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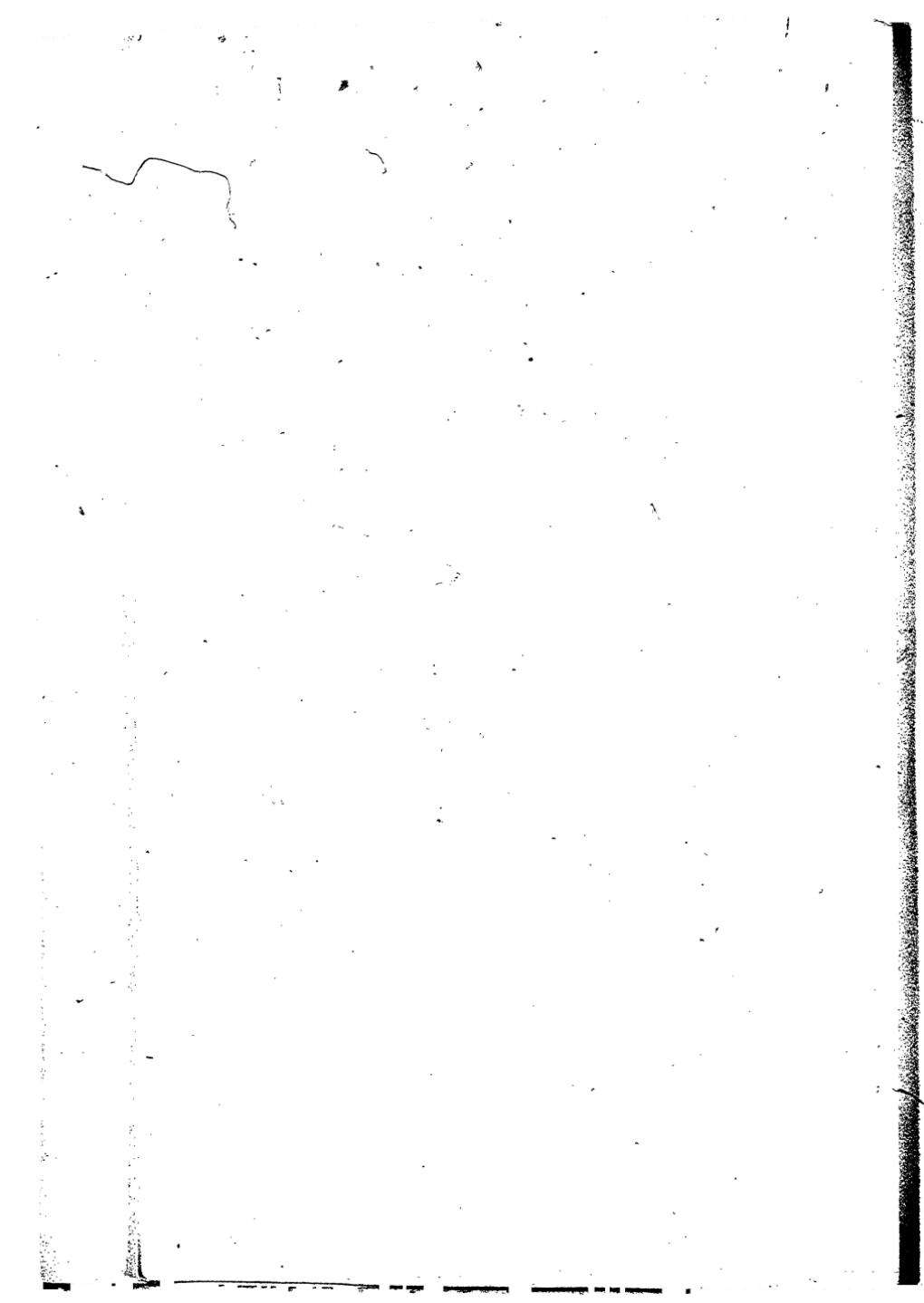
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FLORA LYNDSDAY:

OR,

PASSAGES IN AN EVENTFUL LIFE.

BY MRS. MOODIE,

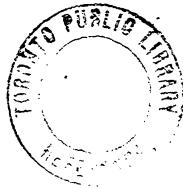
AUTHOR OF "MARK HURDLESTONE," "LIFE IN THE CLEARINGS,"
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FLORA LYNDSDAY;

OR,

PASSAGES IN AN EVENTFUL LIFE

CHAPTER I.

A MATRIMONIAL DIALOGUE.

"FLORA, have you forgotten the talk we had about emigration, the morning before our marriage?" was a question rather suddenly put to his young wife, by Lieutenant Lyndsay, as he paused in his walk to and fro in the room. The fact is, that he had been pondering over that conversation for the last hour.

It had long been forgotten by his wife; who, seated upon the sofa with a young infant of three years old in her lap, was calmly watching its sleeping face with inexpressible delight. She now left off her maternal studies; and looked up at her husband, with an inquiring glance—

"Why do you ask, dear John?"

"Are you turned Quaker, Flora, that you cannot give one a direct answer?"

"I have not forgotten it. But we have been so happy ever since, that I have never given it a second thought. What put it into your head just now?"

"That child—and thinking how I could provide for her in any other way."

"Dear little pet! She cannot add much to our expenses." And the mother beat over her sleeping child, and kissed its soft, velvet cheek, with a zest that mothers alone know.

"Not at present. But the little pet will in time grow into a tall girl; and other little pets may be treading upon her footsteps; and they must all be clothed, and fed, and educated."

Flora, in her overflowing happiness, had dismissed all such cruel realities from her mind.

"Emigration is a terrible word, John. I wish that it could be expunged from our *English* dictionary."

"I am afraid, my dear girl, that you are destined to learn a practical illustration of its meaning. Nay, don't look so despondingly. If you intended to remain in England, you should not have married a *poor* man."

"Don't say that, John, or you will make me miserable. Our marriage made me rich in treasures, which gold could never buy. But, seriously, I do not see this urgent necessity for taking such a hazardous step. I know that we are not rich—that our expectations on that score for the future are very limited. We are both the younger children of large families, whose wealth and consequence is now a thing of the past. We have nothing to hope or anticipate from rich relations; but we have enough to be comfortable, and are surrounded with many blessings. Our little girl, whose presence seems to have conjured before you the gaunt image of poverty, has added greatly to our domestic happiness. Yes, little Miss Innocence! you are awake, are you? Come, crow to papa, and drive these ugly thoughts out of his head."

The good father kissed fondly the young thing seductively held up to him. But he did not yield to the temptation, or swerve from his purpose, though Flora kissed *him*, with eyes brimful of tears.

"We are indeed happy, love. Too happy, I might say. But will it last?"

"Why not?"

"Our income is *very* small?" with a deep sigh.

"It is enough for our present wants. And we have no debts."

"Thanks to your prudent management. Yes, we have no debts. But it has been a hard battle, only gained by great self-denial, and much pinching. We have kind friends, too. But Flora, I am too proud to be indebted to friends for the common necessities of life; and without doing something to improve our scanty means, it might come to that. The narrow income which has barely supplied our wants this year, without the incumbrance of a family, will not do so next. There remains no alternative but to *emigrate!*"

Flora felt that this was pressing her hard. All her affectionate

ingenuity could not furnish an argument against such home truths. "Let us drop this hateful subject," said she, hastily; "I cannot bear to think about it."

"But, my dear girl, we must force ourselves to think about it, calmly and dispassionately; and having determined which is the path of duty, we must follow it out, without any reference to our own likes and dislikes. Our marriage would have been a most imprudent one, had it been contracted on any other terms; and we are both to blame that we have loitered away so many months of valuable time in happy ease, when we should have been earning independence for ourselves and our family."

"You may be right, John,—yes, I know that you are right. But it is no such easy matter to leave your home and country, and the dear friends whose society renders life a blessing and poverty endurable—to abandon a certain good for an uncertain better, to be sought for among untried difficulties. I would rather live in a cottage in England, upon brown bread and milk, than occupy a palace on the other side of the Atlantic."

"This sounds very prettily in poetry, Flora; but, my dear girl, life is made up of stern realities, and it is absolutely necessary for us to provide against the dark hour before it comes suddenly upon us. Our future prospects press upon my heart and brain too forcibly to be neglected. I have thought long and painfully upon the subject, and I have come to the resolution to emigrate this spring."

"So soon?"

"The sooner the better. The longer we defer it the more difficulties we shall have to encounter. The legacy left you by your aunt will pay our expenses out, and enable us, without touching my half-pay, to purchase a farm in Canada."

"Canada!"

Flora's eye brightened.

"Oh, I am so glad that it is not to the Cape of Good Hope!"

"In this decision, Flora, I have yielded to *your* wishes. My *own* inclinations would lead me back to a country where I have dear friends, a large tract of land, and where some of the happiest years of my life were spent. You are not wise, Flora, to regard the Cape with such horror. No person would delight more in the beautiful and romantic scenery of that country than yourself. You have taken up a foolish prejudice against the land I love."

"It is not that, dear John. But you know I have such a terror of the wild beasts—those dreadful snakes and lions! I never should dare to stir beyond the garden, for fear of being stung or devoured. And then, I have been bored to death about the Cape, by our good friends the P——'s, till I hate the very name of the place!"

"You will perhaps one day find out your error, Flora; and your fears are perfectly absurd! Not wishing to render your emigration more painful, by taking you to a country to which you are so averse, I have made choice of Canada, hoping that it might be more to your taste. The only obstacle in the way, is the reluctance you feel at leaving your friends. Am I less dear to you, Flora, than friends and country?"

This was said so kindly, and with such affectionate earnestness for her happiness more than his own—for it was no small sacrifice to Lyndsay to give up going back to the Cape—that it overcame all Flora's obstinate scruples.

"Oh, no, no!—you are more to me than all the world! I will try and reconcile myself to any change, for your sake!"

"Shall I go first, and leave you with your mother until I have arranged matters in Canada?"

"Such a separation would be worse than death! I would rather encounter a thousand dangers, than remain in England without you! If it must be, I will never say another word against it!"

Here followed a heavy sigh. The young husband kissed the tears from her cheek, and whispered—

"That she was his dear, good girl."

And Flora would have followed him to the deserts of Arabia.

"I have had a long conversation with a very sensible, practical man," continued Lyndsay, "who has lately come to England upon colonial business. He has been a settler for some years in Canada, and the accounts he has given me of the colony are so favorable, and hold out such encouragement of ultimate success and independence, that they have decided me in my choice of making a trial of the backwoods. I promised to meet him this morning at the Crown Inn—where he puts up—to look over maps and plans, and have some further talk upon the subject. I thought, dear, that it was better for me to consult you upon the matter before I took any decided steps. You have borne the ill news better than I expected; so keep up your spirits until I return, which will not be long."

Flora remained in deep thought for some time after the door had closed upon her husband. She could now recall every word of that eventful conversation, which they had held together the morning before their marriage, upon the subject of emigration. In the happy prospect of becoming his wife, it had not then appeared to her so terrible.

Faithfully had he reminded her of the trials she must expect to encounter, in uniting her destiny to a poor gentleman, and had pointed out emigration as the only remedy for counteracting the imprudence of such a step; and Flora, full of love and faith, was not hard to be persuaded. She considered that to be his wife, endowed as he was by nature with so many moral and intellectual qualities, with a fine face and noble form, would make her the richest woman in the world; that there was in him a mine of mental wealth, which could never decrease, but which time and experience would augment, and come what might, she in the end was sure to be the gainer.

She argued thus:—"Did I marry a man whom I could not love, merely for his property, and the position he held in society? misfortune might deprive him of these, and a disagreeable companion for life would remain to remind me constantly of my choice. But a generous, talented man like Lyndsay, by industry and prudence may become rich, and then the most avaricious worlding would applaud the step I had taken."

We think after all, that Flora reasoned wisely, and, acting up to her convictions, did right. The world, we know, would scarcely agree with us; but in matters of the heart, the world is rarely consulted.

They were married, and, retiring to a pretty cottage upon the sea-coast, confined their expenditure to their limited means, and were contented and happy, and so much in love with each other and their humble lot, that up to this period, all thoughts upon the dreaded subject of emigration had been banished from one mind, at least. Flora knew her husband too well to suspect him of changing a resolution he had once formed on the suggestion of duty. She felt, too, that he was right; that painful as the struggle was, to part with all dear to her on earth, save him, that it must be made. "Yes, I can, and will dare all things, my beloved husband, for your sake," she said. "My heart may at times rebel, but I will shut out all its weak complainings. I am ready to follow you

through good and ill—to toil for our future maintenance, or live at ease. England—my country! the worst trial will be to part from you!"

CHAPTER II.

THE OLD CAPTAIN.

FLORA's reveries were abruptly dispelled by a gentle knock at the door; and her "Come in," was answered by a tall, portly, handsome old lady, who sailed into the room in all the conscious dignity of black silk and white lawn.

The handsome old lady was Mrs. Kitson, the wife of the naval officer, whose ready-furnished lodgings they had occupied for the last year. Flora rose to meet her visitor, with the baby still upon her arm.

"Mrs. Kitson, I am happy to see you. Pray take the easy-chair by the fire. I hope your cough is better?"

"No chance of that," said the healthy old lady, who had never known a fit of dangerous illness in her life, "while I continue so weak. Hu—hu—hu! You see, my dear, that it is as bad as ever."

Flora thought that she never had seen a person at Mrs. Kitson's advanced stage of life with such a healthy, rosy visage. But every one has some pet weakness. Mrs. Kitson's was always fancying herself ill and nervous. Now, Flora had no very benignant feelings towards the old lady's long catalogue of imaginary ailments; so she changed the dreaded subject, by inquiring after the health of the old Captain, her husband.

"Ah, my dear, he's just as well as ever—nothing in the world ever ails him; and little he cares for the sufferings of another. This is a great day with him; he's all bustle and fuss. Just step to the window, and look at his doings. It's enough to drive a sensible woman mad. Talk of women wearing the *smalls*, indeed! it's a base libel on the sex. Captain Kitson is not content with putting on my apron, but he appropriates my petticoats also. I cannot give an order to my maid, but he contradicts it, or buy a pound of tea, but he weighs it after the grocer. Now, my dear, what would you do if the *Leaffenant* was like my husband?"

"Really, I don't know," and Flora laughed heartily. "It must be rather a trial of patience to a good housekeeper like you. But what is he about?" she cried, stepping to the window that overlooked a pretty lawn in front of the house, which commanded a fine view of the sea. "He and old Kelly seem up to their eyes in business. What an assemblage of pots and kettles, and household stuff, there is upon the lawn! Are you going to have an auction?"

"You may well think so; if that were the case, there might be some excuse for his folly. No, all this dirt and confusion, which once a week drives me nearly beside myself, is what K—— calls clearing up the ship; when he and his man Friday, as he calls Kelly, turn everything topsy-turvy; and, to make the muddle more complete, they always chose my washing-day for their frolic. Pantries and cellars are rummaged over, and everything is dragged out of its place, for the mere pleasure of making a litter, and dragging it in again.

"Look at the lawn! covered with broken dishes, earless jugs, cracked plates, and bottomless saucepans," continued Mrs. Kitson. "What a dish of nuts for my neighbors to crack! They always enjoy a hearty laugh at my expense, on Kitson's clearing-up days. But what does he care for my distress? In vain I hide up all this old trumpery in the darkest nooks in the cellar and pantry—nothing escapes his prying eyes; and then he has such a memory, that if he misses an old gallipot he raises a storm loud enough to shake down the house.

"The last time he went to London," pursued the old lady, "I collected a vast quantity of useless trash, and had it thrown into the pond behind the house. Well, when he cleared the decks next time, if he did not miss the old broken crockery, all of which, he said, he meant to mend with white lead on rainy days; while the broken bottles, forsooth, he had saved to put on the top of the brick wall, to hinder the little boys from climbing over to steal the apples! Oh, dear, dear, dear! there was no end to his bawling, and swearing, and calling me hard names, while he had the impudence to tell Kelly, in my hearing, that I was the most extravagant woman in the world. Now, I, that have borne him seventeen children, should know something about economy and good management; but he gives me no credit at all for that. He began scolding again, to-day, but my poor head could not stand it any longer; so I came over to spend a few minutes with you."

The handsome old lady paused to draw breath, and looked so much excited with this recapitulation of her domestic wrongs, that Mrs. Lyndsay thought it not improbable she had performed her own part in the scolding.

As to Flora, she was highly amused by the old Captain's vagaries. "By-the-bye," she said, "had he any luck in shooting, this morning? He was out by sunrise with his gun."

The old lady fell back in her chair, and laughed immoderately.

"Shooting! Yes, yes, that was another frolic of his. But Kitson's an old fool, and I have told him so a thousand times. So you saw him this morning with the gun?"

"Why, I was afraid he might shoot Lyndsay, who was shaving at the window. The Captain pointed his gun sometimes at the window, and sometimes at the eaves of the house, but as the gun always missed fire, I began to regain my courage, and so did the sparrows, for they only chattered at him in defiance."

"And well they might. Why, my dear, would you believe it, he had no powder in his gun! Now, Mrs. Lyndsay, you will perhaps think that I am telling you a story, the thing is so absurd; yet I assure you that it's strictly true. But you know the man. When my poor Nelly died, she left all her little property to her father, as she knew none of her late husband's relations—never was introduced to one of them in her life. In her dressing-case he found a box of charcoal for cleaning teeth, and in spite of all that I could say or do, he insisted that it was gunpowder. 'Gumpowder!' says I, 'what would our Nelly do with gunpowder? It's charcoal, I tell you.'

"Then he smelt it, and smelt it—'Tis gunpowder, Sally! Don't you think that I know the smell of gunpowder? I, that was with Nelson at Copenhagen and Trafalgar?"

"'Tis the snuff in your nose, that makes everything smell alike,' says I. "Do you think that our Nelly would clean her beautiful white teeth with gunpowder?"

"'Why not?' says he; 'there's charcoal in gunpowder. And now, Madam, if you dare to contradict me again, I will shoot you with it, to prove the truth of what I say!'

"Well, after that, I held my tongue, though I did not choose to give up. I thought to spite him, so for once I let him have his own way. He spent an hour last night cleaning his old rusty gun; and rose this morning by daybreak with the intention of murdering

all the sparrows. No wonder that the sparrows laughed at him. I have done nothing but laugh ever since—so out of sheer revenge, he proclaimed a cleaning day; and he and Kelly are now hard at it."

Flora was delighted with this anecdote of their whimsical landlord; but before she could answer his better-half, the door was suddenly opened, and the sharp, keen face of the little officer was thrust into the room.

CHAPTER III.

THE OLD CAPTAIN IN PERSON.

"MRS. LYNDSDAY, my dear; that nurse of yours is going to hang out your clothes in front of the sea. Now, it's hardly *decent* of her to expose female garments to every boat that may be passing."

The Captain's delicacy threw poor Flora nearly into convulsions of laughter—while he continued, rather pettishly—

"She knows no more how to handle a rope than a pig. If you will just tell her to wait a bit, until I have overhauled my vessel, I will put up the ropes for you myself."

"And hang out the clothes for you, Mrs. Lyndsay, if you will only give him the treat—and then, he will not shock the sensitive nerves of the sailors, by hanging them near the sea," sneered the handsome old lady.

"I hate to see things done in a lubberly manner," muttered the old tar.

"Oh, pray oblige him, Mrs. Lyndsay. He is such an old woman. I wonder he does not ask your permission to let him wash the clothes."

"Fresh water is not my element, Mrs. Kitson, though I have long known, that *hot* water is yours. I never suffer a woman to touch my ropes, and Mrs. Lyndsay borrowed those ropes this morning of me. Don't interrupt me, Mrs. K——; attend to your business and leave me to mine. Put a stopper upon that clapper of yours; which goes at the rate of ten knots an hour—or look out for squalls."

In the hope of averting the storm, which Flora saw was gathering on the old man's brow, and which in all probability, had been

brewing all the morning, she assured the Captain, that he might take the command of her nurse, ropes, clothes, and all.

"Mrs. Lyndsay,—you are a sensible woman,—which is more than I can say of some folks," glancing at his wife; "and I hope that you mean to submit patiently to the yoke of matrimony; and not pull one way while your husband pulls the other. To sail well together on the sea of life, you must hold fast to the right end of the rope and haul in the same direction."

His hand was upon the lock of the door, and the old lady had made herself sure of his exit, and was comfortably settling herself for a fresh spell of gossip at his expense, when he suddenly returned to the sofa on which Flora was seated; and putting his mouth quite close to her ear, while his little inquisitive grey eyes sparkled with intense curiosity, said, in a mysterious whisper, "How is this, my dear—I hear that you are going to leave us?"

Flora started with surprise. Not a word had transpired of the conversation she had lately had with her husband. Did the old Captain possess the gift of second-sight? "Captain Kitson," she said, in rather an excited tone; while the color flushed up into her face, "who told you so?"

"Then it is true?" and the old fox rubbed his hands and nodded his head, at the success of his stratagem. "Who told me?—why, I can't say, who told me. You know, where there are servants living in the house, and walls are thin—news travels fast."

"And when people have sharp ears to listen to what is passing in their neighbors' houses," muttered the old lady, in a provoking aside, "news travels faster still."

Flora was annoyed beyond measure at the impudent curiosity of the inquisitive old man. She felt certain that her conversation with her husband had been overheard. She knew that Captain Kitson and his wife were notable gossips, and it was mortifying to know that their secret plans in a few hours would be made public. She replied coldly, "Captain Kitson, you have been misinformed; we may have talked over such a thing in private as a matter of speculation, but nothing at present has been determined."

"Now, my dear, that won't do; leave an old sailor to find out a rat. I tell you that 'tis the common report of the day. Besides, is not the *Leaftenant* gone this morning with that scapegrace, Tom W——, to hear some lying land-shark preach about Canada."

"Lecture! Kitson," said the old lady, who was not a whit be-

hind her spouse in wishing to extract the news, though she suffered him to be the active agent in the matter.

"Lecture or preach, it's all one; only the parson takes his text from the Bible to hold forth upon, and these agents, employed by the Canada Company, say what they can out of their own heads. The object in both is to make money. I thought the *Lieutenant* had been too long in a colony to be caught by chaff."

"My husband can judge for himself, Captain Kitson. He does not need the advice, or the interference of a third person," said Flora, coloring again. And this time she felt really angry; but there was no shaking the old man off.

"To be sure—to be sure," said her tormentor, without taking the smallest notice of her displeasure; "people are all wise in their own eyes. But what is Canada to you, my dear? A fine settler's wife you will make; nervous and delicate, half the time confined to your bed with some complaint or other. And then, when you are well, the whole blessed day is wasted in reading and writing, and coddling up the baby. I tell you, that sort of business will not answer in a rough country like Canada. I was there often enough during the American war, and I know that the country won't suit you,—no, nor you won't suit the country."

Finding that Mrs. Lyndsay made no answer to this burst of eloquence, he continued, in a coaxing tone—

"Now, just for once in your life, my dear, be guided by older and wiser heads than your own, and give up this foolish project altogether. Let well alone. You are happy and comfortable where you are. This is a nice cottage, quite large enough for your small family. Fine view of the sea from these front windows, and all ready furnished to your hand—nothing to find of your own but plate and linen; a pump, wood-house and coal-bison, and other conveniences,—all under one roof. An oven—"

"Stop," cried the old lady, "you need say nothing about that, Kitson. The oven is good for nothing. It has no draught; and you cannot put a fire into it without filling the house with smoke."

"Pshaw!" muttered the old man. "A little contrivance would soon put that to rights."

"I tried my best," retorted the wife, "and I could never bake a loaf of bread in it, fit to eat."

"We all know what bad bread you make, Mrs. Kitson," said the Captain. "I know that it can be baked in; so hold your

tongue, Madam! and don't contradict me again. At any rate, there's not a smoky chimney in the house, which, after all, is a less evil than a cross wife. The house, I say, is complete from the cellar to the garret. And then, the rent—why, what is it? A mere trifle—too cheap by one half—only twenty-five pounds per annum. I don't know what possessed me, to let it so low; and then, my dear, the privilege you enjoy in my beautiful flower-garden and lawn. There is not many lodging-houses in town could offer such advantages, and all for the *paltry* consideration of twenty-five pounds a-year."

"The cottage is pretty, and the rent moderate, Captain," said Flora. "We have no fault to find, and you have not found us difficult to please."

"Oh, I am quite contented with my tenants; I only want them to know when they are well off. Look twice before you leap once, that's my maxim; and give up this mad Canadian project, which I am certain will end in disappointment."

And with this piece of disinterested advice, away toddled our gallant naval commander, to finish with Kelly the arrangement of his pots and kettles, and superintend the right adjustment of the clothes-lines, and the hanging out of Mrs. Lyndsay's clothes.

Do not imagine, gentle reader, that this picture is over-charged. Captain Kitson is no creature of romance, (or was not, we should rather say; for he has long since been gathered to his fathers); but a brave, uneducated man, who, during the war, had risen from before the mast to the rank of Post Captain. He had fought at Copenhagen and Trafalgar, and distinguished himself in many a severe contest on the main during those stirring times, and bore the reputation of a dashing naval officer. At the advanced age of eighty, he retained all his original ignorance and vulgarity; and was never admitted into the society which his rank in the service entitled him to claim.

The restless activity which in the vigor of manhood had rendered him a useful and enterprising seaman, was now displayed in the most ridiculous interference in his own domestic affairs, and those of his neighbors. With a great deal of low cunning, he mingled the most insatiable curiosity; while his habits were so penurious, that he would stoop to any meanness to gain a trifling pecuniary advantage for himself or his family.

He speculated largely in old ropes, condemned boats and sea

tackle of all description, whilst as consul for the port, he had many opportunities of purchasing wrecks of the sea, and the damaged cargoes of foreign vessels, at a cheap rate; and not a stone was left unturned by old Kitson, if by the turning a copper could be secured.

The meddling disposition of the old Captain rendered him the terror of all the fishermen on the coast, over whom his sway was despotic. He superintended and ordered all their proceedings with an authority as absolute as though he were still upon the deck of his war-ship, and they were subjected to his imperious commands. Not a boat could be put off, or a flag hoisted, without he was duly consulted and apprised of the fact. Not a funeral could take place in the town, without Kitson calling upon the bereaved family, and offering his services on the mournful occasion, securing to himself by this simple manœuvre, an abundant supply of black silk cravats and kid gloves.

"Never lose anything, my dear, for the want of *asking*," he would say. "A refusal breaks no bones, and there is always a chance of getting what you ask."

Acting upon this principle, he had begged favors of all the great men in power; and had solicited the interest of every influential person who had visited the town, during the bathing season, for the last twenty years, on his behalf. His favorite maxim, practically carried out, had been very successful. He had obtained, for the mere trouble of asking, commissions in the army and navy for all his sons, and had got all his grandsons comfortably placed in the Greenwich or Christ Church schools.

He had a garden, too, which was at once his torment and his pride. During the spring and summer months, the beds were dug up and remodeled, three or four times during the season, to suit the caprice of the owner, while the poor drooping flowers were ranged along the grass-plot to wither in the sun during the process, and

"Waste their sweetness on the desert air."

This he termed putting his borders into ship-shape.

The flower-beds which skirted the lawn, a pretty grass plot containing about an acre of ground, surrounded by tall poplar trees, were regularly sown with a succession of annuals, all for the time being of one sort and color. For several weeks, innumerable quantities of double crimson stocks flaunted before your eyes, so

densely packed, that scarcely a shade of green relieved the brilliant monotony. These were succeeded by larkspurs, and lastly by poppies, that reared their tall, gorgeous heads above the low, white railing, and looked defiance on all beholders.

Year after year presented the same spectacle, and pounds of stocks, larkspur, and poppy seeds were annually saved by the eccentric old man to renew his floral show.

Tom W——, who was enchanted with the Captain's oddities, had nick-named the marine cottage *Larkspur Lodge*.

CHAPTER IV.

A VISIT OF CONDOLENCE.

THE news of Lieutenant Lindsey's intended emigration spread like wild-fire through the village, and for several days formed the theme of conversation. The timid shrugged their shoulders, and drew closer to their own cosy fire-sides, and preferred staying at home to tempting the dangers of a long sea-voyage. The prudent said, there was a *possibility* of success; but it was better to take care of the little you had, than run the risk of losing it while seeking for more. The worldly sneered and criticised, and turned the golden anticipations of the hopeful and the benevolent into ridicule, prophesying disappointment, ruin, and a speedy return. Lyndsay listened to all their remarks, endeavored to combat unreasonable objections, and removed preconceived prejudices; but as it was all labor thrown away, he determined to abide by the resolution he had formed, and commenced making preparations accordingly.

Flora, who, like many of her sex, was more guided by her feelings than her reason, was terribly annoyed by the impertinent interference of others, in what she peculiarly considered her own affairs. Day after day she was tormented by visitors, who came to condole with her on the shocking prospects before her. Some of these were kind, well-meaning people, who really thought it a dreadful thing, to be forced, at the caprice of a husband, to leave home, and all its kindred joys, for a rude, uncultivated wilderness like Canada. To such Flora listened with patience; for she believed their fears on her account were genuine—their sympathies sincere.

There was only one person in the whole town whose comments she dreaded, and whose pretended concern she looked upon as a real bore—this was Mrs. Ready, the wife of a wealthy merchant, who was apt to consider herself the great lady of the place.

The dreaded interview came at last. Mrs. Ready had been absent on a visit to London; and the moment she heard of the intended emigration of the Lyndseys to Canada, she put on her bonnet and shawl, and rushed to the rescue. The loud, double rat-tat-tat at the door, announced an arrival of more than ordinary consequence.

"O!" sighed Flora, pushing away her desk, at which she was writing letters of importance, "I know that knock!—that disagreeable Mrs. Ready is come at last!"

Before Mrs. Ready enters the room, I may as well explain to the reader what sort of an intimacy existed between Flora Lyndsay and Harriet Ready, and why the former had such a repugnance to a visit from the last-mentioned lady.

Without the aid of animal magnetism (although we have no doubt that it belongs to that mysterious science) experience has taught us all, that there are some natures that possess certain repellent qualities, which never can be brought into affinity with our own—persons, whom we like or dislike at first sight, with a strong predilection for the one almost amounting to love, with a decided aversion to the other, which in some instances almost merges into downright hate.

These two ladies had no attraction for each other; they had not a thought or feeling in common; and they seldom met without a certain sparring, which, to the looker-on, must have betrayed how matters stood between them.

But why did they meet, if such were the case?

It would be true wisdom in all such repellent natures to keep apart. Worldly prudence, and the conventional rules of society, compel persons to hide these secret antipathies—nay, even to present the most smiling exterior to those whom they often least respect.

The fear of making enemies, of being thought ill-natured and capricious, or even of making the objects of their aversion persons of too much consequence, by keeping them aloof, are some of the reasons we have heard alleged for these acts of mental cowardice.

Mrs. Ready was a low-born woman, and Flora belonged to a

very old and respectable family. Mrs. Ready wished to rise a step higher in the social scale, and, thinking Flora might aid her ambitious views, she had, after the first calls of ceremony had been exchanged, clung to her with a pertinacity which all Mrs. Lyndsay's efforts to free herself had been unable to shake off.

Mrs. Ready was a woman of great pretensions, and had acquired an influence among her own set by assuming a superiority to which, in reality, she had not the slightest claim. She considered herself a beauty—a wit—a person of extraordinary genius, and possessed of great literary taste. The knowledge of a few botanical names and scientific terms, which she sported on all occasions, had conferred upon her the title of a learned woman; while she talked with the greatest confidence of her acquirements. *Her* paintings—*her* music—*her* poetry, were words constantly in her mouth. A few wretched daubs, some miserable attempts at composition, and various pieces of music, played without taste, and in shocking bad time, constituted all her claims to literary distinction. Her confident boasting had so imposed upon the good, credulous people among whom she moved, that they really believed her to be the talented being she pretended.

A person of very moderate abilities can be spiteful; and Mrs. Ready was so censorious, and said, when offended, such bitter things, that her neighbors tolerated her impertinence out of a weak fear, lest they might become the victims of her slanderous tongue.

Though living in the same house with her husband, whose third wife she was, they had long been separated, only meeting at their joyless meals. Mrs. Ready considered her husband a very stupid animal, and did not fail to make both him and her friends acquainted with her opinion.

"There is a fate in these things," she observed, "or you would never see a person of *my* superior intellect united to a creature like *that*."

The world recognised a less important agency in the ill-starred union. Mrs. Ready was poor, and had already numbered thirty years, when she accepted the hand of her wealthy and despised partner.

No wonder that Flora, who almost adored her husband, and was a woman of simple habits and pretensions, should dislike Mrs. Ready; it would have been strange, indeed, if persons so differently constituted, could have met without antagonism.

Mrs. Ready's harsh, unfeminine voice and manners; her assumption of learning and superiority, without any real title to either, were very offensive to a proud, sensitive mind, which rejected with disdain the patronage of such a woman. Flora had too much self-respect, not to say *vanity*, to tolerate the insolence of Mrs. Ready. She had met all her advances towards a closer intimacy with marked coldness; which, instead of repelling, seemed only to provoke a repetition of the vulgar, forcing familiarity, from which she intuitively shrank.

"Mrs. Lyndsay," she was wont to say, when that lady was absent, "is a young person of some literary taste, and with the advise and assistance of a friend (herself of course) she may one day become an accomplished woman."

Lyndsay was highly amused at the league, offensive and defensive, carried on by his wife, and Mrs. Ready, who was the only *blue stocking* in the place; and he was wont to call her Flora's Mrs. *Grundy*.

—But Mrs. *Grundy* is already in the room, and Flora has risen to meet her, and proffer the usual meaningless salutations of the day. To these her visitor returns no answer, overwhelmed as she is with astonishment and grief.

"Mrs. Lyndsay!" she exclaimed, sinking into the easy chair placed for her accommodation, and lifting up her hands in a tragic ecstasy—"Is it true—true, that you are going to leave us? I cannot believe it; it is so absurd—so ridiculous—the idea of your going to Canada. Do tell me that I am misinformed; that it is one of old Kitson's idle pieces of gossip; for really I have not been well since I heard it."

Mrs. Ready paused for breath, and applied her handkerchief to her eyes.

Flora remained silent and embarrassed. What could she say? She placed no confidence in the grief of the weeping lady, and despised the affectation of her tears—till she gasped forth—

"Do not leave me in suspense; I would rather hear the truth at once. Are you really going to Canada?"

"I believe so. That is, if no onward circumstance arise to prevent it."

"Good heavens! And you can regard such a dreadful event with such stoical indifference? Why does not your mother exert her authority, to make you give up such a mad project?"

"My mother would never interfere with my husband's wishes, particularly when she considers them reasonable, and knows that no real objections can be offered on the subject."

"But think of the dreadful sacrifice!"

"Such sacrifices are made every day. Emigration, Mrs. Ready, is a matter of necessity, not of choice. Mr. Lyndsay thinks it necessary for us to take this step, and I have no doubt that he is right. Did I consult my own feelings, I should certainly prefer staying at home."

"Of course you would, and you affect this unconcern on purpose to hide an aching heart. My dear, you cannot deceive me; I see through it all. I pity you, my sweet friend; I sympathise with you, from my very soul; I know what your *real* feelings are; I can realize it all."

Flora remained silent. She certainly did wish that Mrs. Ready occupied any other place in the United Kingdom, at that moment, than the comfortable seat in her easy chair. But what could she do? She could not inform the lady that she was tired of her company, and wished to be alone. That would be considered an act of ill-breeding of the most flagrant description; in common courtesy she was compelled to act a lie.

Rather irritated at the small impression her eloquence had made upon her companion, Mrs. Ready removed the cambric screen from her face, on which not a trace of grief could be found, and clasping her hands vehemently together, continued—

"Your husband is mad, to draw you away from all your friends at a moment's warning! I would remonstrate—I would not go; I would exert a proper spirit, and force him to abandon this Quixotic expedition."

"You speak hastily, Mrs. Ready. Why should I attempt to prevent an undertaking in which I most cordially concur, and which Mr. Lyndsay thinks would greatly benefit his family?"

"Nonsense! I hate, I repudiate such passive obedience, as beneath the dignity of woman! I am none of your soft bread-and-butter wives, who consider it their *duty* to become the mere *echo* of their husbands. If I did not wish to go, no tyrannical lord of the creation, falsely so called, should compel me so act against my inclinations."

"Compulsion is not necessary: on this subject we both agree."

"Oh, yes, I see how it is!" with a contemptuous curl of the lip,

"you aspire to the character of a good, dutiful wife,—to become an example of enduring patience to all the refractory conjugal in the place, myself among the rest. I understand it all. How amiable some people can be at the expense of others!"

Flora was thunderstruck. "Indeed, Mrs. Ready, I meant no reflection upon you. My words had no personal meaning; I never talk *at* any one."

"Oh, certainly not! You are not aware," with a strong sneer, "of the differences that exist between Mr. Ready and me (and which will continue to exist, as long as mind claims a superiority over matter); that we are only husband and wife in name. But I forgive you."

"You have nothing to forgive, Mrs. Ready," said Flora, indignantly; "I never trouble my head with your private affairs—they cannot possibly concern me."

This gave rise to a scene. Mrs. Ready, who lived in an element of strife, delighted in scenes.

"Oh, no," she continued, eagerly clutching at Flora's last words, "you are *too* selfishly engrossed with your own happiness to have the least sympathy for the sorrows of a friend. Ah, well!—It's early days with you *yet!* Let a few short years of domestic care pass over your head, and all this honey will be changed to gall. Matrimony is matrimony, and husbands are husbands, and wives will strive to have their own way—ay, and will fight to get it, too. You will then find, Mrs. Lyndsay, that very little of the sugar of love, and all such romantic stuff, remains to sweeten your cup; and in the bitterness of your soul, you will think of me."

"If this is true," said Flora, "who would marry?"

"It is true in my case."

"But fortunately there are exceptions to every rule."

"Humph!—This is another compliment, Mrs. Lyndsay, at my expense."

"Mrs. Ready, I do not wish to quarrel with you; but you seem determined to take all my words amiss."

A long silence ensued,—Mrs. Ready smoothed down her ruffled plumes, and said, in a pitying, patronising tone, very common to her—

"You will be disgusted with Canada: we shall see you back in less than twelve months."

"Not very likely, if I know anything of John and myself."

"What will you do for society?"

Flora thought solitude would be a luxury and Mrs. Ready away—and she answered, carelessly, "We must be content with what Providence sends us."

"Ah! but you may be miles from any habitation. No church—no schools for the children—no markets—no medical attendant—and with your poor health—think of that, Mrs. Lyndsay! And worse, far worse; no friends to sympathise and condole with you, in distress and difficulty."

Now Flora was answering all these objections in her own mind; and, quite forgetful of Mrs. Ready's presence, she unconsciously uttered her thoughts aloud—"These may be evils, but we shall at least be spared the annoyance of disagreeable visitors."

Imprudent Flora—to think aloud before such a woman as Mrs. Ready. Who will venture to excuse such an eccentric proceeding? Would not the whole world blame you for your incorrigible blunder? It had, however, one good effect. It quickly cleared the room of your intrusive guest, who swept out of the apartment with a haughty "Good morning." And well she might be offended; she had accidentally heard the truth, which no one else in the town dared have spoken boldly out.

Flora was astonished at her want of caution. She knew, however, that it was useless to apologise; and she felt perfectly indifferent as to the result; for she did not care if she never saw Mrs. Ready again; and such a decided affront would render that event something more than doubtful.

"Thank heaven! she is gone," burst heartily from her lips, when she found herself once more alone.

It was impossible for Mrs. Lyndsay to contemplate leaving England without great pain. The subject was so distressing to her feelings, that she endeavored to forget it as much as she could. The manner in which it had been forced upon her by Mrs. Ready, was like probing a deep wound with a jagged instrument; and after that lady's departure, she covered her face with her hands, and wept long and bitterly.

CHAPTER V.

THE TRUE FRIEND.

FLORA LYNDsay was aroused from the passionate indulgence of grief by two arms being passed softly around her neck, and some one pulling her head gently back upon their shoulder, and kissing her forehead.

"Flora," whispered a sweet, gentle woman's voice; "Dear Flora. I am come home at last. What, no word of welcome? No kiss for Mary? In tears, too. What is the matter? Are you ill? Is the baby ill? No—she at least is sleeping sweetly, and looks full of rosy health. Do speak, and tell me the meaning of all this!"

Flora was in the arms of her friend before she had ceased speaking. "A thousand welcomes! dear Mary. You are the very person I most wished just now to see. The very sight of you is an antidote to grief: 'A remedy for sore eyes,' as the Irish say. You have been too long away. When did you arrive?"

"By the mail—about an hour ago."

"And your dear sister—?"

"Is gone to a happier home," said Mary Parnell, in a faltering voice; and glancing down at her black dress, she continued, "she died happy—so happy, dear Flora, and now—she is happier still. But, we will not speak of her just now, Flora; I cannot bear it. Time, which reconciles us to every change, will teach me resignation to the Divine will. But ah! 'tis a sore trial to part with the cherished friend and companion of our early years. We were most attached sisters. Our hearts were one—and now—"

There was a pause. Both friends wept. Mary first regained her composure.

"How is Lyndsay? Has he finished writing his book?"

"The book is finished, and accepted by Mr. Bentley."

"That is good, excellent news; and the darling baby!"

"Little Dormouse. There she lies at the end of the sofa, covered by my shawl. She has been sleeping every since breakfast. I think she only wakes up to amuse papa. But she is beginning to stretch herself, and here comes the head-nurse himself."

"Our dear Mary, returned!" cried Lyndsay, entering the room.
"It seems an age since you left us."

"It has been a melancholy separation to me," said Mary. "This parting I hope will be the last. My father has consented to come and live with my brother; and now that dear Emily is gone, I shall have no inducement to leave home, so you will have me all to yourselves, whenever I can steal an hour from my domestic duties; and we shall once more be so happy together."

Lyndsay looked at Flora, but neither spoke. Mary saw in a moment that there was some hidden meaning in that quick, intelligent glance; and she turned anxiously from one to the other.

"What mischief have you been plotting, during my absence?" cried the affectionate girl, taking a hand of each. "Some mystery is here—I read it in your eyes. I come to you striving to drown the remembrance of my own heavy sorrow, that we might enjoy a happy meeting: I find Flora in tears, and you Lyndsay looking grave and melancholy. What does it all mean?"

"Has not Flora told you?"

"Told me what?"

"That we are about to start for Canada."

"Alas! no. This is sad news,—worse than I expected. But are you really determined upon going?"

"Our preparations are almost completed."

"Worse and worse. I hoped it might be only the whim of the moment—a castle, not of the air, but of the woods—and as easily demolished."

"Let us draw back," said Flora. "Lyndsay, dearest; the trial is too great."

"It is too late now, Flora. Depend upon it love, that God has ordered it, and that we act in conformity to the Divine will, and that all is for the best."

"If such is your belief, my dear friend," said Miss Parnell, "far be it from me to persuade you to stay. God orders all things for good. The present moment is the prophet of the future. It must decide your fate."

"I have not acted hastily in this matter," returned Lyndsay. "I have pondered over it long and anxiously, and I feel that my decision is right. The grief poor Flora feels at parting with her friends, is the greatest drawback. I thought that she possessed more strength of endurance. As for me, I have passed through the

ordeal before, when I left Scotland for the Cape of Good Hope - and I now look upon myself as a citizen of the world. I know that Flora will submit cheerfully to the change, when once we lose sight of the British shores."

"This then means the cause of Flora's tears?"

"Not exactly," said Flora, laughing. "That odious Mrs. Ready has been here, tormenting me with impertinent questions."

"Flora, I'm ashamed of you," said Lyndsay, "for suffering yourself to be annoyed by that stupid woman."

"And worse than that, dear John, I got into a passion, and affronted her."

"And what did *Mrs. Grundy* say?"

"Ah! it's fine fun for you. But if you had been baited by her for a couple of hours, as I was, you could not have stood it much better than I did. Why, she had the impudence to insist upon my acting in direct opposition to your wishes; and all but insinuated that I was a fool not to take her advice."

"A very serious offence, indeed," said Lyndsay, laughing. "Instigating my wife to an act of open rebellion. But I assure you will not profit by her example."

"Indeed, no! She's the very last woman in the world I should wish to imitate. Still I feel angry with myself for letting my temper get the better of prudence."

"What a pity, Flora, that you did not fight it out. I would back my good wife against twenty *Mrs. Grundys*."

"She would scratch my eyes out, and then write a horrid sonnet to celebrate the catastrophe."

"Nobody would read it."

"Ah, but she would read it to everybody, and bore the whole town with her lamentations."

"Let her go, Flora. I am tired of *Mrs. Grundy*."

"Indeed, I was glad enough to get rid of her, which reconciles me to the disagreeable manner in which I offended her."

"Let us talk of your Canadian plans," said Mary. "When do you go?"

"In three weeks," said Lyndsay.

"So soon! The time is too short to prepare one to part with friends so dear. If it were not for my poor old father, I would go with you."

"What a blessing it would be!" said Lyndsay.

"Oh! do go, dear Mary," cried Flora, quite transported at the thought, and flinging her arms about her friend's neck. "It would make us so happy."

"It is impossible!" said the dear Mary, with a sigh. "I spoke without thinking. My heart will follow you across the Atlantic; but duty keeps me here. I will not, however, waste the time still left to us in useless regrets. Love is better shown by deeds than words. I can work for you, and cheer you, during the last days of your sojourn in your native land. Employment, I have always found, by my own experience, is the best remedy for aching hearts."

CHAPTER VI.

FLORA'S OUTFIT.

HAVING once matured his plans, Lyndsay hastened to take the necessary steps to carry them into execution. Leaving Flora and her friend Mary to prepare all the indispensables for the voyage, he hurried to London, to obtain permission from head-quarters to settle in Canada—to arrange pecuniary matters for their voyage, and take leave of a few old and tried friends. During his absence, Flora and her friend were not idle. The mornings were devoted to making purchases, and the evenings to convert them into articles for domestic use. There were so many towels to hem, sheets to make, and handkerchiefs and stockings to mark, that Flora saw no end to the work, although assisted by kind sisters, and the indefatigable Mary.

The two friends held a grand consultation over Flora's scanty wardrobe, in which there were articles "old and new;" but it must be confessed that the old and the unfashionable predominated over the new and well-cut. Flora's friends were poor, and she had been obliged to dispense with a wedding outfit. An old and very rich relation of her father, had presented her with a very elegant wedding-dress, shawl, and bonnet, which was all the finery Flora possessed. Her other dresses were very plain, and composed of common materials; and if it had not been for the unexpected bounty of the said rich lady, our bride must have done without a wedding-garment at all; for she had earned the few common necessaries she

took with her to housekeeping with her own hand, in painting trifles for the bazaars, and writing articles for ladies' magazines. One small trunk contained Flora's worldly goods and chattels, the night she entered the neatly-furnished lodgings which Lyndsay had prepared for her as his wife.

Flora felt almost ashamed of the little she possessed; but her high-minded, generous husband, took her penniless as she was, and laughingly assured her that they could never quarrel on the score of riches; for his wardrobe was nearly as scanty as her own; and, beyond a great chest of books and music, he had nothing in the world but his half-pay. Many a long afternoon Flora spent during her quiet honeymoon (for the month was April, and the weather very wet,) in looking over shirts and socks, and putting them into the best habitable repair. She was thus employed, when an author of some distinction called upon them, to enjoy half-an-hours' chat. Flora hid up her work as fast as she could; but in her hurry, unfortunately, upset her work-basket on the floor, and all the objectionable garments tumbled out at her guest's feet.

He was young, unmarried and a poet; and this certainly was not a poetical incident. "Mrs. Lyndsay," he cried, in a tragic horror, (it would have been more in good taste to have said nothing about it,) "are you forced to devote your valuable time to mending old socks and shirts?"

"They were meant for my *private* hours," said Flora, laughing, as she collected the fallen articles, and stowed them once more into their hiding-place. "With *such* the public has nothing to do."

"Well, if ever I marry, I'll take good care to give away every old thing I have in the world. No wife of mine shall have it to say that she was forced to mend my rags."

"Wait till the time comes," said Flora, quietly. "You don't know what may happen yet. There are more disagreeable things in every-day life than mending old clothes. Industry and perseverance may soon replace these with new ones; but it is useless to throw away old friends until we are sure of obtaining others as good."

Flora had often thought of this scene, and in her overflowing happiness had blessed God that she had been permitted to share Lyndsay's poverty. Mending the old clothes had become a privilege.

Thirty pounds was all that she could now afford to lay out upon

herself and her little one—a small sum, indeed, to the rich, who would have expended as much in a single article of dress, but very large in her estimation, whose wants had always been regulated more by the wants of others than her own.

Ignorant of the nature of the colony to which she was about to emigrate, and of the manners and customs of the people among whom she was to find a new home, and of whom she had formed the most laughable and erroneous notions, many of her purchases were not only useless, but ridiculous. Things were overlooked, which would have been of the greatest service; while others could have been procured in the colony for less than the expense of transportation.

Twenty years ago, the idea of anything decent being required in a barbarous desert, such as the woods of Canada, was repudiated as nonsense.

This reminds one of a gentleman who sent his son, a wild, extravagant, young fellow, with whom he could do nothing at home, to grow tame, and settle down into a quiet farmer in the Backwoods. The experiment proved, as it always does in such cases, a perfect failure. All parental restraint being removed, the young man ran wild altogether, and used his freedom as fresh occasion for licentiousness. The prudent father then wrote out to the gentleman to whose care the son had been consigned, that he had better buy him a wild farm, and a *negro and his wife* to keep house for him.

This, too, after the passing of the Anti-Slavery bill! But, even if slaves had been allowed in the colony, the horror of *color* is as great among the native-born Canadians, as it is in the United States. So much did this otherwise clever man know of the colony to which he sent his unmanageable son!

Flora had been led to imagine that settlers in the Backwoods lived twenty or thirty miles apart, and subsisted upon game and the wild fruits of the country until their own lands were brought into a state of cultivation. Common sense and reflection would have pointed this out as impossible; but common sense is very rare, and the majority of persons seldom take the trouble to think. We have known many persons just as wise as Flora in this respect. It is a fact, however, that Flora believed these reports, and fancied that her lot would be cast in one of those remote settlements, where no sounds of human life were to meet her ears, and the ringing of her husband's axe alone awake the echoes of the forest.

She had yet to learn that the proximity of fellow-laborers in the great work of clearing is indispensable; that man cannot work alone in the wilderness, where his best efforts require the aid of his fellow-men.

The oft-repeated assertion, that *anything would do for Canada*, was the cause of more blunders in the choice of an outfit, than the most exaggerated statements in its praise.

Of the fine towns and villages, and the well-dressed population of the improved districts of the Upper Province, she had not formed the slightest conception. To her fancy, it was a vast region of cheerless forests, inhabited by unreclaimed savages, or rude settlers doomed to perpetual toil—a climate of stern vicissitudes, alternating between intense heat and freezing cold, and which presented at all seasons a gloomy picture. No land of Goshen, no paradise of fruits and flowers, rose in the distance to console her for the sacrifice she was about to make. The ideal was far worse than the reality.

Guided by these false impressions, she made choice of articles of dress too good for domestic drudgery, and not fine enough to suit the rank to which she belonged. In this case, extremes would have suited her better than a middle course.

Though fine clothes in the Backwoods may be regarded as useless lumber, and warm stuffs for winter, and good washing calicoes for summer, are more to be prized than silks and satins, which a few days' exposure to the rough flooring of a log-cabin would effectually destroy; yet it is absolutely necessary to be well-dressed when visiting the large towns, where the wealthier classes not only dress well, but expensively.

In a country destitute of an hereditary aristocracy, and where the poorest emigrant, by industry and prudence, may rise to wealth and political importance, the appearance which individuals make, and the style in which they live, determine their claims to superiority with the public, chiefly composed of the same elements with themselves. The aristocracy of England may be divided into three distinct classes,—that of family, of wealth, and of talent,—all powerful in their order. The one which ranks the last should hold its place with the first, for it originally produced it; and the second, which is far inferior to the last, is likewise able to buy the first. The heads of old families are more tolerant to the great men of genius than they are to the accumulators of riches; and a wide

distinction is made by them between the purse-proud millionaire and the poor man of genius, whose refined tastes and feelings are more in unison with their own.

In Canada, the man of wealth has it all his own way ; his dollars are irresistible, and the money makes the man. Fine clothes are there supposed to express the wealth of the possessor ; and a lady's gown determines her right to the title, which, after all, presents the lowest claims to gentility. A runaway thief may wear a fashionably-cut coat, and a well-paid domestic flaunt in silks and satins.

Now, Flora knew knotting of all this ; and she committed a great error in choosing neat and respectable every-day clothing. The handsome, and the very ordinary, would have answered her purpose much better.

If "necessity is the mother of invention," experience is the hand-maid of wisdom, and her garments fit well. Flora was as yet a novice to the world and its ways. She had much to learn from a stern and faithful preceptress, in a cold, calculating school.

CHAPTER VII.

HOW MISS WILHELMINA CARR AND FLORA BECAME ACQUAINTED.

AMONG the many persons who called upon Flora to talk over her projected emigration was a Miss Wilhelmina Carr—a being so odd, so wayward, so unlike the common run of mortals, that we must endeavor to give a slight sketch of her to our readers. We do not possess sufficient artistic skill to do Miss Wilhelmina justice; for if she had not actually lived and walked the earth, and if we had not seen her with our own eyes, and heard her with our own ears, we should have considered her a very improbable, if not an impossible, variety of the human species feminine. We have met with many absurd people in our journey through life, but a more eccentric individual never before nor since has come under our immediate observation.

Flora's means were far too limited for her to entertain company. Her visitors were confined entirely to her own family, and a few old and chosen friends, with whom she had been intimate from childhood. How, then, did she become acquainted with this lady? Oddly enough; for everything connected with Miss Carr was odd, and out of the common way.

There was a mystery, too, about Miss Carr, which had kept the gossips busy for the last four months; and clever and prying as they were—quite models in their way—not one of them had been able to come at the solution of the riddle.

One hot day, during the preceding summer, Miss Wilhelmina walked into the town, wearing a man's broad-brimmed straw hat, and carrying a cane in her hand, with a very small dog trotting at her heels. She inquired at the first hotel in the town for lodgings, and hired two very handsome apartments of Mrs. Turner, who kept very respectable lodgings, and was patronised by the best families in the neighborhood. Miss Wilhelmina paid three months' rent in advance; she brought no servant, and was to find her own table, engaging Mrs. Turner to cook and wait upon her.

Some days after her arrival, two large travelling trunks, and several well-filled hampers full of wine of the best quality, were forwarded to her direction, and Miss Carr became one of the lions of the little watering place.

Who she was, or from what quarter of the world she emanated, nobody could find out. She had evidently plenty of money at her command, lived as she liked, and did what she pleased, and seemed perfectly indifferent as to what others thought of her.

Her eccentric appearance attracted general attention, for she was no recluse, and spent most of her time in the open air. If your walk lay along the beach, the common, or the dusty high-road, you were sure to meet Miss Carr and her dog at every turn.

The excitement regarding her was so great, that most of the ladies called upon her in the hope of gratifying their curiosity, and learning something about her from her own lips. In this they were quite disappointed; for Miss Wilhelmina Carr, though she was sitting at the window nursing her dog, did not choose to be at home to any one, and never had the courtesy to return these ceremonious visits. An old practised propagator of news waylaid Mrs. Turner in the street, and cross-questioned her in the most dexterous manner concerning her mysterious lodger; but the good woman was either seized with a fit of unusual prudence, or, like Horace Smith's mummy—

"Was sworn to secrecy."

There was no getting anything out of her beyond the astounding facts, that Miss Carr smoked out of a long pipe, drank brandy-

punch, and had her table served with all the dainties of the season. "Besides all this," whispered the cautious Mrs. Turner, "she swears like a man." This last piece of information might be a scandal; the ladies hoped it was, but believed and talked about it as a shocking thing, if true, to all their acquaintance; and congratulated themselves that the dreadful woman had shown her wisdom in not returning the visits of respectable people.

The person about whom all this fuss was made, was a tall and very stout woman of fifty years of age; but active and energetic-looking for her time of life. Her appearance was eccentric enough to afford ample scope for all the odd sayings and doings in circulation respecting her. She had a satirical, laughing, jolly red face, with very obtuse features; and, in order to conceal hair of a decidedly caroty hue, she wore an elaborately-curled flaxen wig, which nearly covered her large forehead, and hung over her eyes like the curly coat of a French poodle dog. This was so carelessly adjusted, that the red and flaxen formed a curious shading round her face, as their tendrils mingled and twined within each other. Her countenance, even in youth, must have been coarse and vulgar; in middle life, it was masculine and decidedly ugly, with no redeeming feature but the large, good-natured mouth, well set with brilliantly white teeth—strong, square, even teeth, that seem to express their owner's love of good cheer; and silently intimated, that they had no light duty to perform, and were made expressly for eating.

Miss Carr, though she sported a man's hat and carried a cane, dressed expensively, her outer garments being made of the richest materials; but she wore these so ridiculously short, that her petticoats barely reached below the middle of her legs—leaving exposed to general observation the only beauty she possessed—a remarkably handsome and neatly-made foot and ankle.

Now, we don't believe that Miss Carr cared a fig about her handsome legs and feet. If they had belonged to the regular Mulingar breed, she would have shown them as freely to all the world; simply, because she chose to do so. She was a great pedestrian, to whom long petticoats would have been uncomfortable and inconvenient.

If she was vain of anything, it was her powers of locomotion. She had made the tour of Europe on foot and alone, and still continued to walk her ten or fourteen miles a day, let the weather be what it would. Hail, rain, blow, or snow, it was all one to Miss

Carr. "She was walking," she said, "to keep herself in practice, as she was contemplating another long journey on foot."

Ida Pfeiffer, the celebrated female traveller, was unknown in those days; or Miss Carr might have taken the shine out of that adventurous lady; as easily as the said Ida destroys all the romantic notions previously entertained by stay-at-home travellers, about the lands she visits, and the people who form the subjects of her entertaining matter-of-fact books.

When Miss Carr made her *début* at church, with her masculine hat placed resolutely on the top of her head, and cane in hand, people could not say their prayers, or attend to the sermon, for staring and wondering at the uncouth apparition which had so unceremoniously appeared in the midst of them. This was not diminished, by her choosing to stand during those portions of the service, when pious females bend the knee. Miss Welhelmina said, "that she was too big to kneel—that her prayers were just as good in one attitude as another. The soul had no legs or knees, that she could discover—and if the prayers did not come from the heart, they were of no use to her, or to any one else. She had not much faith in prayers of any kind. She never could find out that they had done her the least good, and if she had to go through a useless ceremony, she would do it in the most convenient manner."

Flora had heard so much about this strange woman, that she had not called upon her on her first arrival in the town; though it must be confessed, that her curiosity was as much excited as her neighbors. In her walks to and fro from her mother's house, who resided within a short distance of the town, Flora had often encountered the sturdy pedestrian stumping along at full speed, and she had laughed heartily with her husband at her odd appearance; at her short petticoats, and the resolute manner in which she swung her cane, and planted it down upon the ground. She had often wondered how such an elephant of a woman could move so rapidly upon such small feet, which looked as if she had lost her own, and borrowed a pair of some child by the way.

She was always followed in all her rambles by a diminutive non-descript kind of dog—a tiny, long-haired, silky-looking creature, the color of coffee freshly-ground, no bigger than a large squirrel, with brilliant black eyes, bushy tail, and a pert little face, which greatly resembled that animal.

Often, when moving at full speed along the dusty highway, its

mistress would suddenly stop, vociferating at the top of her voice—“Muff! Muff! where are you, my incomparable Muff?” when the queer pet would bound up her dress like a cat, and settle itself down upon her arm, poking its black nose into her hand, or rear up on its hind legs, to lick her face. They were an odd pair, so unlike, so widely disproportioned in size and motion, that Flora delighted in watching all their movements, and in drawing contrasts between the big woman and her small four-footed companion.

By some strange freak of fancy, Lyndsay and his wife had attracted the attention of Miss Carr, who never passed them in her long rambles without bestowing upon them a gracious bow and a smile, which displayed, at one gesture, all her glittering store of large white teeth.

“I do believe, John, the strange woman means to pick acquaintance with us,” said Flora to her husband, one fine afternoon during the previous summer, as they were on their way to spend the evening with her mother at —— Hall. “Instead of passing us at her usual brisk trot, she has loitered at our pace for the last half-hour, smiling at us, and showing her white teeth, as if she were contemplating the possibility of an introduction. I wish she would break the ice, for I am dying with curiosity to know something about her.”

“You are very foolish,” said Lyndsay, who was not one of Miss Carr’s admirers, “to trouble your head about her. These eccentric people are often great bores; and, if you get acquainted with them, it is not easy to shake them off. She may be a very *improper* character. I hate mystery in any shape.”

“O, bless you!” said Flora, laughing, “she is too old and ugly for scandal of that sort. I should think, from her appearance, that she never had had a sweetheart in her life.”

“There’s no telling,” returned Lyndsay. “She may be lively and witty. Odd people possess an attraction in themselves. We are so much amused with them, that they fascinate us before we are aware. She has a good figure for her voluminous proportions, and splendid trotters, which always possess charms for some men.”

“Now, don’t be censorious, husband dear. If she should speak to us—what then?”

“Answer her civilly, of course.”

“And if she should take it into her head to call upon us?”

“Return it, and let the acquaintance drop.”

Flora's love of the ridiculous was her besetting sin. She continued to watch the movements of Miss Carr with mischievous interest, and was as anxious for an interview as Lyndsay was that she could keep her distance. - Flora pressed her hand tightly on her husband's arm, scarcely able to keep her delight in due bounds, while she whispered, in a triumphant aside, "John, I was right. She is shaping her course to our side of the road. She means to speak to us,—and now for it!"

Lyndsay looked annoyed. Flora with difficulty repressed her inclination to laugh out, as Miss Carr came alongside, and verified Mrs. Lyndsay's prediction, by commencing the conversation in a loud-toned, but rather musical voice—

"A bright afternoon for your walk."

"Beautiful for the time of year," said Flora.

"Rather hot for stout people like me. You seem to enjoy it amazingly."

"I am fond of walking. I do not find the heat oppressive."

"Ah, yes; you are thin. Have not much bulk to carry; one of Pharaoh's lean kine. It requires a warm day to make your blood circulate freely. I like winter and spring best for long rambles."

"I should think you would prefer riding," said Lyndsay; "yet I see you out every day on foot."

"I never ride: I hate and detest riding. I never could be dependent upon the motions of an animal. Horses are my aversion; jackasses I despise. God, when He gave us legs of our own, doubtless intended us to make use of them. I have used mine ever since I was a baby, and they are not worn out yet. I got upon my feet sooner than most children, and have kept them to their duty ever since. I am a great walker; I have been walking all my life. Do you know that I have walked over Europe, alone and on foot?"

"So I have heard," said Lyndsay. "It must have been an arduous undertaking for a lady."

"Far easier than you imagine. Women are just as able to shift for themselves as men, if they would follow my example, and make the trial. I have scarcely sat still for the last twenty years. There is not a remarkable spot in Europe that I have not visited, or mountain but what I have climbed, or cavern that I have left unexplored. Three years ago I commenced a pedestrian tour through Great Britain, which I accomplished greatly to my own satisfaction."

When I take a fancy to a place, I stay in it until I have explored all the walks in the neighborhood. Directly I grow tired, I am off. 'Tis a happy, independent sort of life I lead. Confinement would soon kill me."

"Your friends must feel very anxious about you," said Flora, "during your absence."

"Friends! Fiddlesticks! Who told you I had any friends who care a fig for me or my movements? I am gloriously independent, and mean to remain so. There is but one person in the world who is related to me in the most remote degree, or who dares to trouble their head about me or my doings, and he is only a half-brother. He has opposed himself against my freedom of thought and action; but I don't care that"—(snapping her fingers vigorously)—"for him or his opinions. He has made war upon my roaming propensities all his life. As if a woman has not as much right to see the world as a man, if she can pay her own expenses, and bear her own burthen, without being a trouble to any one. It is certainly no business of his how I spend my money, or where and how I pass my life. Not long ago I heard that he was going to issue a writ of lunacy against me, in order to get me and my property into his possession. This is mean; for he very well knows that I am not mad; and he is very rich, so that there is no excuse for his avarice. Fortunately, he don't know me personally—never saw me since I was a child—and as I never go by my real name, it is not a very easy matter for him to discover me. I don't like this place, but it is quiet and out of the way. I think I shall remain where I am, till he gets tired of hunting me out. I trust to your honor, young people; so you must not betray my secret."

Both promised to say nothing about what she had so frankly communicated.

"I take you at your word," continued Miss Carr; "I like your appearance, and would willingly improve my acquaintance. I often watched you from my windows; and yesterday I asked Mrs. Turner who you were. Her account was so much in your favor, that I determined to introduce myself the first time we accidentally encountered each other. I know your names and where you live. May I come and occasionally enjoy an hour's chat?"

"We shall only be too happy," said Flora, in spite of a warning pinch from Lyndsay, which said as plainly as words could have done, "She's mad; as mad as a March hare." But Flora would

not understand the hint. She felt flattered by the confidence so unexpectedly reposed in them by the odd creature ; and vanity is a great enemy to common sense.

"Mind," said Miss Wilhelmina, turning abrupt^{ly} to Lyndsay, "I don't want to see you at my house. I'm a single woman, and, though not very young, I'm very particular about my character. I never allow a male creature to enter my doors. I'm not fond of men—I have no reason to be fond of them. They never were commonly civil to me; and I hate them generally and individually. When I come to see your wife, of course I don't expect you to hide out of the way, or peep at me through crannies, as if I were a wild beast. I shall call to-morrow morning, and so, good day."

"Muff! Muff!—My incomparable! my perfect! What are you doing? Frisking beside that ugly black cur! He's no companion for a dog of your breeding and degree. Away, you vulgar-looking brute!" And running across the road, she seized hold of the pedlar's dog, who was having a great game of romps with her favorite, and gave it a most unjust and unmerciful belaboring with her cane.

The pedlar, who was by no means pleased with this outrage against his cur, now interfered.

"Don't lick my dorrg, ma'am, in that ere sort o' fashun. What harm can that hanimal ha' done to you, or that whiskered, cat-like thing o' yours?"

"Hold your impertinent tongue, fellow! or I'll thrash you, too," cried Miss Wilhelmina, flourishing aloft her cane.

The man eyed her sullenly. "Maybe, you'd beest not try. If you warn't a 'uman, I'd give it to 'un."

"A lady, sir," with great dignity, and drawing herself up to her full height.

"Ladies don't act in that ere way. You be but a 'uman, and a mad yun, too; that be what you be's."

The next moment Lyndsay expected the cane to descend upon the pedlar's head, and was ready to rush to the rescue of the fair Wilhelmina. But no; the lady dropped her cane, burst into a loud fit of laughter, stooped down, patted the offended cur, and, slipping a shilling into the hand of the angry countryman, snatched Muff to her capacious bosom, and walked off at full trot.

The pedlar, looking after her for a minute, with his eyes and mouth wide open in blank astonishment, and then down at the silver glittering in his hand, cried out—

"I knows you bees a lady, now. If you delights in licking o' dorrags, ma'am, you ma' thrash Bull as much as you please for six-pence a licking. That's fair, I thinks."

He might as well have shouted to the winds ; Miss Wilhelmina was out of hearing, and Flora and her husband pursued their walk to the hall.

CHAPTER VIII.

MISS WILHELMINA CALLS UPON FLORA.

THE breakfast things were scarcely removed the following morning, when Miss Carr walked into the room, where Flora was employed at her work-table, in manufacturing some small articles of dress.

"Your husband is afraid of me, Mrs. Lyndsay : he started off the moment he saw me coming up to the door. I don't want to banish him from his own house."

"Oh, not at all. He has business in town, Miss Carr. You have favored me with a very early visit."

"Too early? Just speak the truth plainly out. Why the deuce do people tell so many stories, when it would be far easier to speak the truth? I assure you, that you look so neat and comfortable in your morning costume, that you have no reason to be ashamed. I like to come upon people unawares,—to see them as they really are. You are welcome to come and see me in my nightcap, when the spirit moves me. When I'm not out walking, I'm always at home—busy at work, too," she continued, putting a tiny cap upon her fist. "That looks droll, and tells tales."

"Oh, don't!—do spare me," cried Flora, snatching the article from her odd companion, and hiding it away in the table-drawer. "I did not mean that any one should catch me at this work."

"Don't think, my dear, that I am going to criticise you. I am no judge of sewing,—never set a stitch in my life. It must be a dull way of spending time. Can't you put your needle-work out?"

Flora shook her head.

"Too poor for that? Mrs. Turner's daughter takes in all such gimeracks. Send what you've got over to her, and I'll pay for the making."

"Miss Carr!" said Flora, greatly distressed.

"What, angry again?"

"No, not exactly angry; but you wound my pride."

"It would do you no harm to kill it outright," said Miss Carr, laughing—such a loud, jovial peal of merriment, which rang so clearly from her healthy lungs, that Flora, in spite of her offended dignity, was forced to laugh too.

"You feel better now. I hope the proud fit is going off, and we can enjoy a reasonable chat. These clothes—what a bore they are to both poor and rich,—the rich setting their heart too much upon them, and the poor despised because they have not enough to keep them warm,—and those mean and old. Then, this is not all. There is the perpetual changes of the fashions, which oblige people to put on what does not suit them, and to make monstrous frights of themselves to dress in the mode. You must have a morning-gown, a dinner-dress, and an evening costume; all to be shifted and changed in the same day, consuming a deal of time, which might be enjoyed in wholesome exercise. I have no patience with such folly. The animals, let me tell you, are a great deal better off than their masters. Nature has provided them with a coat which never wants changing but once a-year; and that is done so gradually, that they experience no inconvenience. No need of their consulting the fashions, or patching and stitching to keep up a decent appearance. It is a thousand pities that clothes were ever invented. People would have been much healthier, and looked much better without them."

"My dear madam, did not God himself instruct our first parents to make garments of the skins of animals?"

"They were not necessary in a state of innocence, or He would have created them like cows and horses, with clothes upon their backs," said Wilhelmina, sharply. "It was their own fault that they ever required such trumpery, entailing upon their posterity a curse as bad as the thorns and thistles. For I always consider it as such, when sweltering under the weight of gowns and petticoats on a hot day; and I rate Mother Eve roundly, and in no measured terms, for her folly in losing the glorious privilege of walking in buff."

"You must have been thinking of that," said Flora, rather mischievously, and glancing down at Miss Wilhelmina's legs, "when you cut your petticoats so short."

"You are welcome to laugh at my short petticoats," said Wilhelmina, "as long as I feel the comfort of wearing them. Now do

tell me, candidly—what impropriety is there in a woman showing her leg and foot, more than in another woman showing her hand and arm? The evil lies in your own thoughts. You see the Bavarian buy-a-broom girls passing before your windows every day, with petticoats cut three or four inches shorter than mine. You perceive no harm in that. ‘It is the fashion of her country,’ you cry. Custom banishes from our minds the idea of impropriety; and the naked savage of the woods is as modest as the closely-covered civilian. Now, why am I compelled to wear long petticoats drabbling in the mud, when a Bavarian may wear her’s up to the knees, and nobody think the worse of her? I am as much a free agent as she is; have as much right to wear what I please. I like short petticoats—I can walk better in them—they neither take up the dust nor the mud, and leave my motions free and untrammeled—and what’s more, I mean to wear them.

“I have tried trowsers; but they fettered me. It is difficult to stow a large figure like mine away into trowsers. I felt as if my legs were in the stocks, and kicked them off in disdain—simply remarking—‘what fools men are!’ So, you don’t like my short petticoats? and I hate your long ones. First, because they are slatternly and inconvenient; secondly, because they make your stockings dirty; and thirdly, because they give you the idea that they are intended to conceal crooked legs. So don’t say one word in their favor.”

“It is but a matter of taste and opinion,” said Flora; “we will not quarrel about it. I think it wise, however, in order to avoid singularity, to conform to existing fashions.”

“Mrs. Lyndsay, I can prove to you in less than two minutes, that you transgress, daily, your own rules.” Flora looked incredulous.

“You do not wear a *busle*, which is now considered by all ladies an indispensable article of dress.”

“You are right: it is a disgusting fashion, which destroys the grace and just proportions of the female form. A monstrous piece of absurdity, that I have never adopted, and never will.”*

“Bravo! Bravo!” shouted Miss Wilhelmina, clapping her hands in an ecstasy of delight. “I have conquered you with your own weapons. There is no slipping past the horns of that dilemma.”

* During twenty years Flora kept her word.

ma. You refuse to wear a hump on your back, and I decline the honor of the long petticoats. Let us hear how you can justify yourself?"

" You have gained an advantage by my own admission," said Flora ; " but I can't consider myself beat."

" Fairly out of the field, my dear—fairly out of the field. Acknowledge the defeat with a good grace. Let us shake hands, and drink a glass wine together in token of peace."

" I never keep wine in the house," said Flora, rather embarrassed at the request, particularly at such an early hour of the day.

" Never keep wine in your house! Why, how do you contrive to keep up your spirits, without a glass of wine now and then?"

" We are young, and require no artificial stimulants to render us cheerful and happy."

" Well, I require stimulants," said Miss Wilhelmina, " with the violent exercise I take. I do not object to a glass of brandy-and-water, or even of gin, when I feel exhausted."

" If you feel ill, Miss Carr, I will send out and get some."

" Ill! Lord bless you! I never was ill for an hour in my life. So, you cannot afford a little luxury like wine? My child, I pity you : I am sure you require it. I wish you were better off."

" I shall never quarrel with Providence, from whom we have received so many blessings, on that account," said Flora ; " I am very grateful for the real comforts we enjoy."

" Poor comfort!" quoth Miss Wilhelmina. " My ideas of comfort are always associated with wealth. I maintain, that no one can really be comfortable without it. What should I be without money? An antiquated, despised old maid—and with all my expensive habits, and queer notions, the very boys in the village would hold me in derision. For even boys know the importance of money, and let me pass unmolested through the midst of them."

" I percieve that you are very popular with the young folks," said Flora.

" All bribery and corruption, my dear. Boys are but men abridged and cramped down into skeleton jackets. When I come to a town, I throw a handful of small silver coin into the middle of the first group of boys I find in my path. The next time they see me coming, they cry out lustily, ' Off with your hats, boys; here comes the rich lady!' Off go the tattered hats and caps, and my small coin pays for the compliment."

"Your plan is an expensive one," said Flora ; "no wonder the boys regard you with such favor."

"I never found money fail but in one instance," said Miss Wilhelmina, thoughtfully. "Mind, it is not to every one that I would communicate my experience. People like to talk of themselves—to tell portions of their history; it relieves their minds. There are very few to whom I have ever told mine; but I think it will amuse you. The follies of others are always entertaining."

"My father was Scotch—my mother Irish. The two nations don't amalgamate very well together. The children of such an union are apt to inherit the peculiar national failings of both. My father united to a love of science a great deal of mechanical genius. He was a clever, prudent, enterprising man, and amassed a large fortune. My mother I never knew—she died when I was an infant. My father hired a good-natured, easy kind of woman, to be nurse. She was a widow, without children, whom he afterwards promoted to the head of his table. She was his third wife. He had one son by his first marriage, who had been born in Scotland, and adopted by a rich uncle. He afterwards got an appointment in India; and I never saw him above half-a-dozen times in my life—and only when a child. He was a handsome, proud man, very Scotch in all his words and ways. We never took to one another. He thought me a spoilt, disagreeable, pert child; and I considered him a cross, stern man; and never could be induced to call him brother.

"I inherited a good property from my mother, which made me a very independent little lady, in my own conceit. I knew, that the moment I became of age, I was my own mistress. Perhaps it was this consciousness of power which made me the queer being I am.

"My step-mother was very fond of me. She spoilt me shockingly—more than most mothers indulge their brats. She always seemed to retain a sense of the inferior position she had held. Not a common failing, by-the-bye: persons raised unexpectedly to wealth, from the lower class, generally measure their presumption by their ignorance. She always treated me as a superior. My father was very fond of her. These passive women are always great favorites with men. They have no decided character of their own, and become the mere echoes of superior minds. A vain man loves to see his own reflection in one of these domestic mag-

nifying glasses : it is so gratifying to be the Alpha and Omega in his own house. His former wives were both handsome, conceited women, who thought so much of themselves, that they could reflect no perfections but their own. In this respect I resembled my mother—from a baby I thought fit to have a will and opinions of my own.

"My step-mother always yielded to my masterly disposition when a child, generally ending the brief contest with the remark, 'What a pity Willy was not a boy ! What a fine, spirited boy she would have made !' When I grew a tall girl, I became more independent still, and virtually was mistress of the house. My father sent me to school. I learnt quickly enough ; but I was expelled from half a dozen for striking my teacher whenever she dared to raise her hand to correct me. At length my education was finished, and I returned home for good, as wild and as fierce as an untamed colt.

"My step-mother had a nephew—a lad whom my father had befriended very much. He had paid for his education, had bound him to an eminent surgeon, and, when his term expired, had enabled him, from the same source, to walk the hospitals and attend the necessary lectures. Henry was attending the last course which was to fit him for entering upon his profession ; and during that period he made our house his home.

"He was not handsome, but a well-grown, high-spirited, clever young fellow. Not at all a sentimental person, but abounding in frolic and fun, full of quaint, witty sayings, and the very incarnation of mischief. We took amazingly to each other ; and he enjoyed all my odd freaks and fancies, and encouraged me in all my masculine propensities.

"I grew very fond of him : he was the only creature of his sex I ever loved ;—but I did love him, and I thought that he loved me. I considered myself handsome and fascinating. All young people think so, if they are ever so ordinary. It belongs to the vanity of the age, which believes all things—hopes for all things, and entertains no fears for the result.

"The girls at school had told me, that I was 'a perfect fright,' but I did not believe them. They laughed at my snub nose and carotty locks, and said 'that it would take all my money to buy me a husband.'

"Now, by way o' digression, I'm a great talker, Mrs. Lyndsay,

and love to ramble from one subject to another. Do just tell me why a *snub* nose should be reckoned vulgar and red hair disgraceful?"

This was an awkward question. It was, however, put point blank. Flora could not avoid giving something in the shape of an answer.

"It is impossible to account for these things," she said. "Any deviation from a recognised standard of taste and beauty is always open to objections. But there are a great many modifications of these rules. Elegance of form, grace of manner, charms of expression, and even sweetness of voice, will render plain persons not only agreeable, but highly so."

"You reconcile me to my snub nose and red hair," said the odd woman. "But few people possess a nice sense of discrimination; they are quick at finding out defects—slow at discovering graces. The world is full of unjust partialities. My snub nose would have been considered a beauty in Africa; my red hair would have been admired in Italy; but there is no struggling against national prejudices; and these bull-headed English are the most prejudiced animals under the sun—and I was remorselessly branded as a fright by a sneering pack of girls, half of whom had noses as bad as my own. I had my private opinion on the subject, in which I flattered myself my cousin (as I called Henry) would perfectly agree.

"He never told me he loved me. I felt certain that he did, and that it was gratitude to my father, for all that he had done for him, which kept him silent. This was a foolishly romantic notion of mine; but there was a touch of romance about me in those days. I was green—very green. I can laugh at myself now; but it has always been a rather sore subject.

"Henry did not speak himself. So I thought I would break the ice, and speak for him. You look surprised. Well, I know it is not exactly according to the general rules observed in such matters, which ties a woman's tongue, and obliges her to wait with all humility, until she is asked by some man, whom perhaps she does not care a fig for, to be his wife. I never lived within rules, and I thought I had as much right to please myself, and ask a man to marry me, as a man had to ask me to be his wife.

"I made Henry an offer of my hand, heart, and fortune—and—it is no use being ashamed, at my time of life, of a thing which

happened such a long time ago—I was *refused!*—without any softening of the matter—down right, positively refused.

"The ungrateful varlet did not even thank me for the honor. He briefly told me, 'That I was a very amusing girl, but the last woman on earth he should wish to make his wife; that as to money, it was certainly a great inducement, but not enough to compensate for the sacrifice of his principles. He had a good profession, and hoped to earn by it wealth and independence.'

"Ah! how I hated him while he told me all this. How I have hated all his sex from that hour, for his sake!

"However, my dear, it had this good effect—it cured me of all such ridiculous weakness, then and for ever. I shook off the love fit, and Wilhelmina was herself again.

"My step-mother died shortly after this, and I became the mistress of my father's house. He was old and very infirm, and completely wrapped up in his scientific studies. I only saw him occasionally, and then my nonsense amused him. He pined after my step-mother; and very shortly followed her to the grave. I had just attained my majority when he died, and I came into a fine property, and found myself at my own disposal.

"Nobody cared for me, and I cared for nobody. I wished to take a peep at the world, and determined to travel over as much of its surface as I possibly could; and please myself as to the method I employed to effect my object.

"I have been in a great many foreign countries, and seen a great many strange people; and been an actor in many extraordinary scenes; and I have come to the conclusion, that the world, after all, is not such a terrible bad world to live in, and that the very worst of its inhabitants are not entirely without some good."

As she finished this sentence, the church clock proclaimed to the whole town the hour of one. Miss Wilhelmina sprang from her chair, exclaiming, "Holloa! that's my dinner hour. It will take me ten minutes to get home, and the fish will be quite spoilt. Excuse me, Mrs. Lyndsay, and come and take tea with me, like a good soul, to-morrow evening. I never take tea later than six."

Miss Wilhelmina vanished. Flora laughed over the interview until her husband came home, and then they had a good laugh together.

CHAPTER IX.

FLORA GOES TO TEA WITH MISS CARR.

THE following evening, at the primitive hour of half-past five, Flora took her work, and went across the green to take tea with Miss Carr.

She found that eccentric lady seated by the window, looking out for her, and Muff standing on her shoulder, catching flies off the panes of glass. The evening was cold and raw; though the month was August, and threatened rain. Such changes are common on the coast. The dreary aspect of things without was relieved by a small but very cheerful fire, which was burning away merrily in the grate. A large easy-chair, covered with snow-white dimmity, was placed near it, expressly for Flora's accommodation, into which she was duly inducted by Miss Carr, the moment she had relieved herself of her bonnet and shawl. Everything looked so comfortable and cosy, in the neat lodging-house, and the tame mad woman received Mrs. Lyndsay with such hospitable warmth of mannner, that the former regretted that her husband was not allowed to share her visit.

" You are late," said Wilhelmina, drawing a small sofa up to the fire, and placing it opposite to Flora's easy chair, so that a pretty work-table stood conveniently between them ; " I told you to come early, and I have been waiting for you this hour."

" I am sorry for that. I thought I had come unfashionably early."

" Fashion ! What have you or I to do with anything so absurd as fashion ? You are too poor to attend to the whims and caprices which sway the mind of the multitude, from which I presume emanates the fashions of the world ; and I am too independent to be swayed by any will but my own. We will therefore set the fashion for ourselves. This is liberty hall while I am mistress of it. I do as I please ; I give you full permission to do the same. But what kept you so late ?"

" A thousand little domestic duties, too numerous and too trifling to dwell upon," said Flora, drawing her work from her bag ; since you give me the privilege of doing as I please, I will resume my work, while I listen to your lively conversation."

"You will do no such thing," returned Wilhelmina, twitching a frill which Flora had commenced hemming, from her hand, "I will have no stitching and sewing here, but as much conversation as you please." Then ringing the bell, she handed over the frill to Mrs. Turner. "Give that to your daughter, Mrs. T., to hem for me, and tell her to do it in her very best style."

"Why, la, ma'am, 'tis a very small affair," said Mrs. Turner, with a meaning smile.

"A nightcap frill for Muff," said Miss Carr. "The cold weather is coming. I mean Muff to wear caps in the winter."

"You are a droll lady," said Mrs. Turner, retreating; "it's a pity you had not something better to make an idol of, than a dog."

While Miss Carr was speaking to Mrs. Turner, Flora glanced round the room, and was not a little surprised to find a pianoforte making part of the furniture, an open drawing-box of a very expensive kind, with card-board and other drawing materials, occupied a side-table. These were articles of refinement she had not expected from a man-like woman of Miss Carr's character.

"Are you fond of drawing?" she asked, when they were once more alone.

"Passionately, my dear: I am a self-taught genius. Other people drew, and I was determined that I would draw too. What should hinder me? I have eyes to see, and hands to copy what pleases me; and the school from which I derive instruction is the best in the world, and furnishes the most perfect models—that of Nature. I never bent my mind to anything that I wished to accomplish, and failed. But you shall judge for yourself."

Miss Wilhelmina sprang from her seat, and bouncing into a closet, soon returned with a large portfolio, which she placed on the table before Flora. "There are my treasures; you can examine them at your leisure."

Flora did not expect anything delicate or beautiful, but she was perfectly astonished—not at the skill and taste displayed in these drawings, but at the extraordinary want of it; nothing could be worse, or indeed so eccentrically bad. The first specimen of Miss Carr's talents as an artist, which she drew from the splendid velvet-covered portfolio, puzzled her not a little. What the picture was meant for, Flora, for the life of her, could not tell, until, glancing down to the bottom of the sheet, she read with great difficulty the following explanation, written in a vile hand—

"Portrait of the Incomparable Muff, taken while picking her bone at breakfast."

It was a good thing she had discovered a key to the hieroglyphic, for Miss Carr's keen eyes were fixed intently upon her, as if they were reading her inmost soul.

"Is it not beautiful?" she cried, anticipating Flora's admiration.

"Muff is a very pretty animal," said Flora, evasively,

"Muff pretty!" exclaimed Miss Carr, indignantly; who ever thought of insulting Muff by calling her *pretty*! She is exquisite—the perfection of her species. I have, in that spirited picture, hit her off to the life. Look at the action of that tail—the life-like grasp of those paws! You might almost fancy you heard her growl over the delicious broiled mutton-bone."

Flora thought the picture would have suited the *Ornithorhynchus paradoxus* quite as well as the incomparable Muff. The drawing was too bad to praise; she could not flatter, and she abhorred quizzing.

Miss Carr waited for her answer. Flora was dumb-founded; fortunately the offended vanity of the artist soon relieved her from the painful and embarrassing silence.

"I perceive that you are no judge of good paintings, Mrs. Lyndsay, or you must see some merit in the one before you. I showed that sketch to an Italian artist of celebrity when I was at Rome; he said, 'That it was worthy of the original,' which I considered no mean praise."

"Doubtless, he was right," said Flora. "His judgment must be more correct than mine. Muff is so unlike the generality of dogs, that it is difficult to recognize her as such."

"She's a fairy!" cried Wilhelmina, forgetting her anger, and hugging Muff to her breast.

"A Brownie," suggested Flora, delighted to find the conversation taking a turn.

"Brownies belong to an inferior order of immortals," quoth Wilhelmina, still caressing her dog. "My Muff is among the aristocrats of her species. But you have not seen the rest of my sketches. You will find a great many original pieces in the portfolio."

Flora wished them all behind the fire, and turning with a rueful seriousness to the sacred repository of *genius*, she drew forth several daubs that were meant for landscapes, the contemplation of

which would have provoked the most indifferent person to mirth ; but it was no laughing matter to examine them while a being so odd as Miss Carr was regarding you with a fixed gaze, hungry for applause and admiration.

Flora thought she had discovered the maddest point in Miss Carr's character. At length she stumbled upon a portrait. The figure was meant for that of a boy, but the head was as big as the head of a man, and covered with a forest of red, curling hair, and he held in his hand a bunch of blue flowers as big as himself. "What an odd looking creature!" burst involuntarily from her lips.

"Ah, my beautiful Adolphe!" cried Wilhelmina. "He was odd like myself—he stood alone in the world, in my estimation. I must tell you the history of that child while you have his charming face before you."

Flora quietly slipped the portrait back into the portfolio. Her inclination to laugh became almost irrepressible. Miss Wilhelmina laid her right foot over her left knee, and, patting it almost as complacently as she would have done the silky, brown back of her pet dog, gave Mrs. Lyndsay the following passage from her history :

"That boy, with the education I meant to bestow upon him, would have become a great man—a second William Tell, or Andrew Hoffer—and I should have been the foster-mother of a man of genius. But it was not to be—there is a fate in these things."

"Did he die?" asked Flora.

"Die! that would have been nothing out of the common way ; everybody must die, some time or other. Oh, no, he may be living yet, for what I know—it was far worse than that."

Flora became interested.

"First—I like to begin at the beginning—I must tell you how I came by Adolphe. I passed the summer of '28 in a small village among the Alps. Every fine day I rambled among the mountains, sometimes with a guide, sometimes alone. About half-a-mile from the village I daily encountered, upon the rocky road, a red-headed little boy of eight years of age, who never failed to present me with a bunch of the blue flowers which grow just below the regions of ice and snow. He presented his offering in such a pretty, simple manner, that I never accepted his flowers without giving him a kiss

and a few small coins. We soon became great friends, and he often accompanied me on my exploring expeditions. Whether it was his red head—God bless the mark! or a likeness I fancied I saw between him and me, I cannot tell; but at last I grew so fond of the child that I determined to adopt him as my own. His father was one of the mountain guides, and resided in a small cabin among the hills. I followed Adolphe to his romantic home, and disclosed my wishes to his parents. They were very poor people, with a large family—Adolphe being number twelve of the domestic group.

"For a long time they resisted all my entreaties to induce them to part with the child. The woman, like the mother of the Gracchi, thought fit to look upon her children as her jewels—Adolphe, in particular, she considered the gem in the maternal crown. Her opposition only increased my desire to gain possession of the boy; indeed, I was so set upon having him that, had she remained obstinate, I determined to carry him off without asking her leave a second time. My gold, and the earnest request of the child himself, at last overcome her scruples; and after binding me by a solemn promise to let them see him at least once a-year, she gave him into my charge, with many tears.

"Having accomplished this business, greatly to my own satisfaction, I set off with Adolphe, on a tour on foot through Germany. He was not only a great comfort to me, but useful withal. He was sturdy and strong, a real son of the hills, and he carried my small valise, and enlivened the length of the road with his agreeable prattle.

"When we put up for the night, the people always took him for my son: a fact I thought it useless to dispute in a foreign country. It would have had a more significant meaning in England. A red-headed single lady could not have travelled alone, with a red-headed child, without disagreeable insinuations. Abroad, I always passed myself off as a widow, and Adolphe of course was my orphan son.

"Matters went off very pleasantly, until we arrived at Vienna, and I hired a neat lodging in a quiet part of the city, where I determined to spend the winter. The next morning I went out, accompanied by Adolphe, to examine the lions of the place. By accident we got entangled in a crowd, which had collected in one of the principal thoroughfares, to witness a fire. While striving to stem my way through the heaving mass of human forms that hedged us in on every side, I suddenly missed my child. To find

him among such a multitude, was, indeed, to look for a needle in a wagon of hay ; yet I commenced the search in utter desperation.

"I ran hither and thither, wherever I could find an opening, frantically calling upon Adolphe. I asked every person whom I met—'If they had seen my boy?' Some pitied—some laughed ; but the greater number bade me stand out of their way. I was mad with fear and excitement, and returned to my lodgings late in the evening, starving with hunger, and worn out with fatigue of mind and body. I hoped that the child might have found his way home, and was waiting me there. Alas ! Adolphe had not been seen, and I went to bed too much vexed to eat my supper.

"Early the next morning I resumed my search. I hired the public cryer to proclaim my loss ; I borrowed a large bell from my landlady, and went through all the streets crying him myself, hoping that he would recognise my voice. Alas ! alas ! I never saw my child again !"

"Never?" said Flora. "Was he irrecoverably lost?"

"Lost, lost, lost!" said Wilhelmina, shaking her head. "This comes of adopting other people's brats. Had he been a worthless, spoilt imp of my own, I should have been more successful. I stayed in Vienna all the winter. I advertised him in the papers. I had placards, offering a large reward for his discovery, pasted on the walls of the principal streets ; but I failed in recovering my poor Adolphe. To console myself for his loss, I painted that portrait of him from memory. 'Tis an admirable likeness. No one who had ever seen the original, could mistake it for another. It was just a week after I lost my child, that the mistress of the house, in compassion for my distress, presented me with my incomparable Muff. Fortune owed me a good turn, for the ill-natured trick she had played me. It would not have been difficult for me to have found another red-headed boy, as amiable as Adolphe ; but such a prize as Muff is only to be met with once in a life."

"And the parents of the poor child,—how did they bear his loss?"

"To tell you the truth, my dear, I never knew. I never wish to know ; for, without Adolphe, I never mean to venture into their neighborhood again."

"Let us hope," said Flora, "that the child found his way back to his native mountains."

"Hurra!" cried Miss Wilhelmina, starting from her seat, and

giving Flora such a hearty embrace that she nearly choked her. "I never thought of that possibility before. Yes—yes; he had money in his little purse. I have no doubt that, on missing me, he returned by the road we had travelled to his native place. That demon won't haunt my dreams again. But here comes the coffee, and Miss Turner's delicious cakes and home-made bread and butter. I hope you are fond of coffee, my dear? I detest tea;—it is a sort of nervous, maudlin, sick-chamber trash, only fit for old maids and milk-and-water matrons."

"I prefer coffee," said Flora. "I have quite an Asiatic taste in that respect."

"Don't talk of Asiatic coffee," said Wilhelmina; "wait till you have tasted it. The nauseous stuff! I have drank enough of it at Constantinople, but never could get it down without a grimace. I have it made in the French style."

The coffee and cakes were served on a small silver tray, which was placed on the table between them. The coffee was fragrant and exhilarating; the bread and butter and cakes richly deserved the praise Miss Wilhelmina had bestowed upon them. Flora had dined early, and did justice to them.

"I like to see a person enjoy their meals," said Miss Carr. "I hate affectation in eating, as much as I hate affectation in speech. Some mince with their food as if they were ashamed of putting a morsel into their mouths before people. They ask for the least piece of this, and for an imaginary crumb of that; and make their entertainers uncomfortable by their ridiculous fastidiousness; while, if we could see these very delicate masticators in their own homes, perhaps we should find them grumbling for Benjamin's share of the daily meal. For my own part, I always eat in public as if no eye was upon me, and do it in a hearty, natural way. You may be sure, when you see persons, whether male or female, give themselves great airs at table, that they have never been used to good society at home."

Flora thought there was a great deal of truth in some of Wilhelmina's remarks. But she felt that it would be dangerous to take the doings of such an odd mortal for precedents in any case; and she was justified in her opinion by Miss Carr, the moment the table was cleared, calling for hot water, brandy, and wine.

"Do you smoke?" she cried, producing a box of segars from the closet, and a long Turkish pipe. Then, drawing down the window-

curtains, she tucked her legs under her upon the sofa, and commenced filling, from a beautiful inlaid silver box, her hooker, with its finely-ornamented bowl and amber mouthpiece.

Flora looked her astonishment, as she said—

“ Miss Carr, do you *really* smoke?”

“ Do I know what is good?” said Wilhelmina. “ Did you never see a woman smoke before?”

“ Yes, Irish barrow-women, in London; and I thought it odd, even for them.”

“ They were wise women, my dear, and knew how to appreciate the merits of the weed. The Irish are a clever people—a very clever people. You remember, that I am Irish by the mother’s side, and have retained one of the national tastes. But it was not in Ireland, nor in the streets of London, sitting upon a fruit-woman’s barrow, that I learned the pleasures of smoking. It was in the East, with all its pretended romance, and real humbug, that I acquired what you consider an unfeminine accomplishment. I saw fat, turbaned men sitting cross-legged in every bazaar, dozing over their huge pipes, in a sort of dreamy helplessness; and I determined to fathom the mystery of their enjoyment, and find out the grand secret.

“ The first few whiffs I took made me very sick and stupid. ‘ Courage,’ said I, not in the least disheartened—

“ ‘ Pleasure cometh after pain,
Sunshine cometh after rain—
Wilhelmina, try again.’ ”

And I did try, for I was determined not to be beaten by these long-bearded, long-petticoated men; and the next trial was crowned with complete success.

“ Now, Mrs. Lyndsay, is it not a shame that these selfish men should be tamely allowed by us foolish women to monopolise all the good things of life, and make that criminal in a female which they cannot deny themselves? You don’t know how much you lose, by being frightened by their blustering into passive obedience, and persuaded that what is good for a man is quite out of keeping with a woman. Do, just by way of illustration to my argument, try one of those fragrant cigars. They are of the best quality—real Havana—’pon honor.”

“ You must excuse me,” said Flora, laughing—as Miss Wilhel-

mina's head dimly loomed through clouds of smoke—"I have no wish to acquire such a taste."

"You're a little fool," puffed forth Wilhelmina. "But I hope to make something out of you yet. Take a glass of wine."

"I never drink anything but water, excepting at breakfast and tea."

"Water! Fiddle-faddle. A tumbler of hot punch will do you no harm. I am going to mix some in the most scientific manner."

"Only think what Lyndsay would say," cried Flora, "if he should come in, and find me smoking a cigar, and drinking brandy punch! He would never forgive me—I could never forgive myself."

"All stuff and nonsense; I am certain he would neither refuse one of these cigars, nor a tumbler of this excellent punch. Does he never smoke?"

"Oh, yes; a cigar, sometimes."

"And takes a glass of toddy—or he's no Scot."

"Occasionally, with a friend."

"A male friend, *of course*. He takes snuff, for I have seen him do it; and this, between ourselves, is a far dirtier habit than smoking. I hate snuff; it always reminds me of a lecture I once heard upon that subject in America. The lecturer was a methodist; and he spoke very vehemently against the use of tobacco in any shape; but snuff-taking seemed to rouse him up, and inflame his indignation to a pitch of enthusiasm. 'If the Almighty,' he said, 'had intended a man's nose for a dust-hole, he would have turned up the nostrils the other way.' These were his very words; and to me they were so convincing, that I discarded from that moment all idea of becoming a snuff-taker."

Wilhelmina emptied her tumbler of brandy and water, which she as quickly replenished. These strong potations began to take effect—her eyes danced in her head, and she became so strangely excited, that Flora wished devoutly that she was safe at home. Presently her odd companion laid aside her pipe, pushed from before her the now empty tumbler, and, rising abruptly, exclaimed, "I've had enough."

Flora thought that she might have come to that conclusion half an hour before.

"I'm not intoxicated," she said: "I only drink enough to raise

my spirits, and drive away the blue devils. And now for a little music."

She sat down to the piano.

"I play entirely from ear, Mrs. Lyndsay; I leave you to judge if I have not an exquisite taste. Here is a march I composed this morning for Captain Lyndsay's black regiment—Hottentot, of course. You say he plays well himself. He cannot fail to admire it. I will write it out for him to-morrow."

Of all Miss Carr's strange whims, the idea she entertained of her being a great musician, was the most absurd. She rattled over the keys at a tremendour rate, striking them with such force that she made the instrument shake. It was a mad revel—a hurricane of sound, yet not without a certain degree of eccentric talent. In the midst of a tremendous passage, there came a knock at the door.

"That's my husband," said Flora, rising, glad to get away.

It was only the maid.

"You are no prophet," said Miss Carr, rattling on; "you must stay till I give you *Napoleon's Passaye of the Alps*. I wrote it on the spot. It is a grand thing. I mean to publish it one of these days."

Flora said, "that she should be happy to hear it some other time. It was late. She was anxious to get home."

"Be off with you, then," said Wilhelmina, laughing, "and don't tell me any white lies, or try and convince your good man, that I have been endeavoring to corrupt your morals."

Lyndsay was amused, but not much pleased, with the account his wife gave him of her visit to Miss Carr.

"You must drop that woman's acquaintance, if possible," said he. "Whether insane, or only eccentric, any particular intimacy with her must be attended with unpleasant consequences."

Flora was willing enough to follow his advise; but to get rid of Miss Carr was sooner said than done. Flora did not go to that lady's house, but Wilhelmina chose to come to her; though she gave her neither pipes to smoke, nor brandy to drink, her odd guest never failed to step in once or twice a week.

"You are an ungrateful creature, Flora Lyndsay," said Wilhelmina, one day to her—"very ungrateful. You know I am fond of you; but you are such a mental coward, that you are ashamed of my acquaintance, because the world finds fault with me, for not

living in accordance with its lying customs. You are afraid lest people should sneer at you for tolerating my eccentricities, as they please to term a person leading a true life—or say that Mrs. Lyndsay smokes, and swears, because Miss Carr does; and your sense of propriety is shocked at such an idea. I do drink and smoke; but like Poll, in the sailor's song, '*I seldom swear.*' It gives me no pleasure; and I never do anything gratuitously bad."

Flora could not deny that these were among the objections she had to an intimacy with Miss Carr; but she wisely held her tongue upon the subject.

"Ah, well," said Wilhelmina, after waiting a reasonable time for an answer, and getting none. "Your silence is very conclusive evidence of the accusation I have brought against you. I give you credit for being honest, at least. You are no sneak, though I am rich, and you are poor. I verily believe, that you are prouder of your poverty, than I am of my wealth. I know many persons who hate me, and would yet fawn to me before my face, while they abused me like pickpockets behind my back. You are not one of them, and I love you for that."

Flora had a kindness for Wilhelmina. She believed her to be mad, and not accountable for her actions, and she tried to persuade her to give over her rambling propensities, and accept the protection of her brother's roof. This advice greatly displeased Miss Carr. Flora might as well have striven to confine a hurricane within the bounds of a cambric pocket-handkerchief, as to lay the least embargo upon that lady's freedom of speech or action.

"Mind your own business, Mrs. Lyndsay," she said, angrily. "I suffer no one to interfere with me or my matters."

For many months Wilhelmina never entered the house, though she walked past the window every day, to give Flora a hint that she was still in the land of the living.

In February Mrs. Lyndsay's little girl was born; and for a long time she was too ill to stir abroad. Miss Carr sent Mrs. Turner every day to inquire after her health; and testified her regard in a more substantial form, by sending her two dozen of old Madeira wine, which she said would strengthen and do her good. Flora was very grateful for these little attentions, and felt ashamed of the repugnance she had shown for Wilhelmina's society. But they never met again, until Miss Carr came to bid her farewell.

"You are going to Canada," she said, shaking Flora heartily by

the hand. "You are wise. In that wild country you will enjoy the glorious privilege of living as you please. I would go too, but I am afraid the cold winters would not agree with Muff, and her comfort has to be considered as well as my own. I spent a winter in New York; and I like the Americans first-rate. But as to pure democracy, my dear, that's all a humbug. No well-educated, wealthy persons, ever consider themselves upon an equality with their servants. But they are pleasant, kind, intelligent people to live with, if you have plenty of money, and dress well. I know nothing of Canada; it was too insignificant to awaken either interest or curiosity. I shall regard it with more complacency for your sake."

Flora took the opportunity of thanking Miss Carr for her kindness during her illness.

"What a serious matter you make of a trifle," said Wilhelmina, laughing. "Don't thank me. It was neither out of love nor charity I sent it, but just to make you confess that wine was a good thing; after all, and much better to take than the doctor's stuff."

"The doctor had recommended wine, but we could not afford it. I never told Lyndsay a word about it, for fear he should lay out the money we wanted so much for our voyage, in such an expensive remedy. I am certain that it did me a great deal of good."

"Doubtless," said Wilhelmina. "I am glad to have rendered you a service, however trifling. You are a dear, prudent creature, but want spirit to live as you please. I leave this hum-drum place to-morrow. Perhaps some of these days we may meet again; if not, you may live to learn that you slighted the friendship of one of the greatest geniuses that has arisen in this age."

Miss Carr left the town on foot, as suddenly as she had entered it. Who or what she was, remains a riddle to this day: we are almost inclined to believe that she was a *myth*.

CHAPTER X.

OLD JARVIS AND HIS DOG NEPTUNE.

"MA'AM, old Jarvis is in the kitchen. He has brought some fish, and wants to see you," said Flora's maid one morning, as her mistress had just finished washing and dressing the baby.

"Poor old man! I thought he was dead," said Flora. "I have not seen him for such a long time!" and, with baby in her arms, she followed the girl into the kitchen.

David Jarvis was a fisherman, well known upon that coast,—an active, energetic son of the sea, though somewhat time-worn and weather-beaten. The person of the old man had been familiar to Flora since she was a little child; and many a stolen trip had she taken with her brothers in his cockleshell of a boat, which, tough as its master, had stood the wear and tear of the winds and waves for many years.

Since she came to reside at —, she had often watched that little boat dancing over the waves, carried onward by a stiff breeze, now hiding in the green valleys of the sea, now mounting aloft, like a feather floating on the ridge of some toppling surge. The old man seemed to bear a charmed life; for at all seasons, and in almost all weather, the little wiry seaman, with his short pipe in his mouth, and his noble Newfoundland dog, Neptune, in the bow of his boat, might be seen coasting along the shore, following his adventurous calling.

That large, deep-chested, powerful dog, was the admiration of all the children in the town. It was considered a privilege by the young fry to pat Neptune's buff head, and call him the "dear, good, old dog!" and well did the fine animal deserve the title.

The good dog had, at different times, saved nine seamen from a watery grave, as the collar he wore round his neck recording the fact could testify.

Next to his two fine sons, Nep was the delight of the old man's heart. They were never seen apart. In storm or sunshine, Nep accompanied his master in the boat; or, if fishing on the beach, he sat up on his haunches, with a calm, sagacious air, watching the accumulating pile of fish entrusted to his care. Sociable, affable, and gentle, he submitted good-humoredly to the caresses of all the

youngsters who passed that way ; but if any one dared to lay a finger upon the fish, the lion-like nature of the animal was roused into instant action. His mild eye became red and fiery, and his deep voice bade defiance to the incantious intruder on his master's rights, to protect which Nep was ready to lay down his valuable life.

Jarvis and his dog enjoyed a great degree of popularity in an humble way ; and were decidedly among the lions of the place. Gentlemen had offered large sums for the buff Newfoundland dog, which Jarvis had rejected without a second thought ; declaring, that he would as soon sell a child for money, as his faithful Nep. During the past year the old seaman had been severely tried. Misfortune had followed upon misfortune ; until the hardy veteran looked like the spectre of his former self.

His only daughter, a pretty girl of eighteen, was engaged to marry the ostler at the Crown Inn, a fine-looking young man, who had lately come from London. He saw Nancy Jarvis, became enamored of the fisherman's daughter, told his tale of love, and was accepted. The old man was rather averse to the match ; for, in his eyes, no man was worthy of his Nancy, who was not a genuine son of the sea. Robert Green at last succeeded in overcoming his nautical prejudices ; and a day was fixed for the wedding. Nancy's rosy, artless face was all smiles and sunshine, as night after night she sauntered past Flora's windows, leaning upon the arm of her betrothed. Only two days previous to the one appointed for the wedding, the father learned from old captain P——, whose vessel had just returned from London, that Robert Green had a wife and two children in the great city : that the poor young woman, hearing that his vessel was from the Port of ——, had come on board, to make some inquiries respecting her faithless husband ; and that she and her little ones were now on their way to join him.

This distressing intelligence was rashly communicated, without any previous warning, to Nancy Jarvis. The unfortunate girl, seized with a sudden frenzy, rushed to the pier and flung herself into the sea, when the tide was running out ; and her distracted parents never succeeded in recovering the body of the poor maniac. The worthless libertine, on whose account this desperate act was committed, decamped in the night ; and so escaped the vengeance of the old fisherman and his sons.

Davy Jarvis, the old seaman's youngest son, a fine lad of sixteen,

was drowned in the month of July, only a few weeks after the tragical death of his sister. Flora and Lyndsay had been eye-witnesses of this fresh calamity. Every fine afternoon the young Davy was in the habit of going off with another boy, of his own age, in his father's boat. When they had rowed a couple of miles from the shore, they lay to, stripped, and went into the water to swim, diving and sporting among the waves, like two sea-gulls taking their pastime in the summer ocean.

Lyndsay had often watched them, and admired the dexterity with which the younger Jarvis would tumble bimself from the water into the boat, which was left rocking upon the billows, and steady it for his comrade to get in. They would then resume their garments, and row to the beach.

One afternoon they went off as usual. The day was bright and cloudless, with a stiff breeze. Lyndsay was reading aloud to Flora, as she sat at work at the open window which commanded a view of the whole bay.

"There's Davy Jarvis and his comrade, putting off their boat for a swim. They must mind what they are about," said Lyndsay; "the wind is rather too blustering for their water frolic to-day."

He put down his book, and continued to watch the lads with some interest. The boys reached their accustomed track among the waves; and, leaving their boat as usual, seemed to enjoy their sport with more zest than ever. Whilst in the water, the breeze freshened, and it was with great difficulty, and not without hard swimming, that the lads regained their boat, which, driven before the wind, seemed determined to reach the shore without them. They succeeded at last, dressed themselves, and stood in for the land. A long line of heavy surf was beating violently against the beach, and by some mismanagement, the boat got capsized among the breakers. One lad was thrown on shore, but Davy Jarvis got entangled in the surf, which beat continually over him, and rendered all the efforts of himself and comrade fruitless; and the brave boy was drowned before the sailors who hurried to his assistance could rescue him from his perilous situation.

Flora had watched the scene with a degree of excitement so intense, that it almost deprived her of breath. She could not believe that the lad could perish within the reach of help, and so near the shore. The shrieks of the mother, and the mute despair of the old fisherman, who had been summoned to the spot, too

clearly corroborated the report of Lyndsay, that the lad was indeed dead.

After this fresh calamity, old Jarvis appeared an altered man. His sinewy frame became bent and attenuated, his step fell feebler, his hair was bleached to snowy whiteness, and his homely, tanned features assumed an expression of stern and patient endurance. It was evident to Flora that his heart was breaking for the loss of his children.

Neptune seemed to understand it all—to comprehend in the fullest sense his master's loss and his present sufferings. He would walk slowly by the fisherman's side, and whenever he paused in his unsteady, aimless ramble along the beach, Nep would thrust his nose into his hard brown hand, or, rearing on his hind legs, embrace him with his shaggy fore-paws, fawning and whining to attract his notice, and divert him from his melancholy.

Day after day, during the long bright summer of 1831, Flora had watched the old man come to the spot on the beach where the dead body of his son first touched the shore, and stand there for hours, looking out over the broad sea, his eyes shaded from the rays of the sun by his bony, red hand, as if he expected the return of the lost one. During these fits of abstraction, Nep would stretch himself along the beach at the fisherman's feet, his head sunk between his fore-paws, as motionless as the statue of a dog cut out of stone. The moment the old man dropped the raised hand from his face, Nep would leap to his feet, look up wistfully into his master's eyes, and follow him home.

This touching scene had drawn tears from Flora more than once, and she loved the good dog for his devoted attachment to the grief-stricken, desolate old man. When, however, the fishing season returned, Jarvis roused himself from the indulgence of hopeless grief. The little cockle-shell of a boat was once more launched upon the blue sea, and Jarvis might daily be seen spreading its tiny white sheet to the breeze, while the noble buff Newfoundland dog resumed his place in the bow.

Jarvis came regularly every day to the house to offer fish for sale—cod, whitings, herrings, whatever fish chance had given to his net. Flora was glad to observe something like cheerfulness once more illumine the old sailor's face. She always greeted him with kind words, and inquired affectionately after his welfare; and,

without alluding to his heavy family afflictions, made him sensible that she deeply sympathised in his grief.

Things went on smoothly, until one terrible night in October, Jarvis and his only remaining son, a strong, powerful man of thirty, had been off with several experienced seamen in the pilot-boat, to put a pilot on board a large vessel which was toiling her way through the storm to London. Coming back, the wind rose to a gale, and the sailors, in trying to enter the harbor, ran the boat against one of the piers with such violence, that it upset, and the whole party were thrown into the water.

Old Jarvis was an admirable swimmer, and soon gained the beach, as did most of the others, two of their number being rescued from death by the exertions of the brave dog. One alone was missing—Harry Jarvis was the lost man.

From that hour Flora had never seen old Jarvis or his dog. The boat lay high and dry upon the beach, and his net was still suspended between the poles where it had been left to dry, and she concluded that Jarvis had not survived this last terrible blow. It was a joyful surprise, therefore, to hear that he was not only alive, but pursuing his old calling.

She found the fisherman leaning against the open kitchen-door, a basket of fish at his feet, and his clear grey eyes fixed vacantly upon the silver waves, which, flashing and murmuring in the sunlight, came racing to the beach below. The old sailor's wrinkled face, once so ruddy and bronzed, was as white as his hair; his cheeks had fallen in; and deep hollows had gathered about his temples; it was painful to observe the great alteration in his appearance since they last met. The old man started from his abstraction, as Flora's foot sounded on the floor, and he tried to smile. It was a vain attempt; his shrunken features instantly contracted into their former melancholy expression.

"My good old friend," said Flora, "I am glad to see you; I was afraid you had been ill. What fish have you got for me?"

"Eels, Madam; I caught them in the river. They arn't for sale, but just a little present. I he'erd you wor goin' to cross the salt seas to Canady, an' I had a mind to see you agin."

"I will accept them with pleasure, Davy, and I am very much obliged to you for your kindness. I am very fond of eels—we get them so seldom, they are quite a treat. I have not seen you out in the boat lately, Jarvis?"

"Maybe you'll never see me out in her agin," said the fisherman. "I'm thinking my fishing days are 'most over; boat, tackle and measter are all worn out together. I've parted with the boat, how'somever. An' as to the sea, I allers looked upon its broad face with pleasure, but t'has been a cruel enemy to me and mine; my path, I'm thinking, will be over it no more."

Flora saw the tear glistening in the old man's eye, and she tried to divert his attention by asking him what he had done with his dog—"with dear old 'Nep?'"

"I shot him." The seaman's thin lips quivered, and his whole frame trembled. "Ay, I shot my good dog—my brave, faithful dog—the best, the truest friend man ever had; an' I've niver know'd a happy hour since."

The bright drops were now raining down the old man's cheeks.

Flora reached him a chair, and begged him to sit down. The fisherman mechanically obeyed, with his chin sunk between his hands, and his elbows resting on his knees. For some minutes both were silent, until the old man said, in a thick, husky voice—

"Yes, I shot 'Nep'—shot him with my own hand. It wor cruel and wicked of me to do the like, but I wor mad—stark, staring mad, and who's to blame? You see, my lady, he wor with us that terrible Saturday night, when we went off to put the pilot on board the brig *Sally*, from Shields. Comin' back it wor pitch dark, an' the sea runnin' mountains high, Sam Masters ran the boat plump upon the pier, an' we wor upset on the bar. Nep saved Sam Masters and Ben Hardy, but he let my Harry drown. I never rebelled agin' the providence of God till then; but I trust He'll forgive what the old man said in his mortal distress. Instead of thanking Him, when I sor that so many wor safe, and encouragin' Nep for having saved two on 'em, I cursed the dog for an ungrateful brute for saving strangers, an' letting my Harry be lost. I dashed him off whenever he'd come whining around, to lick my hands an' make friends, an' when I got home I took down the old gun—poor Harry's gun—and called Nep out upon the cliff an' shot him dead.

"I repented the moment I sor him drop. It wor too late then. I thought that both Davy and Harry would have blamed me for taking the poor brute's life—for they wor mortal fond of 'im. The next morning I wor up by daybreak, and down to the piers in the little boat to see if I might chance to light upon the dead body.

"The storm was over, an' in rowing 'twixt the piers, I sor summut that looked like the thing I sought, hanging, as it wor, to the planking of the pier. I steered for the place, an', God o' heaven! it wor the body of my son! He wor just two feet below the water, hanging with his head downwards. The force of the waves had driven him upon an iron stanchion, which extended some distance from the pier; the woodwork to which it belonged had been wrenched away in the storm. It had passed right through Harry's body, and held him fast. And the dog—the poor dog—had tried to get him off; he had dragged at his jacket and shirt-collar, till they wor all shred to bits, and had only given over when he found it of no use, an' then did what he could to save the rest! An' I killed him—I, that should have fed and cherished him to his dying day—I can never forgive myself for that."

"Do not distress yourself, Jarvis, in this way. No one will blame you for what you did in such a distracted state of mind," said Flora, though she was grieved to the heart for the death of the noble dog.

"You are right—you are just right; I was mad; and you must not think hard of a poor, broken-hearted old man. My sorrow is 'most greater than I can bear. It will not be for long; I feel I'm goin' the way of all the earth, an' it matters little when we cast anchor in that port, whether our voyage wor short or long, rough or smooth, when the righteous Judge overhauls our vessel, an' lays bare the secrets of all hearts. I trust He'll have mercy on old Davy Jarvis, and forgive him for the death of his brave dog."

The fisherman took the eels from his basket, and grasping Flora's hand in his hard horny palm, said, "May the Lord grant you prosperity! an' bless you an' your husband an' the little 'un, an' bring you safe to the far land to which you are journeying! May it prove to you a haven of rest! God bless you! good bye!"

Flora looked after the drooping figure of the fisherman as he slowly descended the cliff, and she thought how intense must have been his agony in that dark hour of utter bereavement, which had tempted him to sacrifice his dog on the mere supposition that he had neglected to save the life of his son.

"God comfort you! poor Jarvis," she said, "and guide you in peace through the shadows of the dark valley that stretches its long night before you. The grief which has brought your grey locks in sorrow to the grave was enough to have broken a sterner heart."

CHAPTER XI.

FLORA, IN SEARCH OF A SERVANT, HEARS A REAL GHOST STORY.

LYND SAY had charged Flora, during his absence, to inquire for a female servant, to accompany them to Canada, and take care of the baby during the voyage. Flora was very reluctant to obey this command, though she knew it was entirely on her account that the request was made. Her health was still very bad, and her kind husband was anxious to spare her any additional fatigue and trouble. She much doubted, however, whether another added to their party would not rather increase than diminish her anxiety, and she begged hard to be allowed to do without. To this proposition Lyndsay would not listen for a moment.

"The thing is impossible, Flora," said he, very impetuously, "you cannot do without; you are not able to nurse the child. I must insist upon your hiring a woman immediately."

Flora sighed. "There will be plenty of women in the steerage of any emigrant vessel, who for the sake of a few dollars would gladly render me all the assistance I require."

"You must not trust to such contingencies."

"But, husband dear, consider the great additional expense," she said, coaxingly.

"Nonsense!—that is my affair."

"I should like to have my own way in this matter," said Flora, leaning her hand upon his shoulder, and trying to win him into compliance by sundry little caresses. "I know, John, that I am in the right."

"And those who love you, Flora, and wish to spare you fatigue and discomfort, are in the wrong. Is it not so?"

This last speech silenced his wife, but did not convince her that she was wrong. Flora, as my readers must long ago have discovered, was no heroine of romance, but a veritable human creature, subject to all the faults and weaknesses incidental to her sex. She wished to have her own way, and was ready to cry that she could not get it. Yet, had her advice been acted upon, she would have been spared a great deal of sorrow and mortification, which greatly embittered the first months of her sojourn in a foreign land.

Persons emigrating to Canada cannot be guilty of a greater

blunder than that of taking out servants with them, which is sure to end in loss and disappointment ; for they no sooner set foot upon the North American shores, than they suddenly become possessed with an *ultra republican* spirit. The chrysalis has burst its dingy shell ; they are no longer caterpillars, but gay butterflies, prepared to bask in the sun-blaze of popular rights. Ask such a domestic to blacken your shoes, clean a knife, or fetch a pail of water from the well at the door, and ten to one she will turn upon you as fierce as a lioness, and bid you do it yourself. If you are so imprudent as to insist on being obeyed, she will tell you to hire another in her place ; she is sure of twenty situations as good as yours, to-morrow.

She is right in her assertion, Her insolent rejection of your commands would not stand at all in her way of procuring a new place. And although cleaning a lady's shoes, and bringing in a pail of water, or an armful of wood, is by no means such disgusting employment as scouring greasy pots and scrubbing the floors, she has been told that the former is degrading work, not fit for a woman, and she is now in a free country, and will not submit to degradation.

The mistress, who in England was termed the *dear lady*, now degenerates into the *woman*, while persons in their own class, and even beggars seeking for alms, are addressed as Ma'am and Sir. How particular they are in enforcing these titles from one to another ; how persevering in depriving their employers of any term of respect ! One would imagine that they not only considered themselves on an equality, but that ignorance and vulgarity made them vastly superior. It is highly amusing to watch from a distance these self-made ladies and gentlemen sporting their borrowed plumes.

Some years after she had been settled in Canada, Flora picked up a note which had been thrown out as waste paper, and which was addressed to the father of a very dirty, dishonest girl, whom she had dismissed from her service for sundry petty frauds, a few weeks before. It was addressed to Edward Brady, Esq., and ran as follows :—

" HONORED SIR—The company of *self* and *lady*, is respectfully solicited at a *contribution* ball, to be given next Thursday evening at the Three King's Inn. Dancing to commence at eight o'clock precisely.

Stewards, } PATRICK MALONE, Esq.
 } JOHN CARROLL, Esq."

All the parties herein named were persons of the very lowest class, and the titles thus pompously bestowed upon themselves, rendered the whole affair exquisitely ridiculous. At a *contribution* ball, each person brings a share of the entertainment. Flora's maid had stolen a large quantity of sugar for her part of the feast, and was discovered in the act.

In compliance with Lyndsay's request, Flora now set diligently to work to inquire for a girl willing to emigrate with them to Canada, in the capacity of nurse to her baby. She had scarcely made her wishes public, before the cottage was beset with matrons, widows and maids, both old and young, all anxious to take a trip across the water, and try their fortunes in Canada.

The first person who presented herself as a candidate for emigration, was a coarse, fat, she-clown, with huge red fists and cheeks, "as broad and as red as a pulpit-cushion." On being shown into Flora's little parlor, she stood staring at her with her arms stuck in her sides, and her wide mouth distended from ear to ear, with a grin so truly uncouth and comic, that Mrs. Lyndsay could scarcely restrain her laughter; with a downward jerk of her broad, shapeless person, meant for a courtesy, she burst out in a rude, vulgar voice—

"He'eard, Marm, yah wanted a gurl to go with yah to Cannadah?"

"I do. Who sent you up to me?"

"Whoa sent oie up? Oie sent up moiself."

"What is your name?"

"Moi neame? Is't moi neame yah wants to knowah? Wall, moi neame is Sare Ann Pack; feather warks at Measter Turner's."

"Have you ever worked out, or been used to take care of children?"

"Why, yees, oie 'spect oie ha'. Moothier has ten on 'em. Oie be the oldest on 'em. Oi've had nursing enoof, an' wants to get quit on it."

"I am afraid, Sarah, you will not suit me."

"How dew yah noa, Marm, till yah tries?"

"You are very slatternly, and I wanted a clean, tidy, active girl to nurse my baby."

"Sure moi cloes is clane enoof, and good enoof, for to live amongst the sadvidges?"

"You'll be put to no such trial," said Flora, laughing, in spite

of herself, "without you reckon me and my husband sadvages. Can you wash and iron?"

"Noa. But 'spose oie cud larn."

"What work can you do?"

"Spect anything yah sets oie to. Oie can make doomplings, milk cows, and keep the pot a bilin'."

"And what wages do you expect for such services?"

"Is it to goor to Cannadah? Oh, oie 'specta three punds o' month for the loike o' that."

"You must stop at home then, my good girl, and boil the dumplings," said Flora. "Indeed, I cannot imagine what induced you to come up here to offer me your services. You literally can do nothing, for which you expect exorbitant wages. Why do you wish to leave your friends, to go out with strangers to Canada?"

"That's moi consarn," said the girl, with one of her gigantic expansions of mouth. "Oie he'eard 'twas a mortal good place for maids getting married. Husbands are scarce here, so oise thought, oise might as well try moi chance as the rest o'un. Won't yah take oie?" Flora shook her head.

The girl twirled the strings of her checked apron, "Mayhap, yah won't get another so willin' to go as I'se be."

"Perhaps not. But I want a person of some experience—one who has been used to service, and could bring a good character from her last employer."

"Karakta! karakta!" said the girl, contemptuously. "What need of karakta in such a place as Cannadah? Folk a' go there need na karakta, or they might jeest as well bide to whome."

This last declaration settled the matter, and Flora, not without some difficulty, got rid of the promising candidate for matrimony and emigration. Her place was instantly supplied by a tall, hard-featured, middle-aged woman, who had been impatiently waiting for Miss Pack's dismissal, in the kitchen, and who now rushed upon the scene, followed by three rude children, from six to ten years of age, a girl, and two impudent-looking boys, who ranged themselves in front of Mrs. Lyndsay, with open mouths, and eyes distended with eager curiosity, in order to attract her observation, and indulge themselves in a downright stare.

"Well, my good woman, and what is your business with me?" said Flora, not at all prepossessed by any of the group.

"Are you the mistress?" asked the woman, dropping a courtesy.

Flora answered in the affirmative.

"My business is to go to Canady; but I have not the means. I am a poor widow; my husband died of the fever three years ago, and left me with these children to drag along the best way I could. We have had hard times, I can tell you, Ma'am, and I should be main glad to better my condition, which I think I might do, if I could get out to Canady. I heard that you wanted a nurse for your baby during the voyage, and I should be glad to engage with you, if we can agree as to the terms."

"What are your terms?"

"For you, Ma'am, to pay the passage of me and the three children over, and I to attend upon you and the child."

"But, my good woman, I have only one little child for you to take charge of, and you cannot expect me, for the trifling services that you could render, to pay your passage over, and that of your family."

"Sure you might be glad of the chance," said the sturdy dame. "It is not everbody that would take service with you to go there. I would not trouble you longer than the voyage. I have friends of my own at Montreal, who have written for me to come out to them; and so I would long ago, if I had had the means."

"If they want you, they may pay your passage," said Flora, disgusted with the selfishness of her new acquaintance. "It would be less trouble to me to nurse my own child, than incur the responsibility of three that did not belong to me."

The woman collected her young barbarians from the different quarters of the room, where they were reconnoitring the attractions of the place, and withdrew with a scowl; and Flora's nurse, Mrs. Clarke, shortly after entered the room, with little Josephine in her arms.

"Well, nurse," said Flora, giving way to a hearty laugh, "did you see those queer people who want me to take them out as a venture to Canada?"

"A losing speculation that would be, if we may judge by looks and manners," said the old lady; "but, indeed, Mrs. Lyndsay, it will be no easy matter to find just what you want. It is not every one to whom I would trust the dear baby."

Then sitting down in the nursing chair, and hushing Josey on

her knee, she continued, "I have been thinking of you and the child a great deal since I heard you were bent on going to Canada ; and if you think that I could be of any service to you, I would go with you, myself. I ask no wages—nothing of you, beyond a home for my old age."

Mrs. Clarke was a kind, amiable, good woman, but very feeble, nervous, and sickly, and very little qualified for the arduous and fatiguing life she had chosen.

"My dear nurse," said Flora, clasping her hand in her own, "I should only be too happy to have you. But you are old and in delicate health ; the climate would kill you ; I much doubt whether you could stand the voyage. I cannot be so selfish as to take you from your home and friends at your time of life. But take off your hat and shawl, and we will talk the matter over."

The old woman laid the now sleeping babe in the cradle, and resumed her seat with a sigh.

"It is this want of a home which makes me anxious to go with you. It is hard to be dependent upon the caprice of brothers, in one's old age. Thirty years ago and life wore for me a very different aspect."

"Nurse," said Flora, who was very fond of the good old body, who had attended her with the greatest care, and tenderness, through a long and dangerous illness ; "how comes it that such a pretty woman as you must have been, did not marry in your youth ? I can scarcely imagine that nature ever meant you for an old maid."

"Nature never made any woman to be an old maid," said Nurse ; "God does nothing in vain. Women were sent into the world to be wives and mothers ; and there are very few who don't entertain the hope of being so at some period of their lives. I should not be the forlorn, desolate creature I am to-day, if I had had a snug home, and a good husband to make the fireside cheery, and children together about my knees, and make me feel young again, while listening to their simple prattle.

"I thought to have been a happy wife once," continued Nurse, sadly ; "a heavy calamity that broke another heart besides mine, laid all my hopes in the dust, and banished from my mind the idea of marriage for ever. Did I never tell you the story, Ma'am ? A few words will often contain the history of events that embittered a whole life. Whilst I am hemming this little pinafore for Miss Josey, I will tell you the tale of my early grief.

" My father was a native of this town, and captain of a small vessel employed in the coal-trade, which plied constantly between this port and Newcastle and Shields. He owned most of the shares in her, was reckoned an excellent sailor, and was so fortunate as to have escaped the usual dangers attendant upon the coast-trade, never having been wrecked in his life,—which circumstance had won for him the nickname of 'Lucky Billy,' by which he was generally known in all the seaport towns along the coast.

" I was the eldest of a large family, and the only girl. My mother died when I was fourteen years of age, and all the cares of the household early devolved upon me; my father was very fond of me, and so proud of my good looks, that his ship was christened the *Pretty Betsy*, in honor of me.

" Father not only earned a comfortable living, but saved enough to build those two neat stone cottages on the East-cliff. We lived in the one which my brother now occupies; the other, which is divided from it by a narrow alley, into which the back doors of both open, was rented for many years by the widow of a revenue officer and her two sons.

" Mrs. Arthur's husband had been killed in a fray with the smugglers, and she enjoyed a small government pension, which enabled her to bring up her boys decently, and maintain a respectable appearance. My father tried his best to induce Mrs. Arthur to be his second wife, but she steadily refused his offer, though the family continued to live on terms of the strictest friendship.

" Mrs. Arthur's sons, John and David, were the handsomest and cleverest lads of their class, between this and the port of Y—. They both followed the sea, and after serving their apprenticeships with my father, John got the command of the *Nancy*, a new vessel that was employed in the merchant trade, and made short voyages between this and London. David, who was two years younger, sailed with his brother as mate of the *Nancy*.

" David and I had been sweethearts from our school-days—from a child in frocks and trousers, he had always called me "his dear little wife." Time only strengthened our attachment to each other, and my father and his mother were well-pleased with the match. It was settled by all parties, that we were to be married directly David could get captain of a ship.

" Mrs. Arthur was very proud of her sons; but David, who was by far the handsomest of the two, was her especial favorite. I never

saw the young sailor leave the house without kissing his mother, or return from a voyage without bringing her present. I used to tell him, 'there was only one person he loved better than me, and that was his mother ;' and he would laugh, and say, ' Not better Betsy—but 'tis a different love altogether.'

"I must confess I was rather jealous of his mother. I did not wish him to love her less, but to love me more. Whenever he left us for sea, he used to tell me, the very last thing, ' Show your love to me, dear Betsy, by being kind to my dear old mother. When you are my wife, I will repay it with interest.'

"During his absence, I always went every day to see Mrs. Arthur, and to render her any service in my power. She was very fond of me—always calling me ' her little daughter—her own dear Betsy.' Her conversation was always about her sons, and David in particular, which rendered these visits very agreeable to me, who loved David better than anything else under heaven. He was never out of my thoughts, I worshipped him so completely.

"It was the latter end of February that the Arthurs made their last voyage together. David was to sail as captain, in a fine merchant-ship, the first of May ; and everything had been arranged for our marriage, which was to take place the tenth of April ; and I was to make a bridal tour to London with my husband in the new ship. I was wild with anticipation and delight, and would let my work drop from my hands twenty times a day, with building castles for the future. No other girl's husband would be able to rival my husband ; no home could be as happy as my home : no bride so well beloved as me.

"It was the twentieth of March, 18—; I recollect it as well as if it were only yesterday. The day was bright, clear, and cold, with high winds and a very stormy sea. The Namey had been expected to make her port all that week, and Mrs. Arthur was very uneasy at her delay. She was never happy or contented when her sons were at sea, but in a constant fidget of anxiety and fear. She did not like both sailing in the same vessel. ' It is too much,' she would say—"the safety of two lives out of one family—to be trusted to one keel. This morning she was more fretful and nervous than usual."

"What can these foolish boys be thinking of, Betsy, to delay their voyage in this way ? They will in all probability be caught in the equinoctial gales. David promised me faithfully to be back

before the eighteenth. Dear me! how the wind blows! The very sound of it is enough to chill one's heart. What a stormy sea! I hope they will not sail till the day after to-morrow.'

"Now, I felt a certain conviction in my own mind that they had sailed, and were at that moment on the sea; but, I must confess, I apprehended no danger. It might be that her fears hindered me from indulging fears of my own.

"'Don't alarm yourself needlessly, dear Mother,' said I, kissing her cold, pale cheek. 'The *Nancy* is a new ship—the lads brave, experienced sailors. There is not the least cause for uneasiness. They have weathered far worse gales before now. They have, father says, the wind and tide in their favor. It is moonlight now o' nights; and I hope we shall see them merry and well before morning.'

"'God grant you may be right, Betsy! A mother's heart is a hot-bed of anxiety. Mine feels as heavy as lead. My dreams, too, were none of the brightest. I thought I was tossing in an open boat, in just such a stormy sea all night; and was constantly calling on David to save me from drowning; and I awoke shrieking, and struggling with the great billows that were dragging me down.'

"'Who cares for dreams?' I said. 'Her's, I would have it, was one of good omen; for, though she fought with the storm all night, she was not drowned. So it would be with the lads: they might encounter a gale, and get a severe buffeting, but would arrive safe at last.'

"'I wish it may be so,' she said, with a sigh. 'But I felt just the same sinking at the heart the night my husband was killed, when there appeared no cause for uneasiness.'

"I remained all day with the old lady, trying to raise her spirits. She paid very little attention to all my lively chat; but would stand for hours at her back-window, that commanded a view of the bay, gazing at the sea. The huge breakers came rolling and toiling to the shore, filling the air with their hoarse din. A vessel hove in sight, running under close-reefed topsails, and made signals for a pilot.

"'Ah!' I exclaimed, joyfully; 'that is Captain Penny's old ship, *Molly*. If she has rode out the gale, you may dismiss your fears about the *Nancy*. They have launched the pilot-boat. See how she dances like a feather on the waves! Why, Mother, dear,'

I cried, turning to Mrs. Arthur, who was watching the boat, with the large tears trickling down her cheeks, 'is it not weak, almost wicked of you, to doubt God's providence in this way ?'

"Ah! how I wish it were their vessel!" she sobbed.

"Captain Penny's wife and children would not thank you for that wish," said I. "How glad I am that the good old man is safe!"

"The day wore away—a long day for us both. The gale did not increase, and Mrs. Arthur at last began to listen to reason. The moon rose high and bright; and after seeing the old lady to her bed, I went home to give my father and the boys their supper.

"I found father very cross for having waited so long. 'What the devil, Betsy!' cried he, 'kept you so late? The lads and I have been starving for the last hour. When girls get sweethearts, they can think of nothing else.'

"Mrs. Arthur felt anxious about her sons, and I stayed with her."

"What's the old fool afraid of? This cupful of wind, Penny's old *Molly* rode it out bravely. He told me he left the Arthurs in the river. He thought they would be in by daybreak. Come, be quick, girl! As I am to lose you so soon, I would make the most of you while you belong to me."

His cheerful, hearty manner helped to raise my spirits, which had been depressed by Mrs. Arthur's fretful anticipations of evil. I bustled hither and thither, laughed and sung, and cooked father's mess of fresh fish so much to his satisfaction, that he declared I should make a jewel of a wife, and that he had not made up his mind whether he would part with such a good cook. Without he married again, he was afraid he would not get such another.

"You must be quick, then," said I, "or you will not have me for your bridesmaid. I give you just three weeks for the courtship, for I shan't remain single one day longer to cook the wedding dinner for you."

"You are saucy," said he, filling his pipe. "Davy will have to take the helm himself, if he would keep you on the right tack. Clear the decks now, and be off to your bed. If the gale lulls, I shall sail early in the morning."

I removed the supper-things, and before I lighted my candle, lingered for a few minutes at the back window, to take a last view of the sea. It was a stormy, but very beautiful night. The heavens

were without a cloud. The full moon cast broken gleams of silver upon the restless, tossing waters, which scattered them into a thousand fragments of dazzling brightness, as the heavy surf rolled in thunder against the beach.

"Has the gale freshened, father?" said I, anxiously.

"Not a bit of it. Say your prayers, Betsy, and trust in Providence. Your lover is as safe in his good ship to-night, as in his bed at home."

"He pulled me on to his knee, and kissed me, and I went up to bed with a lighter heart.

"A few minutes later I was fast asleep. I don't know how long this sleep lasted, but I awoke with hearing David Arthur calling beneath my window. His mother's window and mine both fronted the cliff, and were in a line with each other. 'Thank God! David is safe!' I cried, as I sprang joyfully from my bed, and threw open the casement.

"There he was, sure enough, standing in the moonlight, directly beneath the window—his norwester flung far back on his head, his yellow curls hanging in wet masses on his shoulders, and his clothes dripping with the salt spray. The moon shone forth on his upturned face. He looked very pale and cold, and his eyes were fixed intently upon his mother's chamber-window. Before I could speak, he cried out, in his rich, manly tones—

"Mother, dearest mother, I am come home to you. Open the door, and let me in!"

"Stay, Davy, darling—stay one moment, and I will let you in. Your mother's asleep; but I can open the back-door with my key. Oh! I'm so happy, so thankful, that you are safe."

"I threw my clothes on as fast as I could, but my hands trembled so from excitement, that I could scarcely fasten a string. A cold chill was creeping through my whole frame, and, in spite of the joy I felt, I involuntarily burst into tears. Dashing away the unwelcome drops with the back of my hand, I bounded down the stairs, unlocked the back-door that led into the alley, and in another moment stood alone on the cliff.

"David, where are you?" I cried. But no David was there. I glanced all round the wide, open space: not an object was moving over its surface. A deep stillness reigned all around, only interrupted by the solemn thunder of the waters, whose hollow

surging against the shore rendered the solitude of the midnight hour more profound.

"Again I felt those cold chills steal through me—again the unbidden tears streamed down my cheeks.

"What can have become of him?" said I, quite bewildered with surprise and fear; "he must have got in at the back window!—I will go to his mother—I shall find him with her!"

"The key I held in my hand fitted both locks: I went into Mrs. Arthur's, lighted the candle that I had left on her kitchen dresser, and went up to her chamber. She started up in the bed as I opened the door.

"Good God! Betsy," she cried, "is that you? I thought I heard David call me."

"And so he did," I said; "he came under the window just now, and called to you to let him in. I told him to wait till I could dress myself, and I would come down and open the door. Is he not here?"

"No," said his mother, her face turning as white as her cap; "you must have been dreaming."

"Dreaming!" said I, rather indignantly; "you need not try to persuade me out of my senses—I saw him with my own eyes!—heard him with my own ears! and spoke to him! What else will convince you? He has gone back to the ship for John—I will breeze up the fire, put on the kettle, and get something cooked for their supper. After buffeting about in this storm, they will be cold and hungry."

Mrs. Arthur soon joined me. She could not believe that I had spoken to David, though she fancied that she had heard him herself, and was in a fever of anxiety, pacing to and fro the kitchen floor, and opening the door every minute to look out. I felt almost provoked by her want of faith.

"If the ship were in," she muttered, "he would have been in long ago, to tell me that all was safe. He knows how uneasy I always am when he and his brother are away. Betsy must have been deceived."

"Mother, dear—indeed, what I tell you is true!"

"And I repeated to her for the twentieth time, perhaps, what David had said, and described his appearance.

"Hour after hour passed away, but no well-known footstep, or dearly-loved voiced, disturbed our lonely vigil. The kettle sim-

mered drowsily on the hob ; Mrs. Arthur, tired out with impatient fretting at her son's delay, had thrown her apron over her head, and was sobbing bitterly. I began to feel alarmed ; a strange fear seemed growing upon my heart, which almost led me to doubt the evidence of my senses—to fancy, in fact, that what I had seen might have been a dream. But, was I not there, wide awake ? Had not his mother heard him speak as well as me? though her half-waking state had rendered the matter less distinct than it had been to me ? I was not going to be reasoned out of my sanity in that way, because he did not choose to wait until I came down to open the door—which I thought rather unkind, when he must be well aware that my anxiety for his safety must quite equal that of his mother.

"The red beams of the rising sun were tinging the white foam of the billows with a flush of crimson. The gale had lulled ; and I knew that my father's vessel sailed with the tide. I started from my seat ; Mrs. Arthur languidly raised her head—

"'My dear Betsy, will you just run across the cliff to the look-out house, and ask the sailors there if the *Nancy* came in last night ? I cannot bear the suspense much longer.'

"'I might have thought of that before,' I said ; and, without waiting for hat or shawl, I sped my way to the nearest station.

"I found one old sailor kneeling upon the bench, looking intently through his telescope at some object at sea. My eyes followed the direction of the glass, and I saw distinctly, about two miles beyond the east cliff, a vessel lying dismasted upon the reef, with the sea breaking continually over her.

"'What vessel is that, Ned Jones?' said I.

"'It's the *Nancy*,' he replied, without taking his eye from the glass. 'I know her by the white stripe along her black hull. She's a perfect wreck, and both the brave lads are drowned.'

"'When did this happen?' I cried, shaking his arm frantically.

"'She struck upon the reef at half-past one this morning. Our lads got the boat off, but too late to save the crew.'

"'Good God!' I cried, reclining back, as if struck with a bolt of ice ; and the same deadly-cold shiver ran through me. 'It was his ghost, then, I saw !'*

* I have told the story exactly as it was told to me by Flora's nurse. The reader must judge how far the young girl's imagination may have deceived her. Whether as a dream, or a reality, I have no doubt of the truth of her tale.

"I don't know how I got back to Mrs. Arthur. I never knew; or, whether it was from me she learned the terrible tidings of the death of her sons. I fell into a brain fever, and when I recovered my senses, Mrs. Arthur had been in her grave for some weeks.

"In thinking over the events of that fearful night, the recollection which pained me most was, that David's last thought had been for his mother—that during his death-struggle, she was dearer to him than me. It haunted me for years. At times it haunts me still. Whenever the wind blows a gale, and the moon shines clear and cold, I fancy I can see him standing below my window, in his dripping garments, and that sad, pale face turned towards his mother's casement; and I hear him call out, in the rich, mellow voice I loved so well, 'Mother, dearest mother, I have come home to you. Open the door and let me in!'

"It was a dream, nurse," said Flora.

"But supposing, Mrs. Lyndsay, that it was a dream. Is it less strange that such a dream should occur at the very moment, perhaps, that he was drowned; and that his mother should fancy she heard him speak as well as I?"

"True," said Flora, "the mystery remains the same; and, for my own part, I never could get rid of a startling reality, because some people choose to call it a mere coincidence. My faith embraces the spirit of the fact, and disclaims the coincidence; though, after all, the coincidence is the best proof of the fact.

"This event," continued Nurse, "cast a shadow over my life, which no after sunshine ever dispelled. I never loved again, and gave up all thoughts of getting married from that hour. Perhaps I was wrong, for I refused several worthy men, who would have given me a comfortable home; and I should not now, at my time of life, have to go out nursing, or be dependent upon a cross brother for the shelter of a roof. If you will take me to Canada with you, I only ask in return a home in my old age."

Flora was delighted with the project, but on writing about it to her husband, she found him unwilling to take out a feeble old woman, who was very likely to die on the voyage; and Flora, with reluctance, declined the good woman's offer.

It happened very unfortunately for Flora, that her mother had in her employment a girl, whose pretty feminine face and easy pliable manners, had rendered her a great favorite in the family. Whenever Flora visited the Hall, Hannah had taken charge of the

baby, on whom she lavished the most endearing epithets and caresses.

This girl had formed an imprudent intimacy with a farm servant in the neighborhood, which had ended in her seduction. Her situation rendered marriage a matter of necessity. In this arrangement of the matter, it required both parties should agree; and the man, who doubtless knew more of the girl's real character than her benevolent mistress, flatly refused to make her his wife. Hannah, in an agony of rage and contrition, had confided her situation to her mistress, and implored her not to turn her from her doors, or she would end her misery in self-destruction.

"She had no home," she said, "in the wide world—and she dared not return to her aunt, who was the only friend she had; and who, under existing circumstances, she well knew, would never afford her the shelter of her roof."

Simple as this girl appeared, she knew well how to act her part; and so won upon the compassion of Mrs. W——, that she was determined, if possible, to save her from ruin. Finding that Mrs. Lyndsay had failed in obtaining a servant, she applied to her on Hannah's behalf, and requested, as a favor, that she would take the forlorn creature with her to Canada.

Flora at first rejected the proposal in disgust: in spite of Mrs. W——'s high recommendation, there was something about the woman she did not like; and much as she was inclined to pity her, she could not reconcile herself to the idea of making her the companion of her voyage. She could not convince herself that Hannah was worthy of the sympathy manifested on her behalf. A certain fawning servility of manner, led her to imagine that she was deceitful; and she was reluctant to entail upon herself the trouble and responsibility which must arise from her situation, and the scandal it might involve. But her objections were borne down by Mrs. W——'s earnest entreaties to save, if possible, a fellow-creature from ruin.

The false notions formed by most persons in England of the state of society in Canada, made Mrs. W—— reject, as mere bugbears, all Flora's fears as to the future consequences which might arise from her taking such a hazardous step. What had she to fear from ill-natured gossip in a barbarous country, so thinly peopled that settlers seldom resided within a day's journey of each other. If the girl was wise enough to keep her own secret, who

would take the trouble to find it out? Children were a blessing in such a wilderness; and Hannah's child, brought up in the family, would be very little additional expense and trouble, and might prove a most attached and grateful servant, forming a lasting tie of mutual benefit between the mother and her benefactress. The mother was an excellent worker, and, until this misfortune happened, a good and faithful girl. She was *weak*, to be sure; but then (what a fatal mistake) the more easily managed. Mrs. W—— was certain that Flora would find her a perfect treasure.

All this sounded very plausible in theory, and savored of romance. Flora found it in the end a dismal reality. She consented to receive the girl as her servant, who was overjoyed at the change in her prospects, declaring that she never could do enough for Mrs. Lyndsay, for snatching her from a life of disgrace and infamy. And so little Josey was provided with a nurse, and Flora with a servant.

CHAPTER XII.

THE LAST HOURS AT HOME.

To bid farewell to her mother and sisters, and the dear home of her childhood, Flora regarded as her greatest trial. As each succeeding day brought nearer the hour of separation, the prospect became more intensely painful, and fraught with a thousand melancholy anticipations, which haunted her even in sleep; and she often awoke sick and faint at heart with the tears she had shed in a dream.

"Oh that this dreadful parting were over!" she said to her friend Mary Parnell. "I can contemplate, with fortitude, the trials of the future; but there is something so dreary, so utterly hopeless, in this breaking up of kindred ties and home associations, that it paralyses execution."

Mrs. W——, Flora's mother, was in the decline of life, and it was more than probable that the separation would be for ever. This Flora felt very grievously;—she loved her mother tenderly, and she could not bear to leave her. Mrs. W—— was greatly attached to her little grandchild; and, to mention the departure of the child, brought on a paroxysm of grief.

"Let Josey stay with me, Flora," said she, as she covered its

dimpled hands with kisses. "Let me not lose you both in one day."

"What! part with my child—my only child! Dearest mother, it is impossible to grant your request. Whatever our future fortunes may be, she must share them with us. I could not bear up against the trials which await me with a divided heart."

"Consider the advantage it would be to the child."

"In the loss of both her parents?"

"In her exemption from hardship, and the education she would receive."

"I grant all that; yet Nature points out that the interests of a child cannot safely be divided from those of its parents."

"You argue selfishly, Flora. You well know the child would be much better off with me."

"I speak from my heart—the heart of a mother, which cannot, without it belongs to a monster, plead against the welfare of its child. I know how dearly you love her—how painful it is for you to give her up; and that she would possess with you those comforts which, for her sake, we are about to resign. But, if we leave her behind, we part with her for ever. She is too young to remember us; and, without knowing us, how could she love us?"

"She would be taught to love you."

"Her love would be of a very indefinite character. She would be told that she had a father and mother in a distant land, and be taught to mention us daily in her prayers. But where would be the faith, the endearing confidence, the holy love, with which a child, brought up under the parental roof, regards the author of its being. The love which falls like dew from heaven upon the weary heart, which forms a balm for every sorrow, a solace for every care—without its refreshing influence, what would the wealth of the world be to us?"

Flora's heart swelled, and her eyes filled with tears. The eloquence of an angel at that moment would have failed in persuading her to part with her child.

Never did these painful feelings press more heavily on Flora's mind, than when all was done in the way of preparation—when her work was all finished, her trunks all packed, her little bills in the town all paid, her faithful domestics discharged, and nothing remained of active employment to hinder her from perpetually brooding over the sad prospect before her. She went to spend a

last day at the old Hall, to bid farewell to the old familiar haunts endeared to her from childhood.

"Flora, you must keep up your spirits," said her mother, kissing her tenderly; nor let this parting weigh too heavily upon your heart. We shall all meet again."

"In heaven, I hope, Mother?"

"Yes, and on earth."

"Oh, no; it is useless to hope for that. No, never again on earth."

"Always hope for the best, Flora; it is my plan. I have found it true-wisdom. Put on your bonnet, and take a ramble through the garden and meadows; it will refresh you after so many harrassing thoughts. Your favorite trees are in full leaf, the hawthorn hedges in blossom, and the nightingales sing every evening in the wood-lane. You cannot feel miserable among such sights and sounds of beauty in this lovely month of May, or you are not the same Flora I ever knew you."

"Ah, just the same faulty, impulsive, enthusiastic creature I ever was, dear mother. No change of circumstances will, I fear, change my nature; and the sight of these dear old haunts will only deepen the regret I feel at bidding them adieu."

Flora put on her bonnet, and went forth to take a last look of home.

The Hall was an old-fashioned house, large, rambling, picturesque and cold. It had been built in the first year of good Queen Bess. The back part of the mansion appeared to have belonged to a period still more remote. The building was surrounded by fine gardens and lawn-like meadows, and stood sheltered within a grove of noble old trees. It was beneath the shade of these trees and reposing upon the velvet-like sward at their feet, that Flora had first indulged in those delicious reveries—those lovely, ideal visions of beauty and perfection—which cover with a tissue of morning beams all the rugged highways of life. Silent bosom friends were those dear old trees! Every noble sentiment of her soul, every fault that threw its baneful shadow on the sunlight of her mind—had been fostered, or grown upon her, in those pastoral solitudes. Those trees had witnessed a thousand bursts of passionate eloquence—a thousand gushes of bitter, heart-humbling tears. To them had been revealed all the joys and sorrows, the hopes and fears, which she could not confide to the sneering and unsympathising of her own

sex. The solemn druidical groves were not more holy to their imaginative and mysterious worshippers, than were those old oaks to the young Flora.

Now the balmy breath of spring, as it gently heaved the tender green masses of brilliant foliage, seemed to utter a voice of thrilling lamentation—a sad, soul-touching farewell.

"Home of my childhood! must I see you no more?" sobbed Flora. "Are you to become to-morrow a vision of the past? O that the glory of spring was not upon the earth! that I had to leave you amid winter's chilling gloom, and not in this lovely, blushing month of May! The emerald green of these meadows—the gay flush of these bright blossoms—the joyous song of these glad birds—breaks my heart!"

And the poor emigrant sank down amid the green grass, and, burying her face among the fragrant daisies, imprinted a passionate kiss upon the sod, which was never, in time or eternity, to form a resting-place for her again.

But a beam is in the dark cloud even for thee, poor Flora; thou heart-sick lover of nature. Time will reconcile thee to the change which now appears so dreadful. The human flowers destined to spring around thy hut in that far-off wilderness, will gladden thy bosom in the strange land to which thy course now tends; and the image of God, in his glorious creation, will smile upon thee as graciously in the woods of Canada, as it now does in thy English paradise. Yes, the hour will come when you shall exclaim with fervor—

"Thank God, I am the denizen of a free land; a land of beauty and progression—a land unpolluted by the groans of starving millions—a land which opens her fostering arms to receive and restore to his long-lost birthright, the trampled and abused child of poverty: to bid him stand up, a free inheritor of a free soil, who so long labored for a scanty pittance of bread, as an ignorant and degraded slave, in the country to which you now cling with such passionate fondness, and leave with such heart-breaking regret."

When Flora returned from an extensive ramble through all her favorite walks, she was agreeably surprised to find her husband conversing with Mrs. W—— in the parlor. The unexpected sight of her husband, who had returned to cheer her some days sooner than the one he had named in his letters, soon restored Flora's

spirits, and the sorrows of the future were forgotten in the joys of the present.

Lyndsay had a thousand little incidents and anecdotes to relate of his visit to the great metropolis ; to which Flora was an eager and delighted listener. He told her that he had satisfactorily arranged all his pecuniary matters ; and without sacrificing his half-pay, was able to take out about three hundred pounds sterling, which he thought, prudently managed, would enable him to make a tolerably comfortable settlement in Canada, particularly as he would not be obliged to purchase a farm, being entitled to a grant of four hundred acres of wild land.

He had engaged a passage in a fine vessel that was to sail from Leith, at the latter end of the week.

"I found that, in going from Scotland," said Lyndsay, "we could be as well accommodated for nearly half price ; and it would give you the opportunity of seeing Edinburgh, and me the melancholy satisfaction of taking a last look at the land of my birth.

"One of the London steamers will call for us to-morrow morning on her way to Scotland, and I must hire a boat to-night, and get our luggage prepared for a start. A short notice, dear Flora, to a sad, but inevitable necessity, I thought better for a person of your temperament, than a long and tedious anticipation of evil. Now all is prepared for the voyage, delay is not only useless, but dangerous. So cheer up, darling, and be as happy and cheerful as you can. Let us spend the last night at home pleasantly together." He kissed Flora so affectionately, as he ceased speaking, that she not only promised obedience, but contrived to smile through her tears.

It was necessary for them to return instantly to the cottage, and Flora took leave of her mother, with a full heart. We will not dwell on such partings ; they

"Wring the blood from out young hearts,"

as the poet has truly described them, making the snows of age descend upon the rose-crowned brow of youth.

Sorrowfully Flora returned to her pretty little cottage, which presented a scene of bustle and confusion baffling description. Everything was out of place and turned upside down. Corded trunks and packages filled up the passages and doorways ; and formed stumbling-blocks for kind friends and curious neighbors,

who crowded the house. Strange dogs forced their way in after their masters, and fought and yelped in undisturbed pugnacity. The baby cried, and no one was at leisure to pacify her, and a cheerless and uncomfortable spirit filled the once peaceful and happy home.

Old Captain Kitson was in his glory; hurrying here and there, ordering, superintending, and assisting the general confusion, without in the least degree helping on the work. He had taken upon himself the charge of hiring the boat which was to convey the emigrants on board the steamer; and he stood chaffering on the lawn for a couple of hours with the sailors, to whom she belonged, to induce them to take a shilling less than the sum proposed.

Tired with the altercation, and sorry for the honest tars, Lyndsay told the master of the boat to yield to the old Captain's terms, and he would make up the difference. The sailor answered with a knowing wink, and appeared reluctantly to consent to old Kitson's wishes.

"There, Mrs. Lyndsay, my dear, I told you these fellows would come to my terms rather than lose a good customer," cried the old man, rubbing his hands together in an ecstasy of self-gratulation. "Leave me to make a bargain; the rogues cannot cheat me with their d—d impositions. The *Leutenant* is too soft with these chaps; I'm an old sailor—they can't come over me. I have made them take one *pound* for the use of their craft, instead of *one and twenty* shillings. 'Take care of the pence,' my dear, 'and the pounds will take care of themselves.' I found that out, long before poor Richard marked it down in his log."

Then sideling up to Flora, and putting his long nose into her face, he whispered in her ear—

"Now, my dear gall, don't be offended with an old friend; but if you have any old coats or hats that *Leutenant* Lyndsay does not think worth packing up, I shall be very glad of them, for my Charles. Mrs. K. is an excellent hand at transmogrifying things, and in a large family such articles never come amiss."

Charles was the Captain's youngest son—a poor idiot, who, thirty years of age, had the appearance of an overgrown boy. The other members of the Captain's *large* family were all married and settled prosperously in the world. Flora felt truly ashamed of the old man's meanness, but was glad to repay his trifling services in a way suggested by himself. The weather for the last three weeks had

been unusually fine, but towards the evening of this memorable 30th of May, large masses of clouds began to rise in the northwest, and the sea changed its azure hue to a dull, leaden grey. Old Kitson shook his head prophetically.

"There's a change of weather at hand, Mrs. Lyndsay; you may look out for squalls before six o'clock to-morrow. The wind shifts every minute, and there's an ugly swell rolling in upon the shore."

"Ah, I hope it will be fine," said Flora, looking anxiously up at the troubled sky; "it is so miserable to begin a long journey in the rain. Perhaps it will pass off during the night in a thunder-shower."

The old man whistled, shut one eye, and looked knowingly at the sea with the other.

"Women know about as much of the weather as your nurse does of handling a rope. Whew! but there's a gale coming; I'll down to the beach, and tell the lads to haul up the boats and make all snug before it bursts," and away toddled the old man, full of the importance of his mission.

It was the last night at home—the last social meeting of kindred friends on this side the grave. Flora tried to appear cheerful, but the forced smile upon the tutored lips, rendered doubly painful the tears kept back in the swollen eyes—the vain effort of the sorrowful in heart to be gay.

Alas! for the warm hearts, the generous friendships, the kindly greetings of dear old England, when would they be hers again? Flora's friends at length took leave, and she was left with her husband alone.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE DEPARTURE.

It was the dawn of day when Flora started from a broken, feverish sleep, aroused to consciousness by the heavy roaring of the sea, as the huge billows thundered against the stony beach. To spring from her bed and draw back the curtains of the window which commanded a full view of the bay, was but the work of a moment. How quickly she let it fall in despair over the cheerless prospect it presented to her sight! Far as the eye could reach, the sea was covered with foam. Not a sail was visible, and a dark, leaden sky was pouring down torrents of rain.

"What a morning!" she muttered to herself, as she stole quietly back to bed. "It will be impossible to put to sea to-day."

The sleep which had shunned her pillow during the greater part of the night, gently stole over her; and "wrapped her senses in forgetfulness :" and old Kitson, two hours later, twice threw a pebble against the window, before she awoke.

"*Leaftenant Lyndsay—Leaftenant Lyndsay!*" shouted the Captain in a voice like a speaking-trumpet—"wind and tide wait for no man. Up and be doing."

"Ah, ah," responded Lyndsay, rubbing his eyes, and going to the window.

"See what a storm the night has been brewing for you!" continued old Kitson. "It blows great guns, and there's rain enough to float Noah's ark. Waters is here, and wants to see you. He says that his small craft won't live in a sea like this. You'll have to put off your voyage till the steamer takes her next trip."

"That's bad," said Lyndsay, hurrying on his clothes, and joining the old sailor on the lawn. "Is there any chance, Kitson, of this holding up?"

"None. This is paying us off for three weeks fine weather, and may last for several days—at all events, till night. The steamer will be rattling down in an hour, with the wind and tide in her favor. Were you once on board, *Leaftenant*, you might snap your fingers at this capful of wind."

"We must make up our minds to lose our places," said Lyndsay, in a tone of deep vexation.

"You have taken your places then?"

"Yes; and made a deposit of half the passage money."

"Humph! Now, *Leaftenant Lyndsay*, that's a thing I never do. I always take my chance. I would rather lose my place in a boat, or a coach, than lose my money. But young fellows like you never learn wisdom. Experience is all thrown away upon you. But as we can't remedy the evil now, we had better step in and get a morsel of breakfast. This raw air makes one hungry. The wind may lull by that time." Then gazing at the sky with one of his keen orbs, while he shaded with his hand the other, he continued—"It rains too hard for it to blow long at this rate; and the season of the year is all in your favor. Go in—go in, and get something to eat, and we will settle over your wife's good coffee what is best to be done."

Lyndsay thought with the Captain, that the storm would abate, and he returned to the anxious Flora, to report the aspect of things without.

"It is a bad omen," said Flora, pouring out the coffee. "If we may judge of the future by the present—it looks dark enough."

"Don't provoke me into anger, Flora, by talking in such a childish manner, and placing reliance upon an exploded superstition. Women are so fond of prognosticating evil, that I believe they are disappointed if it does not happen as they say."

"Well, reason may find fault with us if she will," said Flora; "but we are all more or less influenced by these mysterious presentiments; and suffer trifling circumstances to give a coloring for good or evil to the passing hour. My dear, cross philosopher, hand me the toast."

Flora's defence of her favorite theory was interrupted by the arrival of two very dear friends, who had come from a distance, through the storm, to bid her good-bye.

Mr. Hawke, the elder of the twain, was an author of considerable celebrity in his native country, and a most kind and excellent man. He brought with him his second son, a fine lad of twelve years of age, to a place under Lyndsay's charge. James Hawke had taken a fancy to settle in Canada, and a friend of the family, who was located in the backwoods of that far region, had written to his father, that he would take the lad, and initiate him in the mysteries of the axe, if he could find a person to bring him over. Lyndsay had promised to do this, and the boy, who had that morning parted with his mother and little brothers and sisters, for the first time in his life, in spite of the elastic spirits of youth, looked sad and dejected.

Mr. Hawke's companion was a young Quaker, who had known Flora from a girl, and had always expressed the greatest interest in her welfare.

Adam Mansel was a handsome, talented man, whose joyous disposition and mirthful humor, could scarcely be trammelled down by the severe conventional rules of the Society to which he belonged. Adam's exquisite taste for music, and his great admiration for horses and dogs, savored rather of the camp of the enemy. But his love for these forbidden carnalities was always kept within bounds, and only known to a few very particular friends.

"Friend Flora," he said, taking her hand, and giving it a most

hearty and cordial shake, "this is a sad day to those who have known thee long, and loved thee well ; and a foul day for the commencement of such an important journey. Bad beginnings, they say, make bright endings ; so there is hope for thee yet in the stormy cloud."

"Flora, where are your omens now?" said Lyndsay, triumphantly. "Either you or friend Adam must be wrong."

"Or the proverb I quoted, say rather," returned Adam. "Proverbs often bear a double meaning, and can be interpreted as well one way as the other. The ancients were cunning fellows in this respect, and were determined to make themselves true prophets at any rate."

"What a miserable day," said the poet, turning from the window, where he had been contemplating thoughtfully the gloomy aspect of things without. His eye fell sadly upon his son. "It is enough to chill the heart."

"When I was a boy at school," said Adam, "I used to think that God sent all the rain upon holidays, on purpose to disappoint us of our sport. I found that most things in life happened contrary to our wishes ; and I used to pray devoutly, that all the Saturday's might prove wet, firmly believing that it would be sure to turn out the reverse."

"According to your theory, Mansel," said Mr. Hawke, "Mrs. Lyndsay must have prayed for a very fine day."

"Dost thee call this a holiday?" returned the Quaker, with a twinkle of quiet humor in his bright brown eyes.

Mr. Hawke suppressed a sigh, and his glance again fell on his boy ; and, hurrying to the window, he mechanically drew his hand across his eyes.

Here the old Captain came bustling in, full of importance, chuckling, rubbing his hands, and shaking his dripping fernaught, with an air of great satisfaction.

"You will not be disappointed, my dear," addressing himself to Mrs. Lyndsay. "The wind has fallen off a bit ; and though the sea is too rough for the small craft, Palmer, the captain of the pilot-boat, has been with me ; and, for the consideration of two pounds (forty shillings)—a large sum of money, by-the-bye—I will try and beat him down to thirty—he says he will launch the great boat, and man her with twelve stout, young fellows, who will take you, bag and baggage, on board the steamer, though the gale

were blowing twice as stiff. You have no more to fear in that fine boat, than you have sitting at your ease in that arm-chair. So make up your mind, my dear ; for you have no time to lose."

Flora looked anxiously from her husband to her child, and then at the black, pouring sky, and the raging waters.

"There is no danger, Flora," said Lyndsay. "These fine boats can live in almost any sea. But the rain will make it very uncomfortable for you and the child."

"The discomfort will only last a few minutes, Mrs. Lyndsay," said old Kitson. "Those chaps will put you on board before you can say Jack Robinson."

"It is better to bear a ducking than lose our passage in the *Chieftain*," said Flora. "There cannot be much to apprehend from the violence of the storm, or twelve men would never risk their lives for the value of forty shillings. Our trunks are all in the boat-house, our servants discharged, and our friends gone ; we have no longer a home, and I am impatient to commence our voyage."

"You are right, Flora. Dress yourself and the child, and I will engage the boat immediately." And away bounded Lyndsay to make their final arrangements, and see the luggage safely stowed away in the pilot-boat.

Captain Kitson seated himself at the table, and began discussing a beefsteak with all the earnestness of a hungry man. From time to time, as his appetite began to slacken, he addressed a word of comfort or encouragement to Mrs. Lyndsay, who was busy wrapping up the baby for her perilous voyage.

"That's right, my dear. Take care of the young one ; 'tis the most troublesome piece of lumber you have with you. A child and a cat are two things which never ought to come on board a ship. But take courage, my dear. Be like our brave Nelson ; never look behind you after entering upon difficulties ; it only makes bad worse, and does no manner of good. You will encounter rougher gales than this before you have crossed the Atlantic."

"I hope that we shall not have to wait long for the steamer," said Flora. "I dread this drenching rain for the poor bab ; far more than the stormy sea."

"Wait," responded the old man, "the steamer will be rattling down in no time ; it is within an hour of her usual time. But Mrs. Lyndsay, my dear,"—hastily pushing from him his empty

plate, and speaking with his mouth full—"I have one word to say to you in private, before you go."

Flora followed the gallant captain into the kitchen, marvelling in her own mind what this private communication could be. The old man shut the door carefully behind him; then said, in a mysterious whisper—"The old clothes; do you remember what I said to you last night?"

Taken by surprise, Flora looked down, colored, and hesitated; she was afraid of wounding his feelings. Simple woman! the man was without delicacy, and had no feelings to wound.

"There is a bundle of things, Captain Kitson," she faltered out at last, "in the press in my bed-room, for Mr. Charles—coats, trowsers, and other things. I was ashamed to mention to you such trifles."

"Never mind—never mind, my dear; I am past blushing at my time of life; and reelly—he always called it reelly)—I am much obliged to you."

After a pause, in which both looked supremely foolish, the old man continued—"There was a china-cup and two plates—pity to spoil the set—that your careless maid broke the other day in the wash-house. Did Mrs. K. mention them to you, my dear?"

"Yes, sir, and they are *paid for*," said Flora, turning with disgust from the sordid old man. "Have you anything else to communicate?"

"All right," said the Captain. "Here is your husband looking for you. The boat is ready."

"Flora, we only wait for you," said Lyndsay. Flora placed the precious babe in her father's arms, and they descended the steep flight of steps that led from the cliff to the beach.

In spite of the inclemency of the weather, a crowd of old and young had assembled on the beach to witness their embarkation, and bid them farewell.

The hearty "God bless you! God grant you a prosperous voyage, and a better home than the one you leave, on the other side of the Atlantic!" burst from the lips of many an honest tar; and brought the tears into Flora's eyes, as the sailors crowded round the emigrants, to shake hands with them before they stepped into the noble boat that lay rocking in the surf.

Precious to Flora and Lyndsay were the pressure of those hard rough hands. They expressed the honest sympathy felt, by a true-

hearted set of poor men, in their present situation and future welfare.

" You are not going without one parting word with me !" cried Mary Parnell, springing down the steep bank of stones, against which thundered the tremendous surf. The wind had blown her straw bonnet back upon her shoulders, and scattered her fair hair in beautiful confusion round her lovely face.

The weeping, agitated girl was alternately clasped in the arms of Lyndsay and his wife.

" Why did you expose yourself, dear Mary, to weather like this ? "

" Don't talk of weather," sobbed Mary ; " I only know that we must part. Do you begrudge me the last look ? Good-bye ! God bless you both ! "

Before Flora could speak another word, she was caught up in the arms of a stout seaman, who safely deposited both the mother and her child in the boat. Lyndsay, Mr. Hawke, his son, Adam Mansel, and lastly Hannah, followed. Three cheers arose from the sailors on the beach. The gallant boat dashed through the surf, and was soon bounding over the giant billows.

Mr. Hawke and friend Adam had never been on the sea before, but they determined not to bid adieu to the emigrants until they saw them safe on board the steamer.

" I will never take a last look of the dear home in which I have passed so many happy hours," said Flora, resolutely turning her back to the shore. " I cannot yet realize the thought that I am never to see it again."

CHAPTER XIV.

AN OPEN BOAT AT SEA.

FLORA's spirits rose in proportion to the novelty and danger of her situation. All useless regrets and repinings were banished from her breast the moment she embarked upon that stormy ocean. The parting, which, when far off, had weighed so heavily on her heart, was over ; the present was full of excitement and interest ; the time for action had arrived ; and the consciousness that they were actually on their way to a distant clime, braced her mind to bear with becoming fortitude this great epoch of her life.

The gale lulled for a few minutes, and Flora looked up to the leaden sky, in the hope of catching one bright gleam from the sun. He seemed to have abdicated his throne that day, and refused to cast even a glimpse upon the dark, storm-tossed waters, or cheer, with his presence the departure of the emigrants.

The gentlemen made an effort to be lively. The conversation turned on the conduct of women under trying circumstances—the courage and constancy they had shown in situations of great peril—animating the men to fresh exertions by their patient endurance of suffering and privation. Mr. Hawke said, "that all travellers had agreed in their observations upon the conduct of females to strangers; and that, when travelling, they had never had occasion to complain of the women."

At this speech, Lyndsay, who began to feel all the horrible nausea of sea-sickness, raised his head from between his hands, and replied, with a smile, "that it was the very reverse with women, for, when they travelled, they had most reason to complain of the men."

The effects of the stormy weather soon became very apparent among the passengers in the pilot-boat—sickness laid its leaden grasp upon all the fresh-water sailors. Even Lyndsay, a hardy Islander, and used to boats and boating all his life, yielded passively to the attacks of the relentless fiend of the salt waters, with rigid features, and a face pale as the faces of the dead. He sat with his head bowed between his hands, as motionless as if he had suddenly been frozen into stone. Flora often lifted the cape of the cloak which partially concealed his face, to ascertain that he was still alive.

The anxiety she felt in endeavoring to protect her infant from the pouring rain, perhaps acted as an antidote to this distressing malady, for, though only just out of a sick bed, she did not feel the least qualmish.

Hannah, the servant, lay stretched at the bottom of the boat, her head supported by the ballast-bags, in a state too miserable to describe; while James Hawke, the lad who was to accompany them in their long voyage, had sunk into a state of happy unconsciousness, after having vainly wished, for the hundredth time, that he was safe on shore, scampering over the village green with his twelve brothers and sisters, and not tempting the angry main in an open boat, with the windows of heaven discharging waters enough

upon his defenceless head to drown him—without speaking of the big waves that every moment burst into the boat, giving him a salt bath upon a gigantic scale.

After an hour's hard rowing, the *King William* (for so their boat was called) cast anchor in the roadstead, distant about eight miles from the town, and lay to, waiting for the coming-up of the steamer.

Hours passed away—the day wore slowly onward—but still the vessel they expected did not appear. The storm, which had lulled till noon, increased in violence, until it blew “great guns,” to use the sailors' nautical phraseology; and signs of uneasiness began to be manifested by the hardy crew of the pilot-boat.

“Some accident must have befallen the steamer,” said Palmer, the captain of the boat, to Craigie, a fine, handsome young seaman, as he handed him the bucket to bail the water from their vessel. “I don't like this; I'll be d—d if I do ~~if~~ if the wind increases, and remains in the present quarter, a pretty kettle of fish it will make of us. We may be thankful if we escape with our lives.”

“Is there any danger?” demanded Flora, eagerly, as she clasped her wet, cold baby closer to her breast. The child had been crying piteously for the last hour.

“Yes, Madam,” he replied, respectfully; “we have been in considerable danger all day. The wind is increasing with the coming in of the tide; and I see no prospect of its clearing up. As the night comes on, do ye see, and if we do not fall in with the *Soho*, we shall have to haul up the anchor, and run before the gale; and, with all my knowledge of the coast, we may be driven ashore, and the boat swamped in the surf.”

Flora sighed, and wished herself safe at home, in her dear, snug, little parlor; the baby asleep in the cradle, and Lyndsay reading aloud to her as she worked, or playing on his flute.

The rain again burst down in torrents, the thunder roared over their heads, and the black, lurid sky, looked as if it contained a second deluge. Flora shivered with cold and exhaustion, and bent more closely over the child, to protect her as much as possible, by the exposure of her own person, from the drenching rain and spray.

“Ah! this is sad work for women and children!” said the honest tar, drawing a large tarpaulin over the mother and child. Blinded and drenched by the pelting of the pitiless shower, Flora crouched down in the bottom of the boat, in patient endurance of

what might befall. The wind blew piercingly cold ; and the spray of the huge billows which burst continually over them, enveloped the small craft in a feathery cloud, effectually concealing from her weary passengers the black waste of raging waters, which roared around and beneath them.

The poor infant was starving with hunger, and all Flora's efforts to keep it quiet proved unavailing. The gentlemen were as sick and helpless as the baby, and nothing could well increase their wretchedness. They had now been ten hours at sea, and, not expecting the least detention from the non-arrival of the steamer, nothing in the way of refreshment had formed any part of their luggage. Those who had escaped the horrors of sea-sickness, of which Flora was one, were suffering from thirst, while the keen air had sharpened their appetites to a ravenous degree.

In spite of their forlorn situation, Flora could not help being amused by the gay, careless manner, in which the crew of the boat contended with these difficulties.

" Well, I'll be blowed, if I ain't hungry !" cried Craigie, as he stood up in the boat, with his arms folded, and his nor'-wester pulled over his eyes, to ward off the drenching rain. " Nothin' would come amiss to me now, in the way of prog. I could digest a bit of the shark that swallowed Jonah, or pick a rib of the old prophet himself, without making a wry face."

" I wonder which would prove the tougher morsel of the two," said Mr. Hawke, raising his languid head from the bench before him, and whose love of fun overcame the deadly pangs of sea-sickness.

" A dish of good beefsteaks from the Crown Inn would be worth them both, friend," said Adam Mansel, who, getting better of the sea-sickness, like Craigie, began to feel the pangs of hunger.

" You may keep the dish, mister," returned Craigie, laughing ; " give me the grub."

" Ah, how bitter ! " groaned James Hawke, raising himself up from the furled sail which had formed his bed, and yielding to the terrible nausea that oppressed him.

" Ay, ay, my lad," said an ancient mariner, on whose tanned face time and exposure to sun and storm, had traced a thousand hieroglyphics ; " nothing's sweet that's so contrary to natur'. Among the bitter things of life, there's scarcely a worse than

the one that now troubles you. Sick at sea—well on shore; so there's comfort for you!"

"Cold comfort," sighed the boy, as he again fell prostrate on the wet sail. A huge billow broke over the side of the boat; and deluged him with brine. He did not heed it, having again relapsed into his former insensible state.

"The bucket aft," shouted Palmer; "it's wanted to bail the boat."

"The bucket's engaged," said Craigie, bowing with ludicrous politeness, to poor Hannah, whose head he was supporting. "I must first attend to the lady."

The patience of the handsome young Quaker, under existing difficulties, was highly amusing. He bore the infliction of the prevailing malady with such a benign air of resignation, that it was quite edifying. Wiping the saltwater from his face with a pocket-handkerchief of snowy whiteness, he exclaimed, turning to Flora, who was sitting at his feet with Josey in her arms, "Friend Flora, this sea-sickness is an evil emetic. It tries a man's temper, and makes him guilty of the crime of wishing himself at the bottom of the sea."

"If you could rap out a good round oath or two, Mister Quaker, without choking yourself, it would do you a power of good," said Craigie. "What's the use of a big man putting up with the like o' that, like a weak gall—women were made to bear man to resist—"

"The Devil, and he will flee from them," said Adam.

"You smooth-faced, unshaved fellows, have him always at your elbow," said Craigie. "He teaches you long prayers—us big oaths. I wonder which cargo is the best to take to heaven."

"Two blacks don't make a white, friend," said Adam, good-naturedly. "Blasphemy, or hypocrisy either, is sufficient to sink the ship."

Night was fast closing over the storm-tossed voyagers. The boat was half full of water, which flowed over Flora's lap, and she began to feel very apprehensive for the safety of her child. At this moment, a large retriever dog which belonged to the captain of the boat, crept into her lap; and she joyfully placed the baby upon his shaggy back, and the warmth of the animal seemed greatly to revive the poor shivering Josey.

It was nearly dark when Palmer roused Lyndsay from his stupor,

and suggested the propriety of their return to —. "You see, sir," he said, "I am quite willing to wait for the arrival of the *Soho*, but something must have gone wrong with her, or she would have been down before this. The crew of the boat have been now ten hours exposed to the storm, without a morsel of food, and if the wind should change, we should have to run in for the Port of Y—, twenty miles distant from this. Under existing circumstances, I think it advisable to return."

"By all means," said Lyndsay. "This might have been done three hours ago;" and the next minute, to Flora's inexpressible joy, the anchor was hoisted, and the gallant boat once more careering over the mighty billows.

Her face was once more turned towards that dear home, to which she had bidden adieu in the morning; as she then imagined forever—"England!" she cried, stretching her arms towards the dusky shore. "Dear England! The winds and waves forbid our leaving you. Welcome—oh, welcome, once more!"

As they neared the beach, the stormy clouds parted in rifted masses; and the deep-blue heavens, studded here and there with a pale star, gleamed lovingly down upon them; the rain ceased its pitiless pelting, the very elements seemed to smile upon their return.

The pilot-boat had been reported during the day as lost, and the beach was crowded with anxious men and women to hail its return. The wives and children of her crew pressed forward to meet them with joyful acclamations; and Flora's depressed spirits rose with the excitement of the scene.

"Hold fast your baby, Mrs. Lyndsay, while the boat clears the surf," cried Palmer. "I'll warrant that you both get a fresh ducking."

As he spoke, the noble boat cut like an arrow through the line of formidable breakers which thundered on the beach; the foam flew in feathery volumes high above their heads, drenching them with a misty shower; the keel grated upon the shingles, and a strong arm lifted Flora once more upon her native shore.

Benumbed and cramped with their long immersion in salt water, her limbs had lost the power of motion, and Lyndsay and old Kitson carried her between them up the steps which led from the beach to the top of the cliffs, and deposited her safely on the sofa in the little parlor of her deserted home.

CHAPTER XV.

ONCE MORE AT HOME.

A CHEERFUL fire was blazing in the grate ; the fragrant tea was smoking on the well-covered table, and dear and familiar voices rang in her ears, as sisters and friends crowded about Flora to offer their services, and congratulate her on her safe return.

"Ah, does not this repay us for all our past sufferings?" cried Flora, after the first hearty salutations of her friends were over. "And the baby! where is the baby?"

Josey was laughing and crowing in the arms of her old nurse, looking as fresh and as rosy as if nothing had happened to disturb her repose.

"Welcome once more to old England ! dear Flora," said Mary Parnell, kissing the cold, wet cheek of her friend. "When I said that we should meet again, I did not think it would be so soon. Thank God, you are all safe ! For many hours it was believed that the boat had been swamped in the gale, and that you were all lost. You may imagine the distress of your mother and sisters, and the anguish the report occasioned us all, and how we rejoiced when Waters ran up with the blessed news that the boat was returning, and that her crew was safe. But come up stairs, my Flora, and change these dripping clothes. There is a nice fire in your bed-room, and I have provided everything necessary for your comfort."

"Don't talk of changing her clothes, Miss Parnell," said the old Captain, bustling in. "Undress and put her to bed immediately, between hot blankets, and I will make her a good stiff glass of brandy-and-water, to drive the cold out of her, or she may fall into a sickness which no doctor can cure. Cut your yarn short, I say, or I shall have to take charge of her myself."

"Captain Kitson is right, Mary," said Lyndsay, who just then entered from superintending the removal of his luggage from the boat, accompanied by a group of friends, all anxious to congratulate Mrs. Lyndsay on her providential escape. "My dear Flora, you must be a good girl, and go instantly to bed."

"It will be so dull!" and Flora glanced at the group of friendly faces, beaming with affection and kindness ; "I should enjoy myself here so much. Now, John, do not send me away to bed, and keep

all the fun to yourself—the bright, cheery fire and all the good things."

Lyndsay looked grave, and whispered something in her ear about the baby, and the madness of risking a bad cold. Whatever was the exact import of his communication, it had the effect of producing immediate obedience to his wishes, and Flora reluctantly quitted the social group, and retired to her own chamber."

"Ah, Mary," she said, as Miss Parnell safely deposited her and the precious baby between the hot blankets, "it was worth braving a thousand storms to receive such a welcome back. I never knew how much our dear, kind, friends loved us before."

"And now we have got you safe back, Flora, who knows what may happen to prevent your leaving us again; Lyndsay may change his mind, and prefer being happy on a small income at home to seeking his fortune in a strange land."

Flora shook her head.

"I know him better than you do, Mary. When once he has made up his mind to any step which he considers necessary, a little difficulty and danger will only stimulate him to exertion, and make him more eager to prosecute his voyage."

Whilst sipping the potion prescribed by old Kitson, and giving Mary an account of all the perils they had encountered during the day, Nurse came running up-stairs to say that Captain Kitson thought that the Soho was just rounding the point off the cliff, and he wanted to know, if it really proved to be her, whether Mrs. Lyndsay would get up and once more trust herself upon the waves?

"Not to-night Nurse, if a fortune depended upon it," said Flora, laughing. "Tell the Captain that I have spent the day in a salt bath, and mean to pass the night in my bed."

Fortunately, Mrs. Lyndsay was not put to this fresh trial. The Captain had mistaken the craft, and she was permitted to enjoy the warmth and comfort of a sound sleep, unbroken by the peals of laughter, that from time to time, ascended from the room beneath; where the gentlemen seemed determined to make the night recompense them for the dangers and privations of the day.

The morning brought its own train of troubles—and when do they ever come singly? Upon examination, Lyndsay found that the salt-water had penetrated into all their trunks and cases, and that everything would have to be unpacked and hung out to dry.

This was indeed dull work, the disappointment and loss attending upon it rendering it doubly irksome.

While Flora and her friend Mary superintended this troublesome affair, Lyndsay lost no time in writing to the steamboat company informing them of his disastrous attempt to meet the Soho, and the loss he had incurred by missing the vessel. They stated, in reply, that the boat had been wrecked at the mouth of the Thames, in the gale; and that another boat would supply her place on the Sunday following; that she would pass the town at noon, and hoist a red flag at her stern, as a signal for them to get on board.

This was Thursday, and the intervening days passed heavily along. A restless fever of expectation preyed upon Flora. She could settle to no regular occupation; she knew that the delay only involved a fresh and heavy expense, that they must ultimately go, and she longed to be off. The efforts made by her friends to amuse and divert her, only increased her impatience. But time, however slowly it passes to the anxious expectant, swiftly and surely ushers in the appointed day.

Sunday came at last, and proved one of the loveliest mornings of that delightful season of spring and sunshine. The lark caroled high in air, the swallows darted on light wings to and fro; and the sea, vast and beautiful, gently heaved and undulated against the shore, with scarcely a ripple to break the long line of golden light, which danced and sparkled on its breast. The church bells were chiming for morning prayer; and the cliffs were covered with happy groups in their holiday attire. Flora, surrounded by friends and relatives, strove to be cheerful; and the day was so promising, that it infused new life and spirit into her breast. All eyes were turned to that part of the horizon on which the long, black, trailing smoke of the steamer was first expected to appear. A small boat, which had been engaged to put them and their luggage on board, and which contained all their worldly chattels, lay rocking in the surf, and all was ready for a start.

In the midst of an animated discussion on their future prospects, the signal was given that the steamer was in sight, and had already rounded the point. How audibly to herself did Flora's heart beat, as a small, black speck in the distance gradually increased to a black cloud, which was doubtless the expected vessel!

Then came the blinding tears, the re-enactment of the last passionate adieu, and they were once more afloat upon the water.

CHAPTER XVI

THE FOG.

THE human heart is made of elastic stuff, and can scarcely experience on the same subject an equal intensity of grief. Repetition had softened the anguish of this second parting ; the bitterness of grief was already past ; and the sun of hope was calmly rising above the clouds of sorrow, which had hung for the last weary days so loweringly above our emigrants. Mr. Hawke and his son alone accompanied them on this second expedition. Adam Mansel had had enough of the sea during their late adventure, and thought it most prudent to make his adieus on shore.

James Hawke was in high spirits ; anticipating, with boyish enthusiasm, the adventures which might fall to his share during a long voyage, and his sojourn in that distant land, which was to prove to him a very land of Goshen. Many gay hopes smiled upon him, which, like that bright sunny day, were doomed to have a gloomy ending, although at the beginning it promised so fair.

The owner of the boat, a morose old seaman, grumbled out his commands to the two sailors who managed the craft, in such a dogged, sulky tone, that it attracted the attention of the elder Hawkes, and being naturally fond of fun, he endeavored to draw him out. An abrupt monosyllable was the sole reply he could obtain to any one of his many questions.

Lyndsay was highly amused by his surly humor, and flattered himself that *he* might prove more successful than his friend, by startling the sea-bear into a more lengthy growl.

"Friend," said he, carelessly, "I have forgotten your name."

"Sam Rogers," was the brief reply, uttered in a short grunt.

"Does the boat belong to you?"

"Yes."

"She looks as if she had seen hard service."

"Yes ; both of us are the worse for wear."

The ice once broken, Mr. Hawke chimed in—"Have you a wife, Captain Rogers?"

"She's in the churchyard," with a decided growl.

"So much the better for Mrs. Rogers," whispered Lyndsay to Flora.

" You had better let the animal alone," said Flora, in the same tone: " 'Tis sworn to silence."

" Have you any family, Captain Rogers?" re-commenced the incorrigible Hawke.

" Ay; more than's good."

" Girls, or boys?"

" What's that to you? Too many of both. Why do you call me Captain? You knows well enough that I'm not a captain; never was a captain, and never wants to be."

After this rebuff, the surly Rogers was left to smoke his short, black pipe in peace, and in a few minutes the little boat came alongside the huge leviathan of the deep. A rope was thrown from her deck, which having been secured, the following brief dialogue ensued :

" The *City of Edinburgh*, for Edinburgh?"

" The *Queen of Scotland*, for Aberdeen, Captain Fraser."

This announcement was followed by a look of blank astonishment and disappointment from the party in the boat.

" Where is the *City of Edinburgh*?"

" We left her in the river. You had better take a passage with us to Aberdeen," said Captain Fraser, advancing to the side of his vessel.

" Two hundred miles out of my way," said Lyndsay. " Fall off." The tow rope was cast loose, and the floating caste resumed her thundering course, leaving the party in the boat greatly disconcerted by the misadventure.

" The *City of Edinburgh* must soon be here?" said Lyndsay, addressing himself once more to Sam Rogers. That sociable individual continued smoking his short pipe, without deigning to notice the speaker. " Had we not better lay-to, and wait for her coming up?"

" No; we should be run down by her. Do you see yon?" pointing with his pipe to a grey cloud that was rolling over the surface of the sea towards them; " that's the sea rake—in three minutes—in less than three minutes, you will not be able to discern objects three yards beyond your nose."

" Pleasant news," said Mr. Hawke, with rather a dolorous sigh.

" This may turn out as bad as our last scrape. Lyndsay, you are an unlucky fellow. If you go on as you have begun, it will be some months before you reach Canada."

In less time than the old man had prognosticated, the dense fog had rapidly spread itself over the water, blotting the sun from the heavens, and enfolding every object in its chilly embrace. The shores faded from their view, the very ocean on which they floated was heard, but no longer seen. Nature seemed to have lost her identity, covered with that white sheet, which enveloped her like a shroud. Flora strove in vain to pierce the thick misty curtain by which they were surrounded. Her whole world was now confined to the little boat and the persons it contained : the rest of creation had become a blank. The fog wetted like rain, and was more penetrating, and the constant efforts she made to see through it, made her eyes and head ache, and cast a damp upon her spirits which almost amounted to despondency.

"What is to be done?" asked Lyndsay, who shared the same feelings in common with his wife.

"Nothing, that I know of," responded Sam Rogers, "but to return."

As he spoke, a dark shadow loomed through the fog, which proved to be a small trading vessel, bound from London to Yarmouth. The sailors hailed her, and with some difficulty ran the boat alongside.

"Have you passed the *City of Edinburgh?*"

"We spake her in the river. She ran foul of the *Courier* steamer, and unshipped her rudder. She put back for repairs, and won't be down till to-morrow morning."

"The devil!" muttered Sam Rogers.

"Agreeable tidings for us," sighed Flora. "This is worse than the storm ; it is so unexpected. I should be quite disheartened, did I not believe that Providence directed these untoward events."

"I am inclined to be of your opinion, Flora," said Lyndsay, "in spite of my disbelief in signs and omens. There is something beyond mere accident in this second disappointment."

"Is it not a solemn warning to us, not to leave England?" said Flora.

"I was certain that would be your interpretation of the matter," returned her husband ; "but having put my hand to the plough, Flora, I will not turn back."

The sailors now took to their oars, the dead calm precluding the use of the sail, and began to steer their course homewards. The fog was so dense and bewildering that they made little way, and

the long day was spent in wandering to and fro without being able to ascertain where they were.

"Hark!" cried one of the men, laying his ear to the side of the boat, "I hear the flippers of the steamer."

"It is the roar of the accursed *Barnet*," cried the other. "I know its voice of old, having twice been wrecked upon the reef—we must change our course; we are on a wrong tack altogether."

It was near midnight before a breeze sprang up and dispelled the ominous fog. The moon showed her wan face through the driving scud, the sail was at last hoisted, and cold and hungry, and sick at heart, our voyagers once more returned to their old port.

This time, however, the beach was silent and deserted. No friendly voice welcomed them back. Old Kitson looked cross at being roused out of his bed at one o'clock in the morning, to admit them into the house, muttering as he did so, something about "unlucky folks, and the deal of trouble they gave; that they had better give up going to Canada altogether, and hire their old lodgings again; that it was no joke having his rest broken at his time of life; that he could not afford to keep open house at all hours, for people who were in no ways related to him."

With such consoling expressions of sympathy in their forlorn condition, did the hard, worldly old man proceed to unlock the door of their former domicile; but food, lights, and firing, he would not produce, until Lyndsay had promised ample remuneration for the same.

Exhausted in mind and body—for she had not broken her fast since eight o'clock that morning—Flora for a long time refused to partake of a cup of tea her loving partner had made with his own hands for her especial benefit; and her tears continued to fall involuntarily over the sleeping babe which lay upon her lap.

Mr. Hawke saw that her nerves were completely unstrung by fatigue, and ran across the green, and called up Flora's nurse to take charge of the infant.

Mrs. Clarke, kind creature that she was, instantly hurried to the house to do what she could for the mother and child. Little Josey was soon well warmed and fed, and Flora smiled through her tears when her husband made his appearance.

"Come, Flora," he cried, "you are ill for the want of food—I am going to make some sandwiches for you, and you must be a good girl and eat them, or I will never cater for you again."

Mr. Hawke exerted all his powers of drollery to enliven the miscellaneous meal, and Flora soon retired to rest, fully determined to bear the crosses of life with more fortitude for the future.

The sun was not above the horizon, when she was roused, however, from a deep sleep, by the stentorian voice of Old Kitson who, anxious to get rid of his troublesome visitors, cried out, with great glee—"Hallo! I say—here is the right steamer at last. Better late than never. The red flag is hoisted at her stern; and she is standing right in for the bay. Quick! Quick! Lieutenant Lyndsay! or you'll be too late."

With all possible despatch Flora dressed herself, though baffled by anxiety from exerting unusual celerity. The business of the toilet had to be performed in such a brief space, that it was impossible to attend to it with any nicety. At last all was completed; Flora hurried down to the beach with Hannah and Mrs. Clarke, James Hawke and Lyndsay having preceded them to arrange their passage to the steamer.

"Make haste, Mrs. Lyndsay," shouted old Kitson; "these big dows wait for no one. I have got all your trunks stowed away into the boat, and the lads are waiting. If you miss your passage the third time, you may give it up as a bad job."

In a few minutes Flora was seated in the boat, uncheered by any parting blessing but the cold farewell and for ever, of old Captain Kitson, who could scarcely conceal the joy he felt at their departure. The morning was wet and misty, and altogether comfortless, and Flora was glad when the bustle of getting on board the steamer was over, and they were safe upon her deck.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE STEAMBOAT.

IN SPITE of the early hour, and the disagreeable weather, a number of persons, glad to escape from the close confinement of the cabins, were pacing the deck of the steamer. Others were leaning over the bulwarks, regarding the aspect of the country they were rapidly passing; while some were talking in small groups, in a loud declamatory tone, evidently more intent on attracting the attention of the bystanders than of edifying their

own immediate listeners. Though bright eyes might look heavy, and fair faces languid and sleepy, vanity was wide awake and never more active, than in the midst of a crowd, where all are strangers to each other. It affords such a glorious opportunity for display for pretenders to rank and importance to show off their affected airs of wealth and consequence; and the world can lay bare its rotten heart, without much fear of detection, or dread of unpleasant results.

Flora sat down upon a bench beside her husband, and her eye ranged from group to group of those strange faces, with a mechanical, uninterested gaze. Here a pretty, insipid-looking girl sauntered the deck with a book in her hand, from which she never read; and another, more vivacious, and equally intent on attracting her share of public notice, raved to an elderly gentleman, on whose arm she was leaning, of the beauty and magnificence of the ocean.

The young and good-looking of either sex were flirting. The more wily and experienced coquetting after a graver fashion; while the middle-aged were gossiping to some congenial spirit on the supposed merits or demerits of their neighbors.

Not a few prostrate forms might be seen reclining upon shawls and cloaks, supported by pillows, whose languid, pale faces, and disarranged tresses, showed that the demon of the waters had been at work, and remorselessly had stricken them down.

Standing near the seat, occupied by the Lyndseys, Flora observed a tall, fashionably-dressed woman, apparently about twenty-eight or thirty years of age. She was laughing and chatting in the most lively and familiar manner with a handsome, middle-aged man, in a military undress. The person of the lady was very agreeable, and though neither pretty nor elegant, was fascinating and attractive.

As her male companion constantly addressed her as Mrs. Dalton, we will call her by her name. When Mrs. Lyndsay first took her seat upon the deck, Mrs. Dalton left off her conversation with Major F—, and regarded the new arrival with a long, cool, deliberate stare, which would have won a smile from Flora, had it not been evidently meant to insult and annoy; for, turning to the Major, with a glance of peculiar meaning, accompanied with the least possible elevation of her shoulders, she let slip the word—
“ *Nobody!* ”

"I am sure that *he* is a gentleman, and, if I mistake not, an officer, and a fine, intelligent-looking man," remarked her companion, in an aside; "and I like the appearance of his wife."

"My dear Sir, I tell you that *she is nobody*. Look at that merino gown; what lady would venture on board of these fine vessels, where they meet with so many *fashionable* people, in such a dress?"

"A very suitable dress, I should say, for a sea-voyage."

"Pshaw!" muttered Mrs. Dalton, "have done with your prudent Scotch sense of propriety. Who minds spoiling a good dress or two, when their standing in society is risked by appearing shabby? I tell you, Major, that she is *nobody*."

"Had you not told me that you had passed the greater part of your life, Mrs. Dalton, in a British Colony, I could have sworn to the fact, from your last speech," said her companion: "you all think so much of dress, that with you it is really the coat which makes the man, and, I suppose, the gown which makes the lady. However, you shall have it your own way. You know how easy it is for you to bring me over to your opinion."

"Do you think that a pretty woman?" she said, directing her husband's eyes towards the lady in question.

"Rather," he replied, coldly, "but very worldly and sophisticated."

"I am glad to hear you say so," said Flora, like a true woman; "that is precisely the opinion I have formed of her. Is that officer her husband?"

"I should rather think not. Husbands and wives seldom try to attract public attention to themselves, as that man and woman are doing. I have no doubt they are strangers who never met before."

"Impossible!"

"Nothing more probable; people who meet on short journeys and voyages like this, often throw aside the restraints imposed by society, and act and talk in a manner which would be severely censured in circles where they are known. Were you never favored by the autobiography of a fellow-traveller in a stage-coach?"

"Yes, often, and thought it very odd that any one should reveal so much of their private history to a stranger."

"It is a common occurrence, originating in the vanity of persons who love to make themselves and their affairs the subject of conver-

sation ; and if they can but obtain listeners, never stop to question who or what they are."

"Ah, I remember getting into a sad scrape," said Flora, "while travelling from S—— to London in a stage-coach. It was one of these uncomfortable things which one hates to think of for the rest of a life, and yet so ridiculous that one feels more inclined to laugh over it than to cry, though I believe (for I was but a girl at the time) I did both:

"My fellow-passengers were three gentlemen, one to whom I was well known, the others perfect strangers. One of the latter, a very well-dressed but rather foppish, conceited young man, talked much upon literary matters, and from his conversation gave you to understand that he was on the most intimate terms with all the celebrated authors of the day. After giving us a very frank, and by no means just critique upon the works of Scott and Byron, whom he familiarly called, 'my friend, Sir Walter,' 'my companion, Lord Byron,' he suddenly turned to me, and asked me 'if I ever read the S—— Chronicle?' It being one of the county papers, I told him that I saw it every week.

"'If that be the case,' said he, 'will you tell me what you think of the Rev. Mr. B.'s poems, which have from time to time appeared in its columns?'

"This reverend gentleman was a man with a very heavy purse, and a very empty head, whose contributions to the country papers were never read but to be laughed at, and not having the slightest personal knowledge of the author, I answered innocently enough, 'Oh, he's a stupid, conceited fellow. It is a pity he has not some friend to tell him what a fool he makes of himself, whenever he appears in print. His poetry is such dull trash, that I am certain he must pay the editor of the paper for allowing him to put it in.'

"Mr. C. was stuffing his handkerchief into his mouth, to avoid laughing out; while the poor gentleman (for it was the author himself) drew back with a face alternately red and pale, with suppressed indignation. His feelings must have been dreadful, for, during the rest of his journey, he sat and regarded me with an air of such offended dignity, that I am certain I must have appeared to him like some wicked ogress, who was ready to devour, at one mouthful, him and his literary fame. He never opened his mouth to speak to any of us after I had made this unfortunate blunder, and I sat upon thorns, until a handsome plain carriage drove up

to the coach about a mile from T., and relieved us of his company.

"This circumstance made me feel so uncomfortable, that I never ventured upon giving an opinion of the works of any living author to a stranger, without having a previous knowledge of the person of the writer."

"He deserved what he got, for his egregious vanity," said Lyndsay. "For my part, I do not pity him at all; and it afforded you a good lesson of prudence for the future."

At this moment a young negro lad, fantastically dressed, and evidently very much in love with himself, strutted past. As he swaggered along the deck, rolling his jet-black eyes from side to side, and showing his white teeth to the spectators, an indolent-looking young man, dressed in the extreme of fashion, called languidly after him—

"Hollo, Blacky! What color's the Devil?"

"White," responded the imp of darkness, "and sports red whiskers like you!"

Every one laughed; the dandy shrunk back, utterly confounded; while the Negro snapped his fingers, and crowed with delight.

"Hector, go down into the ladies' cabin, and wait there until I call for you," cried Mrs. Dalton, in an angry voice; "I did not bring you here to insult gentlemen."

"De Buckra affront me first!" returned the sable page, as he sullenly withdrew.

"That boy grows very pert," continued his mistress, turning to Major F.; "this is the consequence of the ridiculous stir made by the English people against slavery. The fellow knows that he is free the moment that he touches the British shores; and he thinks he can show his independence by disobeying my commands, and being insolent to his superiors. I hope he will not take it into his head to leave me, for he saves me all the trouble of taking care of the children."

The Major laughed, while Flora pitied the children, and wondered how any mother could confide them to the care of such a nurse.

The clouds, that had been rising for some time, gave very unequivocal notice of an approaching storm. The rain began to fall, and the decks were quickly cleared of their motley groups.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A PEEP INTO THE LADIES' CABIN.

IN the ladies' cabin, all was helplessness and confusion. The larger portion of the berths were already occupied by invalids in every stage of sea-sickness. The floor and sofas were strewn with bonnets and shawls, and articles of dress were scattered about in all directions. Some of the ladies were stretched upon the carpet; others, in a sitting posture, were supporting their aching heads upon their knees, and appeared perfectly indifferent to all that was passing around them, and only alive to their own misery: others there were, who, beginning to recover from the odious malady, were employing their returning faculties in quizzing, and making remarks in audible whispers, on their prostrate companions—particularly if their dress and manners did not exactly accord with their preconceived notions of gentility.

The centre of such a group was a little sharp-faced, dark-eyed, sallow-skinned old maid of forty, whose angular figure was covered with ample folds of rich black silk, cut very low in the bust, and exposing a portion of her person, which, in all ladies of her age, is better hid. She was travelling companion to a large, showily-dressed matron of fifty, who occupied the best sofa in the cabin, and, although evidently convalescent, commanded the principal attendance of the stewardess, while she graciously received the gratuitous services of all who were well enough to render her their homage. She was evidently the great lady of the cabin; and round her couch a knot of gossips had collected, when Flora, followed by Hannah carrying the baby, entered upon the scene.

The character of Mrs. Dalton formed the topic of conversation. The little old-maid was remorselessly tearing it to tatters. "No woman who valued her reputation," she said, with pious horror in her looks and tone, "would flirt in the disgraceful manner that Mrs. Dalton was doing."

"There is some excuse for her conduct," remarked a plain but interesting-looking woman, not herself in the early spring of life. "Mrs. Dalton is a West Indian, and has not been brought up with our ideas of refinement and delicacy."

"I consider it no excuse!" cried the other, vehemently, glancing

up, as the cabin-door opened to admit Flora and her maid, to be sure that the object of her animadversions was not within ear-shot. "Don't tell me. She knows, Miss Leigh, very well what she's about. Is it no crime, think you, her trying to attract the attention of Major F——? My dear Madam," turning to the great lady, who, with her head languidly propped by her hand, was eagerly listening to a conversation which so nearly concerned her, "I wonder you can bear so calmly her flirtations with your husband. If it were me, now, I should be ready to tear her eyes out. Do speak to the creature, and remonstrate with her on her scandalous conduct."

"Ah, my dear Miss Mann, I am used to these things," sighed Mrs. F. "No conduct of the Major's can give me the least uneasiness now. Nor do I think that Mrs. Dalton is aware that she is trying to seduce the affections of a *married* man."

"That she is though," exclaimed Miss Mann, triumphantly. "I took care to interrupt one of their lively conversations, by telling Major F. that his wife was ill, and wished to see him. Mrs. Dalton colored, and moved away; but the moment my back was turned, she recommenced her attack. If she were a widow, one might make some allowance for her; but she is a young married woman, with two small children. I have no doubt that she left her husband for no good."

"She was married very young, to a man more than double her own age," said Miss Leigh. "The match was made for her by her friends—especially by her grandmother, who now resides in Edinburgh, and whom I know very well—a woman of considerable property, by whom Mrs. Dalton was brought up. She was always a gay, flighty girl, dreadfully indulged, and used from a child to have her own way. I consider her lot peculiarly hard, in being united, when a mere girl, to a man she had scarcely seen a dozen times, and whom she did not love. The worst that can be said of her, is, that she is vain and imprudent; but I can never believe that she is the bad, designing woman you would make her."

"Her conduct is very creditable for a clergyman's wife," sneered the old maid. "I wonder the rain don't bring her down into the cabin. But the society of ladies would prove very insipid to a person of her peculiar taste. I should like to know what brings her from Jamaica?"

"If it will satisfy your doubts, I can inform you," said Miss Leigh, with a quiet smile. "To place her two children with her grandmother, that they may receive an European education. She is a thoughtless being, but hardly deserves your severe censures."

The amiable manner in which this lady endeavored to defend the absent, without wholly excusing her levity, struck Flora very forcibly. Mrs. Dalton's conduct upon deck had created in her own mind no very favorable opinion of her good qualities. Miss Leigh's remarks tended not a little to soften her disgust and aversion towards that individual, whose attack upon her she felt was as ill-natured, as it was unjust. She was now inclined to let them pass for what they were worth, and to dismiss Mrs. Dalton from her thoughts altogether. But Miss Mann was too much excited by Miss Leigh's extenuating remarks, to let the subject drop, and returned with fresh vigor to the charge.

"It is totally beyond my power," she cried, "to do justice to her vanity and frivolity. No one ever before accused me of being ill-natured, or censorious. But that woman is the vainest person I ever saw. How she values herself upon her fine clothes. Did you notice, my dear Mrs. F., that she changed her dress three times yesterday, and twice to-day? She knelt a whole hour before the cheval-glass, arranging her hair, and trying on a variety of expensive head-dresses, before she could fix on one for the saloon. I should be ashamed of being the only lady among so many men. But she is past blushing—she has a face of brass."

"And so plain, too," murmured Mrs. Major F.

"You cannot deny that her features are good, ladies," again interposed Miss Leigh. "But creoles seldom possess the fine red and white of our British belles."

"At night," suggested Miss Mann, "her color is remarkably good; it is not subject to any variation like ours. The bleak sea air does not dim the roses on her cheeks; while these young ladies look as blue and as cold as figures carved out of stone. Of course, Miss Leigh will think me very uncharitable in saying that Mrs. D. paints; but I know she does. She left her dressing-case open yesterday, and her little boy was dabbling his fingers in her French carmine and pearl white, and a fine mess he made of his mamma's beautiful complexion. Bless me!" exclaimed the old maid, suddenly lowering her voice to a whisper, "if there is not her black imp sitting under the table; he will be sure to tell her all that we

have said about her ! What a nuisance he is ! I do not think it is proper for him, a great boy of sixteen, to be admitted into the ladies' cabin."

"Pshaw!" said Mrs. Major F.; "nobody cares for him—a black."

"But, my dear Mrs. F., though he is a black, the boy has eyes and ears, like the rest of his sex, and my sense of female propriety is shocked by his presence. But, who are these people?"—glancing at Flora and her maid—"and why is that woman admitted into the ladies' cabin?—servants have no business here."

"She is the nurse; that alters the case," said Miss Leigh. "The plea of being the children's attendant, brought Master Hector into the cabin."

"The boy is black, and has, on that score, as Mrs. Major F. says, neither rank nor sex," continued the waspish Miss Mann, contradicting the objections she had made to Hector's company only a few minutes before. "I will not submit to this insult, nor occupy the same apartment with a servant."

"My dear Madam, you strangely forget yourself," said Miss Leigh. "This lady has a very young infant, and cannot do without the aid of her nurse. A decent, tidy young woman is not quite such a nuisance as the noisy black boy that Mrs. Dalton has entailed upon us."

"But, then, she is a woman of *fashion*," whispered Miss Mann; "and we know nothing about these people; and if I were to judge by the young person's dress——"

"A very poor criterion," interrupted Miss Leigh; "I draw my inferences from a higher source."

Flora glanced once more at her dress, and a sarcastic smile passed over her face. It did not escape the observation of Miss Leigh, who, turning towards her, inquired, in a kind, friendly tone, "If she were going all the way to Edinburgh, the age of the baby, and how both were affected by the sea."

Before Flora could answer these questions, Miss Mann addressed her, and said, with great asperity of look and manner—

"Perhaps, madam, you are not aware that it is against the regulations of these vessels to admit servants into the state cabin."

"I am sorry, ladies," said Flora, rather proudly, "that the presence of mine should incommod you. I have only just recovered from a dangerous illness, and I am unable at present to take the

whole charge of the child myself. I have paid for my servant's attendance upon me in the cabin, and I am certain that she will conduct herself in a manner that will not offend the prejudices of any one here."

"How unpleasant," grumbled the old maid, as she turned disdainfully on her heel; "but what else can be expected from under-bred people?"

"Who wear *stuff gowns*," said Flora, maliciously.

Miss Leigh looked up with an amused smile on her fine intelligent countenance; and the little woman in black retreated once more to the couch of the big lady.

"Send away your nurse," said Miss Leigh, in a low voice, to Mrs. Lyndsay; "her presence gives great offence to certain *small-minded* people, and if I may judge by her pale looks, she will be of little service to you; I will help you to take care of your sweet baby."

Flora immediately complied with Miss Leigh's request. Hannah was dismissed, and, indeed, the poor girl had enough to do to take care of herself. She was so miserably ill during the voyage, that, from the moment she left the cabin, she was unable to rise from her bed until the vessel made her port.

Towards evening the wind rose to a gale, and Flora, who had not suffered from sickness during her two disastrous trips to sea, became so alarmingly ill, that she was unable to attend to the infant, or assist herself. Miss Leigh, like a good Samaritan, sat up with her during the night, but in the morning she was so much worse, that she earnestly requested that her husband might be allowed to see her.

Her petition was warmly seconded by Miss Leigh, but met with a decided refusal from the rest of the lady-passengers. Mrs. Dalton, who took a very prominent part in the matter, sprang from her berth, and putting her back against the cabin door, declared "that no man save the surgeon should gain, with her consent, an entrance there!"

"Then I hope, Madam," said Miss Leigh, who was supporting Flora in her arms, "that you will adhere to your own regulations, and dismiss your black boy."

"I shall do no such thing; my objection is to men, and not to boys. Hector, remain where you are!"

"How consistent!" sneered the old maid.

"The poor lady may die," suggested Miss Leigh.

"Send for the Doctor—there is one on board."

"The Doctor, ladies," said the stewardess, coming forward, "got hurt last night by the fall of the sail during the storm, and is ill in his bed."

"If such is the case," continued Miss Leigh, "you cannot surely deny the lady the consolation of speaking to her husband!"

"Who is her husband?" said the old maid, snappishly.

"A very gentlemanly man, I assure you," said Mrs. Dalton: "he is an officer in the army, with whom I had a long chat last night in the saloon."

"Very consoling to his sick wife," whispered Miss Mann to Mrs. Major F., just loud enough to be overheard by Mrs. Dalton; "it must have made the Major jealous."

"What a noise that squalling child makes!" cried a fat woman, popping her night-capped head out of an upper berth; "can't it be removed? It hinders me from getting a wink of sleep."

"Children are a great nuisance," said Miss Mann, glancing towards Mrs. Dalton; "and the older they are, the worse they behave."

"Stewardess!—where are you, Stewardess! Send that noisy babe to the nurse!" again called the fat woman from her berth.

"The nurse," returned that important personage, "is as ill as the mistress."

"Oh, dear!—oh, dear!—my poor head! Cannot you take charge of it, Stewardess?"

"Oh, la! I've too much upon my hands already—what with Mrs. Dalton's children and all this sickness!"

"Have a little mercy, ladies, on the sick mother, and I will endeavor to pacify its cries," said Miss Leigh. "Poor little thing, it misses her care, and we are all strange to it."

"I insist upon its being removed!" cried the fat woman. "The comfort of every lady in the cabin is not to be sacrificed for the sake of that squalling brat. If women choose to travel with such young infants, they should take a private conveyance. I will complain to the Captain, if the stewardess does not remove it instantly."

These words reached Mrs. Lyndsay's ears, just as she was recovering from a long and severe fainting fit, and, starting from Miss Leigh's supporting arms, she staggered to the berth, just as the

stewardess took up the child, and exclaimed, in a tone of alarm, whilst a passionate burst of tears rendered her voice almost inarticulate, "Oh, my poor baby!—do not take away my baby! If it must be expelled, we will go together. If I could but get upon the deck to my husband, we should not meet with the treatment there that we have received here."

"Don't fatigue yourself," said Miss Leigh, "they have no power to send either you or the dear little babe away. I will nurse you both—see! the pretty darling is already asleep."

She carried Josey to her own berth in the state cabin, and then undressed Flora, who was fast relapsing into her former insensible state, and put her to bed.

What a difference there is in women! Some, like ministering angels, strew flowers and scatter blessings along the rugged paths of life; while others, by their malevolence and pride, increase its sorrows an hundred fold.

The next day continued stormy, and the rain fell in torrents. The unsteady motion of the ship did not tend to improve the health of the occupants of the ladies' cabin. Those who had been well the day before, were now as helpless and miserable as their companions. Miss Leigh alone seemed to retain her usual composure. Mrs. Dalton could scarcely be named in this catalogue, as she only slept and dressed in the cabin; the rest of her time was devoted to her friends upon deck, and, in spite of the boisterous winds and heavy sea, she was as gay and as airy as ever.

Her children, the most noisy of their species, were confined to the cabin, where they amused themselves by running races round the table, and shouting at the top of their shrill voices, greatly to the annoyance of the sick women. In all their pranks, they were encouraged and abetted by Hector, who, regardless of the entreaties of the invalids, and the maledictions of the exasperated stewardess, did his very best to increase the uproar and confusion. Hector did not care for the commands of any one but his mistress, and she was in the saloon, playing at billiards with Major F.

Little Willie Dalton had discovered the baby, and Flora was terrified whenever he approached her berth, which was on a level with the floor of the cabin, as that young gentleman, who was at the unmanageable age of three years, seemed decidedly bent on mischief. Twice he had crept into her bed on his hands and knees, and aimed a blow at the head of the sleeping babe with the leg of a

broken chair, which he had found beneath the sofa. The attack had been warded off by Mrs. Lyndsay, but not without receiving a severe bruise on her arm in the scuffle.

While the ladies slept, Hector stole from berth to berth, and possessed himself of all their stores of oranges, lemons, and cayenne lozenges ; sharing the spoils with the troublesome, spoilt monkeys, left by their careful mamma in his keeping.

Towards evening Mrs. Lyndsay felt greatly recovered from her grievous attack of sea-sickness ; and, with the assistance of Miss Leigh, she contrived to dress herself, and get upon the deck.

The rain was still falling in large, heavy drops ; but the sun was bravely struggling through the dense masses of black clouds, that had obscured his rays during the long, stormy day, and now cast a watery and uncertain gleam upon the wild scenery, over which Bamborough Castle frowns in savage sublimity.

This was the last glance Flora gave to the shores of dear old England. The angry, turbulent ocean, the lowering sky, and falling rain, seemed emblems of her own sad destiny. Her head sunk upon her husband's shoulder, as he silently clasped her to his breast ; and she could only answer his anxious inquiries respecting herself and the child with heavy sobs. For his sake—for the sake of the little one, who was nestled closely to her throbbing heart—she had consented to leave those shores for ever. Then why did she repine ? Why did that last glance of her native land fill her breast with such unutterable grief ? Visions of the dim future floated before her, prophetic of all the trials and sorrows that awaited her in those unknown regions to which they were journeying. She had obeyed the call of duty, but had not yet tasted the reward. The sacrifice had not been as yet purified and sublimed, by long suffering and self-denial, so as to render it an acceptable offering on so holy a shrine. She looked up to heaven, and tried to breathe a prayer ; but all was still and dark in her bewildered mind.

The kind voice of the beloved at last roused her from the indulgence of vain regrets. The night was raw and cold ; the decks wet and slippery from the increasing rain ; and, with an affectionate pressure of the hand, that went far to reconcile her to her lot, Lyndsay whispered, “ This is no’ place for you, Flora, and my child. Return, dearest, to the cabin.”

With reluctance Flora obeyed. Beside him she felt neither the

cold nor wet ; and, with the greatest repugnance, she re-entered the ladies' cabin, and retiring to her berth, enjoyed, for several hours, a tranquil and refreshing sleep.

CHAPTER XIX.

MRS. DALTON.

IT WAS midnight when Mrs. Lyndsay awoke. A profound stillness reigned in the cabin ; the invalids had forgotten their sufferings in sleep—all but one female figure, who was seated upon the carpeted floor, just in front of Flora's berth, wrapped in a loose dressing-gown, and engaged in reading a letter. Flora instantly recognised in the watcher the tall, graceful figure of Mrs. Dalton.

Her mind seemed agitated by some painful recollections ; and she sighed frequently, and several bright tears stole slowly over her cheeks, as she replaced the paper carefully in her bosom, and for many minutes appeared lost in deep and earnest thought. All her accustomed gayety was gone ; and her fine features wore a sad and regretful expression, far more touching and interesting than the heartless levity by which they were generally distinguished.

" Is it possible, that that frivolous mind can be touched by grief ? " thought Flora — " that that woman can feel ? "

Mrs. Dalton, as if she had heard the unuttered query, raised her head, and caught the intense glance with which Mrs. Lyndsay was unconsciously regarding her.

" I thought no one was awake but myself," she said ; " I am a bad sleeper. If you are the same, we will have a little chat together ; I am naturally a sociable animal ; of all company, I find my own the worst, and above all things hate to be alone."

Surprised at this frank invitation, from a woman who had pronounced her *nobody*, on no other account than that of wearing a plain but suitable dress, Flora replied, rather coldly, " I fear, Mrs. Dalton, that our conversation would not suit each other."

" That is as much as to say, that you don't like me ; and that you conclude from that circumstance, that I don't like you ? "

" To be candid, then—you are right."

" I fancy that you overheard my observations to Major F. ? "

" I did."

" Well, if you did, I can forgive you for disliking me. When I

first saw you, I thought you a very plain person, and judged by your dress, that you held a very inferior rank in society. After listening a few minutes to your conversation with Miss Leigh, who is a highly educated woman, I felt convinced that I was wrong ; and that you were far superior to most of the women round me. Of course you thought me a very malicious, vain woman."

Flora smiled, in spite of herself.

" Oh, you may speak it out. I deserve to be punished for my want of discrimination. I shan't like you a bit the less for speaking the truth. I am a strange, wayward creature, subject at times to the most dreadful depression of spirits ; and it is only by affecting excessive gayety that I hinder myself from falling into the most hopeless despondency."

" Such a state of mind is not natural to one of your age, and who possesses so many personal attractions. There must be some cause for these fits of gloom."

" Of course there is. I am not quite the heartless coquette I seem. My father was an officer in the army, and commanded a regiment in the West Indies, where I was born. I was an only child, and very much indulged by both my parents. I lost them while I was a mere child, and was sent to Scotland to be educated by my grandmother. I was an irritable, volatile, spoilt child, and expected that everybody would yield to me, as readily as my slave attendants had done in Jamaica. In this I was disappointed. My grandmother was a proud, ambitious woman, and a strict disciplinarian ; and it was a constant battle between us who should be master. I was no match, however, for the old lady, and I fretted constantly under her control, longing for any chance that might free me from her rule. It was a joyful day for me, when I was sent to finish my education at one of the first schools in Edinburgh, which I did not leave until I was sixteen years of age. I found grandmamma several years older, and many degrees more exacting than she was before. She was so much alarmed lest I should make an unsuitable alliance, that she never suffered me to go out without I was accompanied by herself, or an old maiden aunt, who was more rigid and stiff than even grandmamma herself.

" At this period of my girlhood, and before I had seen anything of the world, or could in the least judge for myself, a very wealthy clergymen, who had been a great friend of poor papa's, called to see me before he returned to Jamaica, where he had a fine living,

and possessed a noble property. Unfortunately for me, he fell desperately in love with the orphan daughter of his friend, and his suit was vehemently backed by grandmamma and aunt. He was a handsome, worthy, kind man, but old enough to have been my father. I was so unhappy and restless at home that I was easily persuaded to become his wife ; and I, who had never been in love, thought it such a fine thing to be married, and my own mistress at sixteen. Our union has not been a happy one. I much question if such unions ever are. He is now an aged man, while I am in the very bloom of life, and consequently exposed to much temptation. Thank God ! I never acted criminally, though often severely tried. My home is one of many luxuries, but has no domestic joys. My children are the only tie that bind me to a man I cannot love ; and I have been so long used to drown my disappointment and regret in a whirl of dissipation, that it is only in scenes of gayety that I forget my grief.

" My own sex speak lightly of me ; but I do not deserve their severe censures. My fellow-passengers, I heard from Hector, made a thousand malicious remarks about me yesterday, and that you and Miss Leigh were the only ones that took my part."

" My conduct," replied Flora, " was perfectly negative. I said nothing either in praise or blame. I may have injured you by thinking hardly of you."

" I thank you for your forbearance, in keeping your thoughts to yourself, for I did not deserve that from you. The conversation that Hector repeated to me greatly annoyed me. It has brought on one of my gloomy fits. If I did flirt a little with Major F., it was done more to provoke the spleen of that ill-natured old maid, who acts the part of Cerberus for his proud, pompous wife, than for any wish to attract his attention."

" It is better," said Flora, her heart softening towards her companion, " to avoid all appearance of evil. Superficial observers only judge by outward appearance, and your conduct must have appeared strange to a jealous woman."

" She was jealous of me then ?" cried the volatile Mrs. Dalton, clapping her hands in an ecstasy of delight. " Oh, I am so glad that it annoyed her !"

Flora could not help laughing at the vivacity with which she turned her words to make them subservient to her own vanity. But when she described the consternation felt by Miss Mann, on discov-

ering Hector under the table, her eccentric companion laughed until the tears ran down her cheeks.

The introduction of Hector insensibly turned the conversation upon the state of the slaves in the West Indies. The excitement of the slave question was just then at its height; but the bill for their emancipation had not yet passed the houses of parliament. Upon Flora expressing her abhorrence of the whole system, Mrs. Dalton proceeded to defend it with no little warmth.

"Ah, I perceive that you know nothing about it. You are infected with the bigotry and prejudices of the anti-slavery advocates. Negroes are an inferior race; they were made to work for civilized men, in climates where labor would be death to those of a different complexion."

"This is reducing the African to a mere beast of burthen—a machine in the form of man. The just God never made a race of beings purposely to drag out a painful existence in perpetual toil and degradation."

"They are better off than your peasants at home," continued Mrs. Dalton, indignantly—"better fed and taken care of. As to the idle tales they tell you about flogging, starvation, and killing slaves, they are fearful exaggerations, not worthy of credit. Do you think a farmer would kill a horse that he knew was worth a hundred pounds, out of revenge for his having done some trifling injury to his harness? A planter would not disable a valuable slave, if by so doing he injured himself. But your slave adorers will not listen to reason and common sense. I have been the owner of many slaves, but I never ill-used one of them in my life."

"Hector is an example of over-indulgence," said Flora; "but still he is only a pet animal in your estimation. Tell me truly, Mrs. Dalton, do you believe that a negro has a soul to be saved?"

"I think it doubtful!"

"And you the wife of a Christian minister?" said Flora, reproachfully.

"If they had immortal souls and reasoning minds, we should not be permitted to hold them as slaves. Their degradation proves their inferiority."

"It only proves the brutalizing effects of your immoral system," said Flora, waxing warm. "I taught a black man from the island of St. Vincent's to read the Bible fluently in ten weeks. Was that a proof of mental incapacity? I never met with an unedu-

cated white man who learned to read so rapidly, or who pursued his studies with the ardor of this despised, soulless black. His motive for this exertion was a noble one, which I believe cost him his life—the hope of carrying the glad tidings of salvation to his benighted countrymen, which he considered the best means of improving their condition, and rendering less burdensome their oppressive yoke."

"This was all very well in theory; but it will never do in practice. If the British Government, urged on by a set of fanatics, who, in reality, are more anxious to bring themselves into notice than to emancipate the slaves, madly persist in adopting their ridiculous project, it will involve the West Indies in ruin."

"It were better that the whole group of islands were sunk in the depths of the sea," said Flora, vehemently, "than continue to present to the world a system of injustice and cruelty, that is a disgrace to a Christian community—a spectacle of infamy to the civilized world. Nor think that the wise and good men who are engaged heart and hand in this holy cause, will cease their exertions until their great object is accomplished, and slavery is banished from the earth."

Mrs. Dalton stared at Flora in amazement. She could not in the least comprehend her enthusiasm. "Who cares for a slave?" she said, contemptuously. "You must live among them, and be conversant with their habits, before you can understand their inferiority. One would think that you belonged to the Anti-Slavery Society, to hear the warmth with which you argue the case. Do you belong to that odious Society?—for I understand that many pious women make themselves vastly busy in publicly discussing the *black* question."

"I have many dear friends who are among its staunch supporters—both men and women, whose motives are purely benevolent, who have nothing to gain by the freedom of the slaves, beyond the satisfaction of endeavoring to forward a good work, which, if it succeeds, (and we pray God that it may,) will restore a large portion of the human family to their rights as immortal and rational creatures."

"Mere cant—the vanity of making a noise in the world—one of the refined hypocrisies of the present age. By-the-hye, my dear Madam, have you read a tract published lately by this disinterested Society, called the *History of Mary P——?* It is set forth to be

an authentic narrative, while I know enough of the West Indies, to pronounce it a tissue of falsehoods from beginning to end."

"Did you know Mary P——?"

"I wonder who does? It is an imaginary tale got up for party purposes."

"You are mistaken," said Flora, quietly. "That narrative is strictly true. I was staying, the winter before last, with her mistress in London, and I wrote it myself from the woman's own lips."

"You!" and Mrs. Dalton started from the ground as though she had been bitten by a serpent—"and I have been talking all this time to the author of Mary P——. From this moment, Madam, we must regard ourselves as strangers. No West Indian could for a moment tolerate the writer of that odious pamphlet."

Mrs. Dalton retired to her berth, which was in the state cabin; and Flora lay awake for several hours, pondering over their conversation, until the morning broke, and the steamer cast anchor off New Haven.

CHAPTER XX.

EDINBURGH.

THE storm had passed away during the night; and at day-break Flora hurried upon deck, to catch the first glance of

"The glorious land of flood and fell,
The noble north countrie."

The sun was still below the horizon, and a thick mist hung over the waters, and hid the city from her view. Oh, for the rising of that white curtain! how Flora tried to peer through its vapory folds, to

"Hail old Scotia's darling seat,"

the beautiful abode of brave, intelligent, true-hearted men, and fair good women. Glorious Edinburgh! who ever beheld you for the first time with indifference, and felt not his eyes brighten, and his heart thrill with a proud ecstasy, the mingling of his spirit with a scene, in which romantic sublimity, has not its equal in the wide world

"Who would not dare
To fight for such a land!"

exclaims the patriotic wizard of the north. Aye, and to die for it,

if need be, as every true-hearted Scot would die, rather than see one stain cast upon the national glory of his noble country. The character of a people is greatly influenced by the local features of the land to which it belongs ; and the inhabitants of mountainous districts have ever evaded most effectually the encroachments of foreign invaders. The Scot may, perhaps, derive from his romantic country, much of that poetic temperament, that stern, uncompromising love of independence, which has placed him in the first rank as a man.

The sun at length rose ; the fog rolled its grey masses upwards, and the glorious old castle emerged from between the parting clouds, like some fabled palace of the gods, its antique towers glittering like gold in the sun-burst.

"Beautiful ! oh, how beautiful !" exclaimed the enraptured Flora, her eye kindling, and her cheek flushing with delight.

"The situation of Quebec is almost as fine," said Captain Forbes, who had been watching with pleasure the effect which the first sight of his native city produced upon her countenance. "It will lose little by comparison."

"Indeed !" cried Flora, eagerly, turning to the speaker ; "I had formed no idea of anything in Canada being at all equal to this."

"You have been there, Captain ?" said Lyndsay.

"Yes, many times ; and always with increased pleasure. Quebec combines every object that is requisite to make a scene truly magnificent—woods, mountains, rivers, cataracts—and all on the most stupendous scale. A lover of nature cannot fail to be delighted with the rock-defended fortress of British North America."

"You have made me quite happy, Captain Forbes," said Flora ; "I have contemplated a residence in Canada with feelings of such antipathy, that your description of Quebec almost reconciles me to my lot. I can never hate a country which abounds in natural beauty."

Boats were now constantly plying to and from the shore, conveying passengers and their luggage from the ship to the pier. The Captain, who had recognised a countryman in Lyndsay, insisted on the voyagers taking breakfast with him before they left the vessel. Mrs. Lyndsay had suffered so much from sea-sickness, that she had not tasted food since she came on board ; early rising

and the keen, invigorating air had sharpened her appetite, which was increased by the savory smell of fried ham and eggs. The offer was too tempting to be resisted, and she accepted it with such hearty good will, that the Captain laughed, and rubbed his hands in the excess of hospitable satisfaction, as he called to his steward to place a small table under an awning upon the deck, and serve the breakfast there.

" You will enjoy it much more in the fresh air, Mrs. Lyndsay," he said, " after your severe illness, than in the close air."

Flora was delighted with the arrangement, and set the Captain down as a man of taste, as by this means he had provided for her a double feast—the beautiful scenery which on every side met her gaze, and an excellent breakfast, served in the balmy morning air.

The rugged grace with which the gallant tar presided at what might be termed his own private table, infused a cheerful spirit into those around him, and never was a meal more heartily enjoyed by our emigrants. James Hawke, who had been confined during the whole voyage to his berth, now rejoined his friends, and ate of the savory things before him in such downright earnest, that the Captain declared it was a pleasure to watch the lad handle his knife and fork.

" When a fellow has been starving for eight and-forty-hours, it is not a trifle that can satisfy his hunger," said Jim, making a vigorous onslaught upon a leg of Scotch mutton. " Oh! but I never was so hungry in my life!"

" Not even during those two disastrous days last week, which we spent starving at sea?" said Flora.

" Ah, don't name them," said the boy, with an air of intense disgust. " Those days were attended with such *qualms* of conscience that I have banished them from the log of life altogether. Oh, those dreadful days!"

" Why, Jim, you make a worse sailor than I expected," said Flora; " how shall we get you alive to Canada?"

" Oh, never fear," said the lad, gaily; " I have cast all those horrible reminiscences into the sea; I was very ill, but 'tis all over now, and I feel as light as a feather; you shall see that I shall be quite myself again, directly we leave sight of the British shores."

On returning to the ladies' cabin, to point out her luggage to the steward of the boat, Flora found that important functionary of the gender feminine, pacing to and fro the now empty scene of all her

trouble in high disdain. She had paid very little attention to Mrs. Lyndsay during the voyage, for which neglect, in all probability, the merino gown was the sole cause. She had waited with the most obsequious, fawning politeness on Mrs. Major F. and Mrs. Dalton, because she fancied they were rich people, who would amply reward her for her services. They had given her all the trouble they possibly could, while she had received few commands from Flora, and those she had neglected to perform. Still, as Flora well knew that the paid salary of these people is small; and that they mainly depend upon the trifles bestowed upon them by passengers, who try their strength and patience to the uttermost, she slipped half-a-crown into her hand, and begged her to see that the trunks she had pointed out were carried upon deck.

The woman stared at her, and dropped a low courtesy—yes—in the very shadow of the ample folds of Flora's despised merino gown.

"La, Mem, you are one of the very few of our passengers, who has been kind enough to remember the stewardess. It's too bad—indeed it is. And all the trouble that that Mrs. Dalton gave with her spoilt children, and nasty black vagabond. I was out of my bed all last night with those cross noisy brats—and thinks I to myself—she cannot do less than give me half a sovereign for my services. But would you believe me, she went off without bestowing on me a single penny? And worse than that, I heard her tell the big fat woman, that never rose up in her berth, but to drink brandy-and-water, 'that it was a bad fashion the Hinglish had of paying servants, and the sooner it was got rid of, the better.'

"I perfectly agree with you, said the fat woman; and so she gave nothing;—no—not even thanks. Mrs. Major F.—pretended not to see me, though I am sure I'm no midge; and I stood in the doorway on purpose to give her a hint; but the hideous little old maid told me to get out of the way, as she wanted to go upon deck to speak to the Major. Oh, the meanness of these would-be fine ladies! But if ever they come to Scotland in this boat again, won't I pay them off!"

Now it must be confessed that Flora rather enjoyed these unsolicited confessions of a disappointed stewardess; and she was forced to turn away her head for fear of betraying a wicked inclination to laugh, which, if indulged in at that moment would I have no doubt, have afforded her great satisfaction and delight. As it was, she

made no comment upon the meanness of her fellow-passengers, nor consoled the excited stewardess by complaining of their unlady-like conduct to herself. What they were in their rank of life, the stewardess was in hers. They were congenial souls—all belonging to the same family, and Flora was not a little amused by the striking points of resemblance.

Bidding adieu to the Captain of the steamer, the Lyndseys and their luggage were safely landed on the chain-pier at New Haven; from thence they proceeded to Leith in a hackney coach, as Lyndsay wished to procure lodgings as near the place of embarkation as possible, in order to avoid all unnecessary expense. Leaving Flora and her maid at the inn, he set off with James Hawke in search of what he required; and returning in less than an hour, he conducted his wife to the house of a respectable woman, the widow of a surgeon, who resided near the Lieth Bank, and only a few minutes' walk from the wharf.

CHAPTER XXI.

MRS. WADDEL.

GREAT was the surprise of Flora, when, instead of entering the house by a front door, they walked up an interminable flight of stone stairs, every landing comprising a distinct dwelling, or flat (as it is there technically termed), with the names of the proprietors marked on the doors. At last they reached the flat that was occupied by good Mistress Waddel, which was situated at the very top of this stony region. Mrs. Waddel was at the door ready to receive them. She showed them into a comfortable sitting-room with windows fronting the street. A bright fire was blazing in a very old-fashioned grate; and she welcomed her new lodgers with a torrent of kindly words, pronounced in the broadest Scotch dialect, which were only half understood by the English portion of her audience.

A large, portly personage was Mrs. Waddel—ugly, amiable, and by no means over-particular in her dress; which consisted of a wollen-plaid, very much faded, and both ragged and dirty. Her large *mutch*, with its broad frills, formed a sort of glory round her head, setting off to no advantage her pock-marked, flabby face, wide mouth and yellow projecting teeth. She had a comical, good-

natured obliquity of vision in her prominent light-grey eyes, which were very red about the rims ; and Flora thought, as she read with an inquiring eye the countenance of their landlady, that, without being positively disgusting, she was the most ordinary, uncouth woman she ever beheld.

Mrs. Waddel was eloquent in the praise of her apartments, which she said had been occupied by my Leddy W., when his Majesty George the Fourth—God bless his sorsy face—landed at Leith, on his visit to Scotland. Her lodgings, it seemed, had acquired quite an aristocratic character since the above-named circumstances ; and not a day passed, but the good woman enumerated all the particulars of that memorable visit. But her own autobiography was the stock-theme with the good landlady. The most minute particulars of her private history she daily divulged, to the unspeakable delight of the mischievous, laughter-loving James Hawke, who, because he saw that it annoyed Mrs. Lyndsay, was sure to lead the conversation slyly to some circumstance that never failed to place the honest-hearted Scotch woman on her high-horse : and then she would talk—ye gods!—how she would talk—and splutter away in her broad provincial dialect, until the wicked boy was convulsed with laughter.

“Aye, Mister Jeames,” she would say, “ye will a’ be makin’ yer fun o’ a puir auld bodie, but ‘tis na’ cannie o’ ye.”

“ Making fun of *you*, Mrs. Waddel”—with a sly glance at Flora—“ how can you take such an odd notion into your head ! It is so good of you to tell me all about your courtship—it’s giving me a hint of how I’m to go about it when I’m a man. I am sure you were a very pretty, smart girl in your young days”—with another quizzical glance at Flora.

The old lady drew herself up, and smiled approvingly upon her black-eyed tormentor.

“ Na, na, Mister Jeames, my gude man that’s dead an’ gane said to me, the verra day that made me his ain—‘ Katie, ye are nae bonnie, but ye a’ gude, which is a’ hantle better.’ ”

“ No doubt he was right, Mrs. Waddel ; but I really think he was very ungallant to say so on his wedding-day, and did not do you half justice.”

“ Weel, weel,” said the good dame, “every ain to his taste. He was not o’wr gifted—that way himself ; but we are nane sensible o’ our ain defects.”

The great attraction in the small, windowless closet in which James slept, was an enormous calabash, which her son, the idol of Mrs. Waddel's heart, had brought home with him from the South Seas. Over this calabash, the simple-hearted mother daily rehearsed all the wonderful adventures she had gathered from that individual, during his short visits home, and as she possessed a surprisingly retentive memory, her maternal reminiscences would have filled volumes—to all of which James listened with the most earnest attention; not on account of the adventures, for they were common-place enough, but for the mere pleasure of hearing Mrs. Waddel talk broad Scotch, from which he seemed to derive the most ludicrous enjoyment. Mrs. Waddel had two daughters, to whom nature had been less bountiful than even to herself. Tall, awkward, shapeless dawdles, whose unlovely youth was more repulsive than the mother's full-blown, homely age—with them the old lady's innocent obliquity of vision had degenerated into a downright squint, and the redness round the rims of their large, fishy-looking, light eyes, gave you the idea of perpetual weeping; a pair of Niobes, versus the beauty, whose swollen orbs were always dissolved in tears. They crept slip-shod about the house, their discolored stockings hanging in loose folds about their thin, bony, ill-shaped legs, and their morning wrappers fitting so easily their wide, slovenly figures, that you expected to see them suddenly fall to the ground, and the young ladies walk on native simplicity.

"My daughters are like myself—na' bonnie," said Mrs. Waddel. "They diuna' tak' wi' the men folk, wha look mair to comeliness than gudeness now-a-days in a wife. A' weel, every dog maun ha' his day, an' they may get husbands yet."

"I weel remember, when Noncy was a bairn, she was the maist ugsome wee thing I ever clappit an e'e upon. My Leddy W. lodged in this verra room, in the which we are no' sittin'. She had a daughter, nearly a woman grown, an' I was in my sma' back parlor washin' an' dressin' the bairn,—in runs my Leddy Grace, an' she stood an' lookit an' lookit a lang time at the naked bairn in my lap: at last she clappit her hands, an' she called o'ot to her mither—'Mamma! mamma! for gudeness sake, come here, an' look at this ugly, blear-eyed, bandy-legget child!—I never saw sic an object in a' my life!'

"It made my heart sair to hear her despise a creature made in God's image in that way, an' I bursted into tears, an' said—'My

ledder, ye'r a bad Christian to spier in that way o' my pair bairn, an' that in the hearin' of its ain mither. May God forgive you; but you ha' a hard heart.' She was verra angry at my reproof, but my Liddy W. just then came in, an' she said, with one of her ain gracious smiles—' For shame, Grace; the bairn's weel enough. Let us hope she maun prove a blessin' to her parents. The straightest tree does na' always bear the finest fruit.'

"I ha' met wi' money crosses and sair trials in my day; but few o' them made me shed bitterer tears than that proud, handsome young leddy's speech on the deformity o' my pair bairn."

Flora stood reproved in her own eyes, for she knew she had regarded the poor, ugly girls with feelings of repugnance, on account of their personal defects. Even Jim, careless and reckless though he was, possessed an excellent heart, and he looked grave, and turned to the window, and tried to hum a tune, to get rid of an unpleasant sensation about his throat, which Mrs. Waddel's artless words had suddenly produced.

"Hang me," he muttered half aloud, "if I ever laugh at the poor girls again!"

Mrs. Waddel had, in common with most of her sex, a great predilection for going to auctions; and scarcely a day passed without her making some wonderful bargains. For a mere trifle, she had bought a gude pot; only, upon inspection, it turned out to be miserably leaky. A nice palliasse, which, on more intimate acquaintance, proved alive with gentry with whom the most republican body would not wish to be on intimate terms. Jim was always joking the old lady upon her bargains, greatly to the edification of Betty Fraser, a black-eyed Highland girl, who was Mrs. Waddel's prime minister in the culinary department.

"Weel, Mister Jeames, jist ha' yer laugh o'ot, but when ye get a glint o' the bonnie-table I bought this mornin' for three an' sax-pence, ye'll be noo makin' game o' me ony mair, I'm thinkin'. Betty, ye maun just step o'ur the curb-stane to the broker's, an' bring hame the table."

Away sped the nimble-footed Betty, and we soon heard the clattering of the table, as the leaves flapped to and fro as she lugged it up the public stairs.

"Now for the great bargain!" exclaimed the saucy Jim; "I think, Mrs. Waddel, I'll buy it of you, as my venture to Canada."

"Did ye ever?" exclaimed the old lady, her eyes brightening as

Betty dragged in the last bargain, and placed it triumphantly before her mistress. Like the Marquis of Anglesea, it had been in the wars, and with a terrible clatter, the incomparable table fell prostrate to the floor. Betty opened her great black eyes with a glance of blank astonishment, and raising her hands with a tragic air that was perfectly irresistible, exclaimed, "Mercy me, but it wants a fut!"

"A what?" screamed Jim, as he sank beside the fallen table and rolled upon the ground in a fit of irrepressible merriment; "Do, for Heaven's sake, tell me the English for a fut. Oh dear, I shall die! Why do you make such funny purchases, Mrs. Waddel, and suffer Betty to show them off in such a funny way? You will be the death of me, indeed you will; and then, what will my mammy say?"

To add to this ridiculous scene, Mrs. Waddel's grey parrot, who was not the least important personage in her establishment, having been presented to her by her sailor son, fraternized with the prostrate lad, and echoed his laughter in the most outrageous manner.

"Whist, Poll! Hauld yer clatter. It's no laughing matter to lose three an' saxpence in buying the like o' that."

Mrs. Waddel did not attend another auction during the month the Lyndsay's occupied her lodgings. With regard to Betty Fraser, Jim picked up a page out of her history, which greatly amused Flora Lyndsay, who delighted in the study of human character. We will give it here.

Betty Fraser's first mistress was a Highland lady, who had married and settled in Edinburgh. On her first confinement, she could fancy no one but a Highland girl to take care of the babe, when the regular nurse was employed about her own person. She therefore wrote to her mother to send her by the first vessel that sailed for Edinburgh, a good, simple-hearted girl, whom she could occasionally trust with the baby. Betty, who was a tenant's daughter, and a humble scion of the great family-tree, duly arrived by the next ship.

She was a hearty, healthy, rosy girl of fourteen, as rough as her native wilds, with a mind so free from guile that she gave a literal interpretation to everything she saw and heard.

In Canada, Betty would have been considered very green. In Scotland she was regarded as a truthful, simple-hearted girl. A

few weeks after the baby was born, some ladies called to see Mrs. ——. The weather was very warm, and one of them requested the neat black-eyed girl in waiting to fetch her a glass of water. Betty obeyed with a smiling face; but oh, horror of horrors! she brought the clear crystal to the lady guest in her red fist.

The lady smiled, drank the water, and returned the tumbler to the black-eyed Hebe, who received it with a profound courtesy.

When the visitors were gone, Mrs. ——, who was very fond of her young clanswoman, called her to her side, and said, "Betty, let me never see you bring anything into my room in your bare hands. Always put what you are asked for on to a waiter or an ashat."

The girl promised obedience.

The very next day some strange ladies called; and after congratulating Mrs. —— on her speedy recovery, they expressed an earnest wish to see the "*dear little baby*."

Mrs. —— rang the bell. Betty appeared. "Is the baby awake?"

"Yes, my leddy."

"Just bring him in to show these ladies."

Betty darted into the nursery, only too proud of the mission, and telling nurse to "mak' the young laird brau," she rushed to the kitchen, and demanded of the cook a "muckle big ashat."

"What do you want with the dish?" said the English cook.

"That's my ain business," quoth Betty, taking the enormous china platter from the cook's hand, and running back to the nursery. "Here, Mistress Norman, here is ain big enough to hand him in, at ony rate. Pray lay his wee duds smooth, an I'll tak' him in, for I hear the bell."

"Are ye duff, lass? Would ye put the bairn on the ashat?"

"Aye, mistress tauld me to bring what she asked me for on an ashat. Sure ye wud no' ha' me disobey her?"

"Na, na," said the nurse, laughing, and suspecting some odd mistake. "Ye sal' ha' it yer ain way."

And she carefully laid the noble babe upon the dish, and went before to open the door that led to Mrs. ——'s chamber.

Betty entered as briskly as her unwieldy burden would permit, and with glowing cheeks, and eyes glistening with honest delight, presented her human offering in the huge dish to the oldest female visitor in the room.

With a scream of surprise, followed by a perfect hurricane of

laughter, the venerable dame received the precious gift from Betty's hand, and holding it towards the astonished mother, exclaimed, "Truly, my-dear friend, this is a dish fit to set before a king. Our beloved sovereign would have no objection of seeing a dish so filled with royal fruit, placed at the head of his own table."

The laugh became general; and poor Betty, comprehending the blunder she had committed, not only fled from the scene, but dreading the jokes of her fellow-servants, fled from the house.

CHAPTER XXII.

CLIMBING THE MOUNTAINS.

THE Lyndseys, to their infinite mortification and disappointment, found, upon their arrival at Leith, that the *Chieftain*, in which vessel their places had been taken for Canada, had sailed only two days before. To make bad worse, Mrs. Waddel confidently affirmed, that it was the very last vessel that would sail that season.

Lyndsay, who never yielded to despondency, took these contrary events very philosophically, and lost no time in making inquiries among the ship-owners, to ascertain whether Mrs. Waddel was right.

After several days of anxions, and almost hopeless search, he was at last informed that the *Flora*, Captain Ayre, was to leave for Canada in a fortnight. The name seemed propitious, and that very afternoon he walked down with his wife to inspect the vessel.

The *Flora* was a small brig, very old, very dirty, and with wretched accommodations. The Captain was a brutal-looking person, blind of one eye, and very lame. Every third word he uttered was an oath; and, instead of answering Mr. Lyndsay's inquiries, he was engaged in a blasphemous dialogue with his two sons, who were his first and second mates. The young men seemed worthy of their parentage; their whole conversation being interlarded with frightful imprecations on their own limbs and souls, and the limbs and souls of others.

They had a very lage number of steerage passengers engaged, for the very small size of the vessel, and these emigrants of the very lowest description.

"Don't let us go in this horrible vessel," whispered Flora to her

husband. "What a captain—what a crew—we shall be miserable if we form any part of her live cargo!"

"I fear, my dear girl, there is no alternative. We may, perhaps, hear of another before she sails. I won't engage places in her until the last moment."

The dread of going in the *Flora* took a prophetic hold of the mind of her namesake; and she begged Jim to be on the constant look out for another vessel.

During their stay at Leith, Lyndsay was busily employed in writing a concluding chapter to his work on the Cape; and Flora amused herself by taking long walks, accompanied by James, the maid, and the baby, in order to explore all the beauties of Edinburgh. The lad, who was very clever, and possessed a wonderful faculty of remembering places and of finding his way among difficulties, always acted as guide on these occasions. Before he had been a week at Leith, he knew every street in Edinburgh; had twice or thrice climbed the heights of Arthur's seat, and visited every nook in the old castle. There was not a ship in the harbor of Leith, but he not only knew her name, and the name of her captain, but he had made himself acquainted with some of her crew, and could tell her freight and tonnage, her age and capabilities, the port from which she last sailed, and the port to which she was then bound, as well as any sailor on the wharf. It was really amazing to listen of an evening to the lad's adventures, and all the mass of information he had acquired during his long rambles through the day.

Flora was always in an agony lest James should be lost, or meet with some mishap during his exploring expeditions; but Mistress Waddel comforted her with the assurance, "That a cat, throw her which way you wu'd, lighted a' upon her feet—that naught was never tent—an' they that war' born to be hanget' wu'd never be drowned."

So, one fine afternoon in June, Flora took it into her wild head, that she would climb to the top of the mountain, the sight of which from her chamber window she was never tired of contemplating. She asked her husband to go with her. She begged—she entreated—she coaxed—but he was just writing the last pages of his long task, and he told her, that if she would only wait until the next day, he would go with pleasure.

But with Madam Flora, it was this day or none. She had set

her whole heart and soul upon going up to the top of the mountain and to the top of the mountain she determined to go. And this resolution was formed in direct opposition to her husband's wishes, and with a perfect knowledge of the tale of the dog Ball, which had been one of her father's stock stories, the catastrophe of which she had known from a child. Lyndsay did not tell her positively she should not go without him ; and, unable to control her impatience, she gave him the slip, and set off with Jim, who was only too eager for the frolic, on her mountain climbing expedition.

Now be it known unto our readers, that Flora was the native of a rich pastoral country ; very beautiful in running brooks, smooth meadows, and majestic parks ; where the fat, sleek cattle, so celebrated in the London markets, graze knee-deep in luxuriant pastures, and the fallow deer browze and gambol beneath the shadow of majestic oaks through the long bright summer days. But Flora had never seen a mountain before her visit to the North in her life, had never risen higher in the world than to the top of Shooter's hill, and when she arrived at the foot of this grand upheaval of nature, she began to think the task more formidable than she had imagined at a distance. Her young conductor, agile as a kid, bounded up the steep alclivity with as much ease, as if he were running over a bowling green.

"Not so fast, Jim !" cried Flora, pausing to draw breath. "I cannot climb like you."

Jim was already beyond hearing, and was lying on the ground peering over a projecting crag at least two hundred feet above her head, and impishly laughing at the slow progress she made.

"Now Jim ! that's cruel of you, to desert me in my hour of need," said Flora, shaking her hand at the young mad-cap. "Lyndsay was right after all. I had better have waited till to-morrow."

Meanwhile, the path that wound round the mountain towards the summit became narrower and narrower, and the ascent more steep and difficult. Flora sat down upon a stone amid the ruins of the chapel to rest, and to enjoy the magnificent prospect. The contemplation of this sublime panorama for a while absorbed every other feeling. She was only alive to a keen sense of the beautiful ; and while her eye rested on the lofty ranges of mountains to the north and south, or upon the broad bosom of the silver Forth, she no

longer wondered at the enthusiastic admiration expressed by the bards of Scotland for their romantic land.

While absorbed in thought, and contrasting the present with the past, a lovely boy of four years of age, in kilt and hose, his golden curls flying in the wind, ran at full speed up the steep side of the hill ; a panting woman, without bonnet or shawl, following hard upon his track, shaking her fist at him, and vociferating her commands (doubtless for him to return) in Gaelic, fled by.

On ran the laughing child, the mother after him ; but as well might a giant pursue a fairy.

Flora followed the path they had taken, and was beginning to enjoy the keen bracing air of the hills, when she happened to cast her eyes to the far-off meadows beneath. Her head grew suddenly giddy, and she could not divest herself of the idea, that one false step would send her to the plains below. Here was a most ridiculous and unromantic position : she neither dared to advance nor retreat ; and she stood grasping a ledge of the rocky wall in an agony of cowardice and irresolution. At this critical moment, the mother of the run-away child returned panting from the higher ledge of the mountain, and, perceiving Flora pale and trembling, very kindly stopped and asked what ailed her.

Flora could not help laughing while she confessed her fears, lest she should fall from the narrow foot-path on which she stood. The woman, though evidently highly amused at her distress, had too much native kindness of heart—which is the mother of genuine politeness—to yield to the merriment that hovered about her lips.

“ Ye are na’ accustomed to the hills,” she said, in her northern dialect, “ or ye wu’d na’ dread a hillock like this. Ye suld ha’ been born whar’ I wa’ born, to ken a mountain fra’ a mole-hill. There is my bairn, noo’, I canna’ keep him fra’ the mountain. He will gang awa’ to the tap, an’ only laughs at me when I spier to him to come do’on. It’s a’ because he is sae weel begotten—an’ all his forbears war reared amang the hills.”

The good woman sat down upon a piece of the loose rock, and commenced a long history of herself, of her husband, and of the great clan of Macdonald (to which they belonged), that at last ended in the ignoble discovery, that her aristocratic spouse was a corporal in the Highland regiment then stationed in Edinburgh, and that Flora, his wife, washed for the officers in the said regiment ;

that the little Donald, with his wild-goat propensities, was their only child, and so attached to the hills, that she could not keep him confined to the meadows below. The moment her eye was off him, his great delight was to lead her a dance up the mountain, which, as she, by her own account, never succeeded in catching him, was quite labor in vain.

All this, and more, the good-natured woman communicated in her frank, desultory manner, as she led Flora down the steep, narrow path that led to the meadows below. Her kindness did not end here, for she walked some way up the road to put Mrs. Lyndsay in the right track to regain her lodgings, for Flora, trusting to the pilotage of Jim, was perfectly ignorant of the location.

This Highland Samaritan indignantly refused the piece of silver Flora proffered in return for her services.

"Hout, leddy! keep the siller! I wudna' tak' aught fra' ye o' the Sabbath-day for a trifling act o' courtesy—na, na, I come of too gude bluid for that!"

There was a noble simplicity about the honest-hearted woman, that was not lost upon Flora. What a fine country!—what a fine people! No smooth-tongued flatterers, are these Scotch! With them an act of kindness is an act of duty; and they scorn payment for what they give gratuitously, without display and without ostentation.

"If I were not English," thought Flora, "I should like to be Scotch."

She looked rather crest-fallen, as she presented herself before her Scotch husband, who, instead of pitying, laughed heartily over her misadventure; and did not cease to tease her about her expedition to the mountain, as long as they remained in its vicinity.

This did not deter her from taking a long stroll on the sands "o' Leith," the next afternoon, with James, who delighted in these Quixotish rambles; and was always on the alert to join in any scheme that promised an adventure.

It was a lovely afternoon. The sun glittered on the distant waters, that girdled the golden sands with a zone of blue and silver. The air was fresh and elastic, and diffused a spirit of life and joyousness around. Flora, as she followed the footsteps of her young agile conductor, felt a child again; and began to collect shells and sea-weeds, with as much zest as she had done along her native coast,

in those far off, happy days, which at times returned to her memory like some distinct, but distant dream.

For hours they wandered hither and thither, lulled by the sound of the waters, and amused by their child-like employment ; until Flora remarked, that her footprints filled with water at each step, and the full deep roaring of the sea gave notice of the return of the tide. Fortunately they were not very far from the land ; and oh, what a race they had to gain the "Prin o' Leith," before they were overtaken by the waves. How thankful they felt that they were safe, as the billows chased madly past, over the very ground, which, a few minutes before, they had so fearlessly trod !

"This is rather worse than the mountain, Mamma Flora," (a favorite name with James for his friend Mrs. Lyndsay), "and might have been fatal to us both. I think Mr. Lyndsay would scold this time, if he knew our danger."

"Thank God ! the baby is safe at home," said Flora ; "I forgot all about the tide. What a mercy we were not drowned!"

"Yes ; and no one would have known what had become of us. Really, Mamma, you are a very careless woman." This was said laughing.

"Hush, Jim ! We won't quarrel on the score of prudence. But what is this ?" and she stepped up to a blank wall, on their homeward path, and read aloud the following advertisement :

"To sail on the first of July, via Quebec and Montreal, the fast-sailing brig *Anne*, Captain Williams. For particulars, inquire at the office of P. Gregg, Bank Street, Leith.

"N. B. The *Anne* is the last ship that leaves this port, for Canada, during the season."

"Hurrah !" cried the volatile Jim, flinging his cap into the air ; "a fig for Captain Ayre and the *Flora*. I'd lay sixpence, if I had it, that we shall sail in the *Anne*."

"Let us go, James, and look at the vessel," cried Flora, clapping her hands with delight. "Oh, if it had not been for our fright on the sands, we should not have seen this. Surely, nothing, however trifling, happens to us in vain."

Flora hastened home to inform her husband of the important discovery they had made ; and before half-an-hour had elapsed, she found herself in company with him and Jim, holding a conference with Captain Williams, in the little cabin of the *Anne*.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE BRIG ANNE.

The brig Anne was a small, old-fashioned, black-hulled vessel, marvellously resembling a collier in her outward appearance. She was a one-masted ship, of one hundred and eighty tons burthen, and promised everything but aristocratic accommodations for women and children:

The cabin was a low, square room, meant to contain only the captain and his mate; whose berths, curtained with coarse, red stuff, occupied the opposite walls. The table in the centre was a fixture, and the bench that ran round three sides of this crib was a fixture also; and though backed by the wall, was quite near enough to the table to serve the double purpose of chair or sofa. A small fireplace occupied the front of the cabin, at the side of which a door opened into a tiny closet, which the captain dignified with the name of his state-cabin. The compass was suspended in a brass box from the ceiling—other articles of comfort or luxury there were none.

The captain, a stout, broad-shouldered, red-faced man, like Captain Ayre, of the *Flora*, was minus an eye; but the one that fortune had left him was a piercer. He was a rough, blunt-looking tar, some forty-five or fifty years of age; and looked about as sentimental and polite as a tame bear. His coarse, weather-beaten face had an honest, frank expression, and he bade his guests to be seated with an air of such hearty hospitality, that they felt quite at home in his narrow, low den.

He had no cabin-passengers, though a great many in the steerage; and he assured Flora that she could have the very best accommodations, as he would resign the state-cabin to her and the child. Mr. Lyndsay could occupy the mate's berth in the cabin, and they could not fail of being quite snug and comfortable.

The state-cabin was just big enough to hold the captain's chest of drawers, the top of which, boarded, and draped with the same faded red stuff that decorated the outer room, formed the berth that Flora was to occupy. Small as the place was, it was scrupulously neat and clean, and possessed for Flora one great charm—that of privacy. She could, by shutting the door and drawing the

bolt, at any time enjoy the luxury of finding herself, though in a crowded vessel, alone.

"Mamma Flora, are you not charmed with the splendid accommodations of your fancy ship?" whispered the mischievous Jim. "There is not room for a flea to hop, without giving him the cramp in his legs."

"It is better than the *Flora*, so hold your tongue, you wicked imp."

But Lyndsay thought otherwise. The *Flora* was larger, and was to sail a fortnight earlier. He demurred—his wife coaxed and intreated; but he only went so far as to tell the captain to keep the berths unoccupied until the following day, and he would inform him of his final determination.

Just as they were rising to take leave, a tall, lanky man stuck his long, scraggy neck in at the cabin-door, and, in the broadest Scotch vernacular, exclaimed—

"To what port are ye bound, man?"

"Quebec and Montreal."

"Wull you tak' a cabin-passenger on reasonable terms?"

"The fare is fixed by the owner of the vessel, P. Gregg, Bank-street, Leith. You had better apply to him."

"Weel, I dinna' think I'll jest go noo'. I want to see the Canada lochs. Ane o' these days I'll tak' passage wi' you, ony-how."

"Perhaps a glass of brandy and water would serve your purpose at this time," said the captain, with a knowing smile.

"I've noo' objections, captain," said the long-visaged traveller to the lochs o' Canada.

"That's one way of getting a glass of brandy for nothing," said the captain, as he accompanied the Lyndsays to the deck. "That fellow has as much notion of going to Canada as I have of taking a voyage to the moon. But he knows that I will give him the brandy to get rid of him."

"What queer people there are in the world!" said Flora, as she took the proffered arm of her husband. "But what do you think of the *Anne* and her captain, John? He is a rough sailor, but looks like an honest man. And the ship, though small, is clean, and offers better accommodations than the *Flora*, where we should have to share a small cabin with fourteen vulgar passengers."

"My dear wife, it may all be true what you say; but I have

made up my mind to go in the *Flora*. She sails so much earlier, that it will be a great saving of time and expense."

Flora's countenance fell, and the tears actually came into her eyes; but she only muttered to herself—

"Oh, I have such a horror of going in that ship!"

At the turning of the street, they met Mr. Peterson, the owner of the *Flora*, to whom Lyndsay had spoken about taking a passage in her the day before.

"Well, Mr. Lyndsay," he said, shaking hands in a friendly manner with him; "have you concluded to take passage in my vessel?"

"Not quite," returned Lyndsay, laughing. "My wife has such an unconquerable aversion to going with your captain and his sons, on account of the reprobate language they used the other day in her hearing, that she has actually found up another vessel in which she wishes me to sail."

"Oh, the *Anne*, Captain Williams," said Peterson, with a contemptuous smile,—"the last and most insignificant vessel that leaves our port. The owner, P. Gregg, is not a liberal person to deal with; the captain is a good seaman, but a stubborn brute,—quite as unfit for the society of ladies as Captain Ayre. To tell you the truth, we have little choice in these matters. It is not the manners of the men we employ we generally look to, but to their nautical skill. There is, however, one great objection to your taking passage in the *Anne*, that I think it right you should know. She has a most objectionable freight."

"In what respect?"

"She is loaded with brandy and gunpowder."

"By no means a pleasant cargo," said Lyndsay, "What do you say to that, Flora?" turning to his wife.

"I will tell you to-morrow: do wait until then."

In order to pacify her evident uneasiness, Lyndsay promised to postpone his decision.

When they reached their lodgings, they found a short, round-faced, rosy, good-natured looking individual, waiting to receive them, who introduced himself as Mr. Gregg, the owner of the *Anne*. He had learned from Captain Williams, that they had been inspecting the capabilities of his vessel.

"She was a small ship," he said, "but a safe one; the captain, a steady, experienced seaman; and if Mr. Lyndsay engaged a pas-

sage for himself and family, he would grant the most liberal terms."

Lyndsay mentioned his objections to the freight.

"Who told you that?" asked the little owner, somewhat excited.

"Mr. Peterson. We parted from him only a few minutes ago."

"The scoundrel! the mean, dirty scoundrel!" said Gregg, stamping on the floor. "Why, Sir, Mr. Lyndsay, his own ship carries the same freight. What did he say about that?"

"He told me yesterday, she took out a general cargo——"

"Of brandy and gunpowder. Both vessels are employed by the same house, and take out the same freight. You must, however, please yourself, Mr. Lyndsay. The Flora has a great number of passengers of the lowest cast—is old and crank!—with the most vicious, morose captain that sails from this port. I know him only too well. He made two voyages for me; and the letters I received, complaining of his brutal conduct to some of his passengers, I can show you at my office."

"You have said enough, Mr. Gregg, to deter me from taking my wife and child in the Flora. The deceitful conduct of Mr. Peterson alone would have determined me not to contract with him.

And now, what will you take us for! Our party consists of my wife and infant, a lad of thirteen years who accompanies us, a servant girl, and myself."

Mr. Gregg considered for some minutes.

"Well," he said, "there is a large party of you; but I will give your wife, child, and self, a cabin passage, finding you in the same fare as the captain, and the lad and servant a second cabin passage, save the privilege of the cabin table, for thirty pounds. Is that too much?"

"It is very liberal indeed. Peterson asked fifty."

"It is reasonable; but as you have to wait a fortnight longer in order to sail with me, I have taken that into account. Is it a bargain?"

They struck hands; and Mr. Gregg, after drawing up an agreement, which Lyndsay signed, turned to Mrs. Lyndsay, and pressingly invited the whole party to spend the following afternoon with them in a friendly way.

"My wife is a homely little body," he said; "but she will do

her best to make you comfortable, and will give you, at any rate, a hearty Scotch welcome."

Flora was so overjoyed at the prospect of going by the Anne, that she shook the little fat man heartily by the hand, and told him she would come with the greatest pleasure.

"Now, Flora, are you not delighted in having it your own way?" asked Lyndsay, after Mr. Gregg left them, taking both her hands. "But let me assure you, my dear wife, you owe it entirely to the mean conduct of Mr. Peterson. I tell you frankly, that I would not have yielded my better judgment to a mere prejudice, even to please you."

"You are determined, John, that I shall never fulfil the gipsy's prophesy."

"What was that?"

"Did I never tell you that story, nor the girls either? for it was a standing joke against me at home for years. Oh, you must have it, then. But be generous, and don't turn it as a weapon against me:

"Some years ago, a gipsy woman came to our kitchen-door, and asked to see the young ladies of the house. Of course, we all ran out to look at the sybil, and hear her errand, which was nothing more nor less than to tell our fortunes. Partly out of curiosity, partly out of fun, we determined to have a peep into futurity, and see what the coming years had in store for us. We did not believe in gipsy craft. We well knew that, like our own, the woman's powers were limited; that it was all guess-work; that her cunning rested in a shrewd knowledge of character—of certain likings springing out of contrasts, which led her to match the tall with the short, the fair with the dark, the mild with the impetuous, the sensitive and timid with the bold and adventurous. On these seeming contrarities the whole art of fortune-telling, as far as my experience goes, appears based.

"Well, she gave husbands to us all—dark, fair, middle-complexioned, short and tall, amiable, passionate, or reserved—just the opposite of our own complexions or temperament, such as she judged them to be; and she showed a great deal of talent and keen perception of character in the choice of our mates.

"In my case, however, she proved herself to be no prophet. I was to marry a sea-faring gentleman—a tall, black-eyed, passionate man—with whom I was to travel to foreign parts, and die in a for-

eign land. I was to have no children ; and he was to be very jealous of me. ‘ And yet, for all that,’ quoth the gipsy, drawing close up to me; and whispering in my ear, but not so low but that all the rest heard her concluding speech, ‘ you shall wear the breeches.’

“ She did not bargain that you were to marry a Scotchman,” said Lyndsay, laughing.

“ Nor did she know, with all her pretended art, that my husband was to be a soldier, fair-haired, and blue-eyed, and that this little lass would give a direct contradiction to her prophesy,” and Flora kissed fondly Josey’s soft cheek. “ Well, I was so tormented about that last clause in my fortune, that I determined it should never come to pass ; that whatever portion of my husband’s dress I coveted, I would scrupulously avoid even the insertion of a toe into his nether garments.”

“ You forget, Flora, your trip to the mountain without my consent ? ” whispered Lyndsay, mischievously.

Flora colored, stammered, and at last broke into a hearty laugh — “ I was too great a coward, John, to wear them with becoming dignity. If that was wearing the breeches, I am sure I disgraced them with my worse than womanish fears. I will never put them on again.”

“ My dear wife, I’ll take good care you shan’t. When a Scotchman has any breeks to wear, he likes to keep them all to himself.”

“ Ah ! we well know what a jealous, monopolising set you are. Let any one attempt to interfere with your rights, and, like your sturdy national emblem, you are armed to the teeth,” said Flora, as she ran off to order tea.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A VISIT TO THE SHIP OWNERS.

EARLY in the afternoon of the following day, our family party set off to pay their promised visit. The weather was delightful, and Flora was in an ecstasy of high spirits, as they turned from the narrow streets of Leith into a beautiful lane, bounded on each side by hawthorn hedges, redolent with the perfume of the sweet-briar and honeysuckle. The breath of new-mown hay floated on the air, and the lilac and laburnum, in full blossom, waved their

graceful boughs above the white palings that surrounded many a pleasant country retreat, in which the tired citizen, after the toils of the day in the busy marts of commerce, returned to enjoy a comfortable dish of tea with his family.

The verse of an old, old song, now quite out of date, that Flora had been taught to repeat when a child, came flush to her memory. It was a perfect illustration of the rural scene :

"It was within a mile of Edinburgh town,
And a pleasant time o' the year,
Sweet lilacs bloomed, and the hay was down,
And each shepherd wooed his dear."

Why do old songs ever go out of fashion? What poetry charms us so much as these simple lyrics, which spring spontaneously from the heart? They are loved and remembered when the most sublime efforts of human genius are forgotten, and are always associated with the best and truest feelings of our nature. Those lines of the old song carried Flora back to the days of her childhood—the days when, wild with delight, she had revelled among the new-mown hay in the fair fields that spread around the dear old homestead she was to see no more;—to the days when the lilac and laburnum were Nature's own jewels, more prized by her than the gems in a monarch's crown, and life one continued dream of fruits and flowers, a paradise of joy, from which she never wished to rove;—to the days when she left shreds of her white frocks on every brier bush, while sporting with the elves in the green wood,—when she cried at her mother's knee for a sackcloth gown that could not be torn by the rude bushes. This rending of fine garments was one of the only sorrows of Flora's young life. It had made her a democrat from her cradle.

A walk of half-a-mile brought them to the suburban retreat of the worthy Mr. Gregg, and he was at the green garden-gate to receive his guests, his honest, saucy face, radiant with an honest welcome.

"I was fearful ye wud not keep your promise," he said: "my youngsters ha' been on the look-out for you this hour."

Here he pushed the giggling youngsters forward, in the shape of two bouncing, rosy-faced school-girls, who were playing at bo-peep behind papa's broad blue back, and whose red cheeks grew crimson with blushes as he presented them to his guests.

James Hawke seemed to think the merry girls, who were of his

own age, well worth looking at, if you might judge by the roguish sparkling of his fine black eyes, as he bounded off with them to be introduced to the strawberry-beds, and all the other attractions of the worthy citizen's garden.

It was a large, old-fashioned house, that had seen better days, and stood on a steep, sloping hill, that commanded a beautiful view of Edinburgh, the grand old mountain looming in the distance, and the bright Forth, with all its wealth of white sails, glittering in the rays of the declining sun.

"What a delightful situation!" exclaimed Flora, as her eye ranged over the beautiful scene.

"Aye, 'tis a bonnie place," said Mr. Gregg, greatly exalted in his own eyes, as master of the premises;—"an' very healthy for the bairns. I often walked past this old house when I was but a prentice lad in the High street, o' Sunday afternoons, and used to peep through the pales, and admire the old trees, an' fruits, an' flowers; an' I thought if I had sic a braw place of my ain, I should think mysel richer than a crow'd king. I was a puir callant in those days. It was only a dream, a fairy dream; yet here I am, master of the auld house and the pretty gardens. Industry and prudence—industry and prudence, madam, my dear, has done it all, and converted my air-built castle into substantial brick and stane."

Flora admired the old man's honest pride. She had thought him coarse and vulgar, while in reality he was only what the Canadians term homely; for his heart was brimful of kindly affections and good feeling. There was not a particle of pretence about him—of forced growth or refined cultivation: a genuine product of the soil, a respectable man in every sense of the word. Proud of his country and his king, and doubly proud of the wealth he had acquired by honest industry. A little vain, and pompous, perhaps, but most self-made men are so; they are apt to overrate the talents that have lifted them out of obscurity, and to fancy that the world estimates their worth and importance by the same standard as they do themselves.

In the house, they were introduced to Mrs. Gregg, who was just such a person as her husband had described; a cheerful, middle-aged woman, very short, very stout, and very hospitable. Early as it was, the tea-table was loaded with good cheer; and Flora, for the first time in her life, saw preserves brought for tea; large

strawberries preserved whole, and that pet sweatmeat of the Scotch, orange marmalade, which looked tempting enough, in handsome dishes of cut glass, flanked by delicious homemade bread and butter, cream, cheese, and sweet curds.

"A tall, fine-looking woman, very gaily dressed, and not half so genteel in appearance as the mistress of the house, was presented to the Lyndsays as Mrs. M'Nish, a married daughter. Her husband was a loud-voiced, large-whiskered consequential-looking young man, whose good humor and admiration of himself, his wife, and his father and mother-in-law, and the big house, appeared inexhaustible.

His young wife seemed to look upon him as something superhuman; and to every remark she made, she appealed to Wullie, as she called him, for his verdict of approval.

Little Josey, who made one of the party, was soon on the most intimate terms with the family group. The young married woman, after bestowing upon her many kisses, passed her over to her husband, telling him, with a little laugh, "that she wondered if he would make a good nurse: it was time for him commence practising." Then she blushed, and giggled, and the old man chuckled and rubbed his knees, and the mother looked up with a quiet smile as the jolly bridegroom burst into a loud laugh. "Ay, Jean, my woman, it's time enough to think of troubles when they come." And then he tossed Miss Josey up to the ceiling with such vigorous jerks, that Flora watched his gymnastics in nervous fear lest the child should fall out of his huge grasp and break her neck.

Not so Josey; she never was better pleased in her life; she crowed and screamed with delight, and rewarded her Scotch nurse, by tangling her tiny, white fingers in his bushy red whiskers, and pulling his long nose.

"Haut you're a spereted lass. Is that the way you mean to lead the men?" he said, as he bounced her down into his wife's lap, and told her "that it was her turn to mak' a trial o' that kind o' wark an' see how it wud fit; he was verra' sure he sud sune be tired o't." And this speech was received with another little giggle, followed by a loud laugh. But Josey was by no means tired of her game of romps; and she crowed and held out her arms to the M'Nish, to induce him to take her again; and when he turned a deaf ear to the infant's petition, she fairly began to cry."

"Wully, Wully, dinna let the bairn greet in that kind o' fashun,"

cried the wife ; " ye might be proud o' having such a wee arngel to nurse."

" Aye, so I shall be, ane o' these days," said the huge man, taking the babe from her arms ; and Miss Josey got another dance, which was so vigorously kept up that she fairly dropped off to sleep, which circumstance was doubtless a joyful one to all parties.

The old gentleman was impatient to discuss the important business of tea-drinking ; after which he proposed to have the pleasure of showing his visitors the garden, and some other grand sight of which he would not speak now, but which he was certain must be appreciated by every person who possessed a half-penny worth of taste."

Flora sat down to the table, wondering what it could be.

Big Wullie stepped to the hall door, and summoned the children to the evening meal with a loud hallo ; which was answered from among the trees by a jovial shout, and in a few minutes the young folks poured into the room, some of them looking rather dull, from their protracted visit to the strawberry-beds."

The fresh air and exercise had made Mrs. Lyndsay unusually hungry. She ate heartily and enjoyed her meal, but this did not satisfy the overflowing hospitality of her entertainers, who pressed and worried her in every possible manner to take more, till she felt very much inclined to answer with the poor country girl, " Dear knows, I can't eat another bit ;" or with the Irish settler's wife, in the backwoods of Canada, who, on being urged to take more, pushed away her plate, exclaiming, impatiently, " No, thank you, I'm satisfied ! "

But there was no way of satisfying the entreaties of the Greggs, but by making a retreat from the table, and even then they persisted in declaring their guests had been starved, and would not do the least justice to their good cheer.

This mistaken kindness brought to Flora's mind a story she had heard Lyndsay tell, of a merchant of Edinburgh who went to the north of Scotland to visit some country folk who were his near relations. The good people were outrageously glad to see him, and literally killed the fatted calf, and concocted all sorts of country dainties in order to celebrate the advent of their distinguished guest, who, it seems in this case, was in less danger of starving than of being stuffed to death.

Having partaken at dinner of all, and perhaps of rather more

than he required, he did his best to resist their further importunities for him to eat *more*, but finding his refusing to do so increased their anxiety to force upon him the good things they had to bestow, he spread a large silk handkerchief upon his knees, under cover of the table-cloth, into which he contrived dexterously to empty the contents of his plate, whenever the eye of his watchful hostess was off him. At last, even her importunities for him to continue the feast grew fainter, and she wound up by exclaiming, "Ye ha' made a verra puir dinner, Sir ; ye ha' just eaten nae-thing ava'."

At this speech, he, hardly able to keed his gravity, placed his handkerchief upon the table, and displayed its contents of fish, flesh, fowl, and confectionaries, to his astonished entertainers, exclaiming, as he did so, "My dear Madam, think what would have become of me, had I eaten all this!"

It was no feast of reason, at the honest Greggs ; the entertainment was of the most animal kind, and Flora felt relieved when it was over, and the whole party issued once more into the pure balmy air.

She was just hastening to a parterre, gay with roses, to rifle some of its sweets, when the old gentleman came panting hard upon her track. "Ye must come an' see my raree show, before the sun gangs doon," he cried ; and Flora turned and followed him back into the house. In the hall the whole family party were collected.

"I'll gang first, father, and open the door," cried a merry boy of fourteen ; and beckoning to Jim, they both clattered after each other up the old-fashioned stairs.

Old houses in Edinburgh and its vicinity are so high, one would think the people in those days wished to build among the stars ; at least to emulate the far-famed wonders of that language-confounding tower, that caused the first emigration, by scattering the people over the face of the earth.

They went up, and up, and up ; there seemed no end to the broad, short steps. On the last flight, which led to the roof, the staircase had so greatly contracted its proportions, that fat Mr. Gregg could scarcely force himself up it, and he so completely obscured the light that peered down upon them from a small trap-door which opened upon the leads, that Flora, who followed him, found herself in a dim twilight, expecting every moment the pant-

ing mountain that had come between her and the sky, would lose the centre of gravity, and suffocate her in its fall.

No such tragic misfortune occurred. The old gentleman forced himself, after much squeezing and puffing off steam, through the narrow aperture, and very gallantly lent a hand to assist Flora on to the leads, though the perspiration was streaming down his face, now almost purple with the exertions he had used.

"This is a strait gate, on a narrow way," he cried. "But tell me, if it does na' gie ye a glimpse o' heaven?"

The old man was right. Flora stood perfectly entranced with the glorious spectacle that burst upon her sight, the moment she stepped upon the roof of that old house. Edinburgh, and the world of beauty that lies around it, lay at her feet, bathed in the golden light of a gorgeous June sunset. To those who have beheld that astonishing panorama, all description must prove abortive. It is a sight to be daguerreotyped upon the heart. It is impossible for words to give a picture of the scene. The cheeks pale, the eyes moisten, slowly and solemnly the soul mounts upwards towards the Creator of this wondrous vision of power and beauty, till humbled and abashed by a sense of its own utter insignificance in a presence so august and incomprehensible, it sinks back to earth in silent self-annihilation, to wonder and adore.

"Weel, was it not worth toiling up yon weary stairs, to get sic a glimpse as that, of the brave auld town?" said honest P. Gregg, wiping his bald head with his handkerchief. "I'm jest thinkin' I must enlarge the stair, or diminish myself, before I can venture through that narrow pass again. An', my dear leddy, I can do neither the one nor the other. So this mayhap may be my last glint o' the bonnie auld place."

Then he went on, after this quaint fashion, to point out to Mistress Lyndsay all the celebrated spots in the neighborhood, which every Scot knows by heart; and Flora was so much amused and interested by his narrations, that she was sorry when the deepening shades of approaching night warned the old man that it required daylight to enable him to descend the narrow stair, and they reluctantly left the scene.

CHAPTER XXV.

FLORA'S DINNER.

LYNDSDAY had some literary friends in Edinburgh, whose kindly intercourse greatly enhanced the pleasure of a month's residence near the metropolis of Scotland. The foremost among these was M——, the poet, who, like Lyndsay, was a native of the Orkney Islands. Having been entertained at the house of this gentleman, he naturally wished to return his courtesy.

"Flora," he said, addressing his wife, the day after their visit to the Greggs, "do you think you could manage a dinner for a few friends?"

Flora dropped her work, and opened her eyes in blank dismay at the very idea of such a thing.

"What, in these poor lodgings? and Mrs. Waddel such an impracticable, helpless old body? My dear John, it is impossible!"

Now, Lyndsay had set his heart upon the dinner, which he thought not only very possible, but could see no difficulty about it. Men never look behind the scenes, or consider the minor details of such things; and on these trifling items, in their eyes, the real success or failure of most domestic arrangements depend. But Flora had been behind the scenes, and knew all about it, to her cost, for it was with the greatest difficulty she could prevail upon Mrs. Waddel to cook his plain steak or pudding fit to send to table. She had been forced, unknown to him, to superintend the cooking of his daily meals, and make sauces or gravies, which Mrs. W. declared she could "nai fash hersel about; that sic dainties were a' verra weel, but the meat ate jist as sweet without them." The idea of such a tardy mistress of the kitchen cooking a dinner for company, appeared perfectly ridiculous to Flora, who knew that any attempt of the kind must end in mortification and disappointment.

"Flora," said Lyndsay, quite seriously, "I am certain that you could manage it quite well, if you would only make the trial."

"It is from no unwillingness on my part that I object to your entertaining your friends; I should like to do so on my own

account, as well as yours, for they have been very kind to me, but I doubt the means of being able to do so. If it will satisfy you, I will cook the dinner myself, though I must confess I am but a poor hand at it. But this is not the chief difficulty. There is but one cooking-range in the house, and that one small and inconvenient, and I fear their cooking utensils are limited to the dimensions of their fire, as Mrs. Waddel always put off cooking our dinner until she had despatched her own."

"There is a large fire-place in our bed-chamber, Flora," said Lyndsay, unwilling to beat a retreat : "you could boil a couple of pots there."

"True," replied Flora, musingly ; "I did not think of that. It would do that damp, cold room good to get a fire lighted in it."

Seeing her husband determined upon the dinner, she began to question him as to the items of the entertainment.

"Oh, nothing particular dear. M—— knows that we are in lodgings, and can't manage as well as if we were in a house of our own. A nice cut of fresh salmon, which is always to be had in the fish-market, a small roast of beef, or leg of mutton, with vegetables and a pudding, will do ; and, above all things, Flora, don't make a fuss. If everything does not do exactly to please you, don't look vexed and annoyed, or it will only make matters worse. I am going to call upon M—— this morning, and I will ask him and his friend P—— to step over and dine with us at six o'clock."

"What shall we do for wine and spirits?"

"I will order these as I go along. So mind, dear, and have everything as snug and comfortable as you can."

Lyndsay was hardly gone before Flora put on her bonnet, and calling to Hannah to follow with the basket, set off for the fish-market.

In spite of the anxiety she felt as to the success of the dinner, Flora could not help pausing to admire the spacious fish-market, with its cool stone pavement, and slabs of white marble, on which lay piled, in magnificent profusion, the most beautiful specimens of the finny rangers of the deep. It was a hall of wonders to her, filled with marine curiosities, and she could have spent hours in contemplating the picturesque groups it presented.

There lay the salmon in its delicate coat of blue and silver ; the mullet, in pink and gold ; the mackerel, with its blending of all hues—gorgeous as the tail of the peacock, and defying the art of

the painter to transfer them to his canvas : the plaice, with its olive green coat, spotted with vivid orange, which must flash like sparks of flame glittering in the depths of the dark waters ; the cod, the siller haddies, all freckled with brown, and silver and gold ; the snake-like eel, stretching its slimy length along the cool pavement, among moving heaps of tawny crabs—those spiders of the deep, that seemed to emulate the scorpion lobsters near them in repulsive ugliness.

But what most enchanted Flora, was the antique costume of the New Haven fish women, as seated upon their upturned baskets, they called the attention of the visitor to their various stores of fish.

Flora was never tired of looking at these sea maids and matrons. Their primitive appearance, and quaint, old-fashioned dress, took her fancy amazingly—with their petticoats so short, their blue stockings and buckled shoes, their neat, striped linen jackets, and queer little caps, just covering the top of their head, and coming down in long, straight mops over their ears—their honest broad features, and pleasant faces, that had been fair before the sun and the sea air tanned them to that warm, deep brown—their round, red arms and handsome feet and legs, displayed with a freedom and ease which custom had robbed of all indecency and rendered natural and proper.

Flora wished that she had been an artist, to copy some of the fine forms she saw among these fish girls—forms that had been left as the great God of nature made them, uncrippled by torturing stays and tight vestments.

How easy their carriage! with what rude grace they poised upon their heads their ponderous baskets, and walked erect and firm, filling the air with their mournfully-musical cry! The great resemblance between these people and the Bavarian broom-girls, both in features and costume, impressed her with the idea that they had originally belonged to the same race.

The New Haven sea-nymph, however, is taller, and has a more imposing presence, than the short, snub-nosed Bavarian.

But time, that waits on no one's fancy or caprice, warned her that she must not linger over a scene which she afterwards visited with renewed pleasure, but gave her a gentle hint that there was work to be done at home—that she had better make her purchases and proceed to business.

Having bought a fine cut of fresh salmon, she bade adieu to the

market, and proceeded to the poulterers, where she made choice of a fat pair of fowls, which, with a small ham, she thought would just make a nice, quiet family dinner. She returned to her lodgings in high spirits; despatching Jim to the green-grocer's, in the next street, to buy some peas and young potatoes, and then followed Hannah and her basket into Mrs. Waddel's kitchen.

"Marcy me! what ha' ye got, the noo?" said Mistress Waddel, lifting the napkin from the basket; "meat enough, I declare, to last the hale week. The weather's o'er hot, I'm thinkin', for a' they to keep sweet sae lang."

"Mrs. Waddel, I expect two gentlemen to dinner—particular friends of Mr. Lyndsay—and I want you to cook these things for me as well as you can," said Flora, coaxingly.

"Twa' gentlemen, did ye say? There's ten times mair in yon basket than twa' gentlemen can eat!"

"Of course there is; but we cannot stint our guests. You see, dear Mrs. Waddel, I want you to boil the salmon, (I'll make the shrimp-sauce mysclf), and to roast these two nice fowls—they are all ready for the spit—and to cook the ham, and a few peas and potatoes."

"Whist, woman!" cried Mrs. Waddel, interrupting Flora's eloquent speech, "it makes my heid ache only to think about a' that roast, an' boil, an' boil, an' roast! And wha' sall we find the kitties an' the coals for a' that?"

"Of course you must have pots for such purposes?"—said Flora, and her spirits began to sink rapidly.

"Aye, sic as they be. But I ha' but twa' o' them; and the tea-kettle serves a turn noo' an' then. Ye ken my muckle big pot—that ane that I use a washin' days—tak's up a' the fire to its ainsel—and the ne'est wunna haud a muckle ham, without cutting it in twa—an' ye wunna like that!"

"Oh, certainly not!—But are these your whole stock?"

"A' but twa old sauspans, a spider, an' a wee bit panikin, for melting butter. Ane o' the sauspans has no handle, and the other has a muckle hole in the bottom o'nt."

"And pray, how did you contrive to cook for Lady Weyms, with such utensils?" asked Flora, rather indignantly.

"Gudeness gracious! Do ye think that my Leddy Weyms cared for the cooking o' the like o' me? When his late majestie, God bless him, honored our auld toon wi' his presence, folk were

glad to get a decent place to cover their heids, an' war' in no wise o'er particular, sae they could get lodged awa."

"So I should think—when a titled lady put up with such as these—where the mistress engages to cook for her lodgers, and has not a whole pot in her culinary establishment."

"My Leddy brought her ain cook, an' she had my twa best rooms, jest aff the passage, whar' Captain Macpherson bides the noo."

"And how do you manage to cook for him?" asked Flora, very sullenly.

"He keeps a man. An auld sojer, whar' does the cooking himself."

"Do you think you could borrow a pot of him, big enough to hold the ham?"

"He's awa', in the countrie, sure, an' will not be home this week, an' his door is locked. He's afraid of trusting an' honest bodie wi' his duds."

Flora sighed from the very bottom of her heart; as she glanced at the array of crazy vessels that Betty Fraser, the better to convince her of the truth of her mistress's statements, had ranged in rank and file on the floor at her feet. As Flora examined the capabilities of these old pots, which, perhaps, had belonged to the widow's grandfather, and were so antique in their form and appearance, that they might have been considered very interesting relics of a by-gone age by the members of the Antiquarian Society, she began to despair of ever cooking a dinner in them. She almost doubted the fact that they had ever been used for that purpose.

The widow's meals were of the most simple kind, consisting of porridge in the morning—some preparation of salt or fresh fish for dinner, with potatoes—and if she did occasionally indulge in the luxury of *butcher meat*, as she termed it, the purchase was so small, that it was either broiled on the gridiron, or suspended before the fire by a string, with a broken plate placed below to catch the gravy. By this tedious process, she had contrived to prepare steaks or a small joint for her lodgers, and the result had been that the meat was either raw or cooked to rags.

After a great deal of consultation, Mrs. Lyndsay pitched upon the washing boiler, as the only vessel in which she could contrive to boil the ham; but then another difficulty occurred—the vessel was so large that it monopolized the whole width of the small grate,

to the exclusion of the fish and vegetables. She thought of the fireplace in her chamber—which the ham might occupy in solitary state, leaving the kitchen range free for the other dishes. This plan she suggested to Mrs. Waddel.

"If I light a fire there," said the good woman, "ye maun buy the coal yourself."

"If that is the only difficulty," said Flora, laughing, "we can soon surmount it. Does the chimney smoke?"

"I dinna' ken. I ha' lived in this flat for nigh twenty years, an' I never put fire to a coal there in a' that time."

"At any rate, we can but try," said Flora. "If you will let Betty buy the coals, the sooner we make the experiment the better."

Coals and wood were soon procured; the old chimney-board removed, and the cobwebs and dust, which had accumulated in the rusty grate, swept out—the materials for the fire duly laid, and Betty Fraser, in lieu of a pair of bellows, went down upon her knees, blowing with all her strength, in order to raise a flame, and set the fire going. It was a long time before the fire thought fit to kindle; but when it did, such a gush of black smoke rushed from the old chimney, that it not only darkened the gloomy chamber, producing a temporary night, but literally filled the house. Flora sprang to the window, and threw it open to get a breath of air—she felt suffocated—while Betty commenced coughing and sneezing as if she never meant to give over. But this was not the worst of the matter. The swallows, who had held undisturbed possession of the chimney for half a century, in making their exit from the smoke, caused such a sudden rushing and clapping of wings, that it brought down about a bushel of soot, that not only extinguished the fire, but covered the floor around the fireplace an inch deep with black dust. This fresh disaster made Flora and Betty retreat from the room, as fast as the swallows did from the chimney. On emerging into daylight once more, the faces of both mistress and maid were as black as if they had practised the chimney sweeping craft for half their lives.

Flora scarcely knew whether to laugh or cry. I very believe she did both the one and the other; while Betty, opening her great black eyes to their largest dimensions, and raising her hands in a tragic manner above her head, exclaimed, in a piteous tone of voice, "Did you ever"—

" See anything so provoking ?" said Flora, finishing the sentence.
" Betty, what are we to do ?"

" Weel, Ma'am, if ye'd jest tak the advice o' a puir bodie like me, I'd say, ye had better send the fowl to the bakehouse, an' I'll get a neebor woman to boil the ham for ye, for a trifle o' siller."

Flora could have kissed the good-natured lass, as she saw at length a way through the troubles that beset her.

" I will give you a couple of shillings, Betty, for yourself, if you will manage this for me. In the meanwhile, do you think it possible for us to cook the other things at the kitchen-fire ?"

" I'll do my best for ye," cried the delighted Betty. " We may mak' out wi' the fish and the vegetables; but I misdoubt the pudden'. Cu'd ye not get a pie or a tart frae the pastry-cook's at the end o' the street? Mistress Waddel is unco lazy; she'll no fash hersel' about the pudden'."

This, after all, was the only feasible plan that could be acted upon; and Flora sent Hannah to clear away the soot and rubbish from her bed-room, while she and Betty prepared the dinner.

The ham was sent out to be boiled, the chickens to be baked; the tarts were ordered for six o'clock; and everything was in a fair train but the fish and the vegetables. But the indefatigable Betty procured the loan of a small pot and a fish-kettle from the owners of the flat below; and, when Lyndsay returned to luncheon at one o'clock, Flora met him in good spirits, and made him laugh heartily over her mishaps.

The dinner went off better than could have been expected, though little praise could be conscientiously given to the cooking. The fish was done *too much*, the ham *too little*, and the baked fowls looked hard and dry. The pastry was the only thing at table about which no fault could be found.

After the cloth was removed, Flora gave the poet and his friend the history of the dinner, which so amused Mr. M., that he declared it was worth twenty dinners hearing her relate the misadventures of the morning. Flora forgot the disasters of the day while enjoying the conversation of Mr. M. and his friend—men who had won by their genius no common literary reputation in the world; and the short hour "ayont the twal" had been tolled some time from all the steeples in Edinburgh before the little party separated, mutually pleased with each other, never to meet in this world of change again.

CHAPTER XXVI.

FEARS OF THE CHOLERA—DEPARTURE FROM SCOTLAND.

THE cholera, which had hitherto only claimed a few victims in the city, now began to make fearful progress ; and every day enlarged the catalogue of the dead, and those who were laboring under this awful disease.

The people seemed unwilling to name the ravages of the plague to each other ; or spoke of it in low, mysterious tones, as a subject too dreadful for ordinary conversation.

Just at this time Flora fell sick, and was forced to keep her bed for several days. At first, she feared that her illness was the terrible pestilence ; but, though very nearly resembling it in most of its symptoms, she was fortunate enough to surmount it.

During the time she was confined to her chamber, Mrs. Waddel kept up a constant lamentation, declaring that the reputation of her lodgings would be lost for ever, if Mrs. Lyndsay should die of the cholera ; yet, to do the good creature justice, she waited upon her, and nursed her with the most unselfish kindness—making gallons of gruel, which the invalid scarcely tasted, and recommending remedies which, if adopted, would have been certain to kill the patient, for whose life she most earnestly and devoutly prayed.

The very morning that Mrs. Lyndsay was able to leave her bed, her husband got a note from Mr. Gregg, informing him that the *Anne* was to sail at four o'clock the next day.

"My dear Flora," said Lyndsay, tenderly, "I fear you are not able to go in your present weak-state."

"Oh yes, I shall be better for the change. This frightful cholera is spreading on all sides. The sooner, dear John, we can leave this place the better. Two persons, Mrs. Waddel told me, died last night of it, only a few doors off. I know that it is foolish and unphilosophical, to be afraid of an evil which we cannot avoid ; but I find it impossible to divest myself of this fear. I look worse than I feel just now," she continued, walking across the room, and surveying her face in the glass. "My color is returning, I shall pass muster with the doctors yet."

The great business of packing up for the voyage went steadily

forward all day; and before six in the evening, trunks, bedding, and little ship stores, were on board, ready for a start.

Flora was surprised in the afternoon by a visit from Mr. and Mrs. Gregg, and the two rosy girls, who expressed the greatest regret at their departure. They had made a plum-cake for Mrs. Lyndsay to eat during the voyage; and truly it looked big enough to have lasted out a trip to the South Seas, while Mrs. Gregg had brought various small tin canisters filled with all sorts of faranaeuous food for the baby.

Abundant as their kindness was, the blessings and good wishes they heaped upon the emigrants were more abundant still—the kind-hearted mother and her bonnie girls kissing them at parting, with tears coursing down their rosy cheeks. Mr. Gregg, who was terribly afraid of the cholera, tried to raise his own spirits, by describing all the fatal symptoms of the disease, and gave them a faithful catalogue of those who had died of it that morning in the city. He had great faith in a new remedy, which was just then making a noise in the town, which had been tried the day before, on a relation of his own—the injection of salt into the veins of the sufferer.

"Did it cure him?" asked Flora, rather eagerly.

"Why no, I canna jest say it did. But it enabled him to mak' his will an' settle a' his worldly affairs, which was a great point gained—"

"For the living," sighed Flora. "Small satisfaction to the dying, to be disturbed in their last agonies, by attending to matters of business, while a greater reckoning is left unpaid."

"You look ill yoursel', Mistress Lyndsay," continued the good man. "Let's hope that it's not the commencement of the awfu' disease."

"I thought so myself two days ago," said Flora. "I am grateful to God that it was not the cholera, though an attack very nearly akin to it. Does it ever break out on board ship?"

"It is an affliction sae lately sent upon the nations by the Lord, that we ha' had sma' experience o' the matter," quoth Mr. Gregg. "Your best chance is to trust in Him. For let us be ever so cautious, an' He wills it, we canna' escape out o' His hand."

"Perhaps its the best way to confide ourselves entirely to His care, and to think as little about it as we possibly can. All our precautions remind me of the boy who hid in the cellar during

a terrible thunderstorm, in the hope that the lightning would never find him there, little dreaming that his place of safety exposed him to as much danger as a stand on the house-top. A man may run away from a battle, and escape from a fire, but it seems to me of little use attempting to fly from a pestilence which lurks in the very air we breathe, the water we drink, and the food we take to nourish us. Faith in the mercy of God, and submission to His will, appear to me the only remedies at all likely to avert the danger we shrink from with so much fear."

"It comes like a thief in the night," said Mr. Gregg; "and it behooves us to all mind the warning o' the Saviour, to watch an' pray, for we know not at what hour the Master of the house cometh."

After the good Greggs had made their adieus, Flora felt so much recovered that she accompanied her husband in a coach, to bid the rest of their kind friends in Edinburgh farewell.

They drove first to the house of Mr. W., where Flora had spent many happy days during her sojourn in Leith. Mr. W. had an only son, who held an official situation at the Cape of Good Hope. Lyndsay had been on intimate terms with this gentleman during his residence in the colony; and on his return to Scotland, he was always a welcome visitor at the house of his parents. They loved to talk of Willie to Lyndsay, and treasured up as household words any little anecdotes they could collect of his colonial life. Mrs. W. and her two daughters were highly accomplished, elegant women. They took a deep interest in the fate of the emigrants, and were always devising plans for their future comfort.

As to the father of the family, he was a perfect original—shrewd, sarcastic, clever, and *very ugly*. The world called him morose and ill-natured; but the world only judged from his face, and most certainly he should have indicted it for bringing false witness against him. It was a libellous face, that turned the worst aspect to the world; its harsh lines and exaggerated features magnifying mental defects, while they concealed the good qualities of the warm, generous heart, that shone like some precious gem within that hard, rough case.

Mr. W. loved opposition, and courted it. He roused himself up to an argument, as a terrier dog rouses himself to kill rats; and, like the said terrier, when he got the advantage of his opponent, he loved to worry and to tease, to hold on till the last, till the van-

quished was fain to cry aloud for mercy ; and then his main object in quitting the dispute was to lie in wait for a fresh tussle. Flora laughed at all his blunt speeches, and enjoyed his rude wit, and opposed him, and argued with him to his heart's content, until they became the best friends in the world.. Their first meeting was so characteristic, that we must give it here.

She had accepted an invitation to dine, with her husband, at Mr. W.'s house. It was only a family party, and they were to come early. On their arrival, they found that Mr. W—— had been called away on business, but was expected back to dinner. After chatting a while to Mrs. W—— and her daughters, Flora's attention was strongly directed to an oil painting which hung above the drawing-room mantel-piece. It was the portrait of an old man, as large as life. The figure was represented in a sitting posture, his head leaning upon his hand, or rather the chin supported in the open palm. The eyes glanced upward with a sarcastic, humorous expression, as if the original were in the act of asking some question which a listener might find no easy matter to answer ; and a smile of mischievous triumph hovered about the mouth. It was an extraordinary countenance. No common every-day face, to which you could point and say, " Does not that put you in mind of Mr. So-and-So ? " Memory could supply no duplicate to this picture. It was like but one other face in the world—the one from which it had been faithfully copied. It was originally meant for a handsome face, but the features were exaggerated until they became grotesque and coarse in the extreme, and the thick, bushy, iron-grey hair and whiskers, and clay-colored complexion, put the finishing strokes to a portrait which might be considered the very *ideal of ugliness*.

While Flora sat looking at the picture, and secretly wondering how any person with such a face could bear to see it transferred to canvass, she was suddenly roused from her reverie by the pressure of a heavy hand upon her shoulder, and a gentleman in a very gruff, but by no means an ill-natured or morose voice, thus addressed her :

" Did you ever see such a d——d ugly old fellow in your life before ? "

" Never," returned Flora, very innocently. Then, looking up in his face, she cried out with a sudden start, and without the least mental reservation, " It is the picture of yourself ! "

"Yes, it is my picture. An excellent likeness—half bull-dog, half terrier. Judging from that ugly, crabbed old dog over the mantelpiece what sort of a fellow ought I to be?"

He said this with a malicious twinkle in his clear, grey eyes, that glanced like sparks of fire from under his thick, bushy eyebrows.

"Better than you look," said Flora, laughing. "But your question is not a fair one, Mr. W——; I was taken by surprise, and you must not press me too hard."

"A clear admission, young lady, that you would rather avoid telling the truth."

"It is the portrait of a plain man."

"Pshaw! You did not qualify it as such in your own mind. Plain is only one degree worse than good-looking. You thought it——"

"Ugly—if you insist upon it."

"Nothing worse?"

"Eccentric—pugnacious—satirical."

"God's truth. But that was not all."

"Good heavens! but what am I to say?"

"Don't swear; 'tis not fashionable for ladies. I do it myself; but 'tis a bad habit. Now shall I tell you what you *did think* of the picture?"

"I would rather have your opinion than mine?"

"To relieve you from the horns of the dilemma? Well, then; you thought it the ugliest, most repulsive, and withal the oddest phiz you ever saw; and you wondered how any one with such a hideous, morose countenance, could ever sit for the picture?"

"Indeed I did."

"Good!" cried her tormentor, clapping his hands. "You and I must be friends. You wonder how I came to guess your thoughts; I knew them by my own. Had any one asked my opinion of the picture of another man, as ugly as that, I should have spoken out plainly enough. I have often wondered that the Almighty descended to animate such an ill-looking lump of clay with a portion of His Divine Spirit. Fortunately the qualities of the mind do not depend upon the beauty of the face—though personal beauty is greatly increased by the noble qualities of the mind; and I know my inner man to be as vastly superior to its outer case, as the moon is to the cloud she pierces with her rays. To mind, I am indebted

for the greatest happiness I enjoy—the confidence and affection of my wife and children.

"Mrs. W—— was reckoned pretty in her youth; I think her so still. She was of a good family, too; with a comfortable independence, and had lovers by the score. Yet she fell in love with the ugly fellow and married him, though he had neither fame nor fortune to offer her in exchange. Nothing but the mental treasures he had hid away from the world in this rough casket. My daughters are elegant, accomplished girls; not beauties, to be sure, but pleasing enough to be courted and sought after. Yet they are proud of being thought like their ugly old father. That picture must be a likeness; it is portrayed by the hand of love. My dear girl there drew it with her own pencil, and rejoiced that she had caught the very expression of my face. To her, my dear lady, it is beautiful, for love is blind. She does not heed the ugly features; she only sees the mind she honors and obeys, looking through them."

"Ah, dear papa, who that knows you, as we know you, could ever think you ugly?" said Mary W——, laying her hand on the old man's shoulder, and looking fondly and proudly in his face. "But I have forgotten all this time to introduce you to Mrs. Lyndsay."

"My old friend Lyndsay's wife? I ought not to be pleased with you, madam, for you disappointed a favorite scheme of mine."

"How could that possibly be?" said Flora.

"I loved that man of yours; I wanted him for a son-in-law. Of course, neither I nor the girls hinted such a wish to him. But had he asked, he would not have been refused."

"Mrs. Lyndsay," broke in Mary W——, "you must not mind papa's nonsense. He will say just what he likes. Mr. Lyndsay was always a great favorite with us all; and papa would have his joke at our expense."

"Well, my young friend has thought fit to please himself, and I am so well pleased with his wife, that she shall sit by the ugly old man; 'an I will ha' a spate o' clatter wi' her to mine ain sel.'"

The more Flora saw of the eccentric old man, the more she admired and respected him. In a little time, she ceased to think him ugly—he was only plain and odd looking; till at length, like all the rest of Mr. W——'s friends, she almost believed him handsome.

When did genius ever fail to leave upon the rudest clay an impress of divine origin.

It was with feelings of mutual regret, that our emigrants took leave, and for ever, of this talented family. Before the expiration of one short year, that happy group of kind faces had passed out of the world. The sudden death of the younger Mr. W—, who was the idol of the family, brought his mother in sorrow to the grave. The girls, by some strange fatality, only survived her a few weeks; and the good old man, bereft of every kindred tie, pined away and died of a broken heart.

Some years, after Flora had been settled in Canada, a gentleman from Scotland, who had been acquainted with the W— family, told her that he called upon the old gentleman on a matter of business, a few days after the funeral of his youngest daughter. The old man opened the door: he was shrunk to a skeleton, and a perfect image of woe. When he saw who his visitor was, he shook his thin, wasted hand at him, with a melancholy, impatient gesture, exclaiming, "What brings you here, P—? Leave this death-doomed house! I am too miserable to attend to anything but my own burden of incurable grief."

He called again the following morning. The poor old man was dead.

The next day the emigrants bade farewell to the beautiful capital of Scotland. How gladly would Flora have terminated her earthly pilgrimage in that land of poetry and romance, and spent the rest of her days among its truthful, high-minded, hospitable people! But vain are regrets. The inexorable spirit of progress points onward; and the beings she chooses to be the parents of a new people, in a new land, must fulfil their august destiny.

On the 1st of July, 1832, the Lyndsay's embarked on board the brig *Anne*, to seek a new home beyond the Atlantic, and friends in a land of strangers.

CHAPTER XXVII.

A NEW SCENE AND STRANGE FACES.

FOUR o'clock, p. m., had been tolled from all the steeples in Edinburgh, when Flora stood upon the pier "o' Leith," watching the approach of the small boat that was to convey her on board the ugly, black vessel, that lay at anchor at the Berwick Law. It was a warm, close, hazy afternoon; distant thunder muttered among the hills, and dense clouds floated around the mountain from base to summit, shrouding its rugged outline in a mysterious robe of mist. Ever and anon, as the electrical breeze sprang up and stirred these grey masses of vapor, they rolled up in black, shadowy folds, that took all sorts of Ossianic and phantom-like forms—spirits of bards and warriors, looking from their grey clouds upon the land their songs had immortalized, or their valor saved.

Parties of emigrants and their friends were gathered together in small picturesque groups on the pier. The cheeks of the women were pale and wet with tears. The words of blessing and farewell, spoken to those near and dear to them, were often interrupted by low, pitiful wails, and heart-breaking sobs.

Flora stood apart waiting for her husband, who had been to the ship, and was in the returning boat that was now making its way through the water to take her off. Sad she was, and pale and anxious; for the wide world was all before her, a world of new scenes and strange faces—a future as inscrutable and mysterious as that from which humanity instinctively shrinks, which leads so many to cling with expiring energy to evils with which they have grown familiar, rather than launch alone into that unknown sea which never bears upon its bosom a returning sail. Ah, well is it for the poor, trembling denizens of earth that—

"Heaven from all creatures hides the book of fate,"

or how could they bear up from day to day against the accumulated ills that beset them at every turn along the crooked paths of life?

Flora had already experienced that bitterness of grief, far worse than death, that separates the emigrant from the home of his love,

the friends of his early youth, the land of his birth ; and she shed no tear over the mournful recollection, though the deep sigh that shook her heart to its inmost depths, told that it was still felt and painfully present to her memory.

She stood alone among that weeping crowd ; no kindred hand was there to press hers for the last time, or bid God speed her on her perilous voyage. Oh, what a blessing it would have been at that moment, to have bent a parting glance on some dear, familiar face, and gathered strength and consolation from eyes full of affection and sympathy !

The beautiful landscape that had so often cheered and gladdened her heart, during her brief sojourn in that glorious land, no longer smiled upon her, but was obscured in storm and gloom. The thunder, which had only muttered at a distance, now roared among the cloud-capped hills, and heavy drops of rain began to patter slowly upon the earth and sea. These bright globules, in advance of the heavy shower whose approach they announced, made small dimples in the waters, spreading anon into large circles, until the surface of the salt brine seemed to boil and dance, which a few minutes before had lain so glassy and still beneath the hot breath of the coming storm. Flora thought how soon those billows, shaking off their brief slumber, would chafe and roar for ever between her and her native land.

Then the lines of Nature's own bard, the unhappy but immortal Burns, whose fame had become as eternal as those ancient hills, rose to her mind, and she could fancy him standing upon that very spot, breathing out from the depths of his great, inspired heart, the painful separation he anticipated, when called by adverse circumstances to leave old Scotia's shores and the woman he adored :

"The boat rocks at the pier o' Lieth,
The ship rides at the Berwick Law,
And I maun leave my bonnie Mary."

The words still hovered on her lips when the boat touched the pier, and her husband threw his arms around her and lifted her and the dear offspring of their mutual love, into the small bark that was to bear them away from the glorious land of Bruce and Burns. The men bent to their oars, and in a few minutes, she found herself one among the many strangers that crowded the narrow deck of the emigrant ship.

The down-pouring of the thunder-shower compelled her to take instant refuge in the cabin, followed by Hannah and the child.

The little dingy place dignified by that name, was crowded with trunks and packages, piled upon each other in endless confusion; and the close atmosphere was rendered more hot and suffocating from the mingled odors of brandy, onions, red herrings, and tobacco; the smoke from several pipes floated in lazy wreaths through the confined space, and effectually concealed, for the first few minutes, the parties indulging in the dreamy luxury of the fragrant weed.

The gloom occasioned by the passing thunder-clouds produced a dim twilight in the little room, which looked more like the den in a travelling menagerie, appropriated to the use of some imprisoned lord of the desert, than a fitting habitation for civilized men and women.

Flora groped her way to the beach that surrounded the walls, and for a few minutes covered her face with her hands, to conceal her agitation and keep down the swelling of her heart, before she gained sufficient courage to reconnoitre the aspect of her temporary home. At length, she succeeded in calming her feelings, and was able to look about her.

The Captain was sitting upon a large trunk in his shirt-sleeves, with a short pipe stuck between his teeth, holding in one hand a tumbler of brandy punch, and in the other a bundle of papers containing a list of his passengers, which he was in the act of proffering for the inspection of the excise officers, who were settling with him sundry matters of business, connected with the cargo of the ship.

Two sinister, ill-looking men they were, who spoke with loud, authoritative voices, and for the time being, appeared masters of the vessel and all that it contained, examining with provoking exactness cupboards, bedding, boxes, and bins of biscuit, till there seemed no end to their prying and vexatious system of cross-questioning.

The Captain notified his consciousness of the presence of the newcomers with a short nod of recognition; but he was too much occupied to welcome them with words. He seemed in a desperate ill-humor with his official visitors, and replied to all their queries with a significant elevation of his broad shoulders, and a brief "No" or "Yes," which greatly resembled a growl.

During his absence on deck, whether he accompanied the senior officer, his companion, who was seated on the bench opposite to that occupied by Mrs. Lyndsay and her maid, with his back to an open bin, full of biscuits and other sea-stores, took the opportunity afforded by the Captain's departure, in filling the huge pockets in his large jacket with the said stores, until his tall, lank person, was swelled out into very portly dimensions. He then made a sudden dash at the brandy-bottle, which the Captain had left on the table, and, casting a thievish glance at Mrs. Lyndsay, who was highly amused by watching his movements, he refilled his glass, and tossed it off with the air of a child who is afraid of being detected, while on a foraging expedition into Mamma's cupboard. This matter settled, he wiped his mouth with the cuff of his jacket, and assumed a look of vulgar consequence and superiority, which must have forced a smile to Flora's lips, had she been at all in a humor for mirth.

"Strange," she thought, as she sat muffed up in her cloak, a silent spectator of his manoeuvres, "that such a mean, dishonest wretch as this, should be empowered to act the petty tyrant, and pass judgment on the integrity of others, who is so destitute of the principles of common honesty himself!"

She certainly forgot, during her mental colloquy, the wisdom concealed beneath the homely adage, "Set a thief to catch a thief!" and the profound knowledge of the world hidden in the brief, pithy sentence.

The provoking business of inspection (for so it seemed to the Captain—to judge by his flushed cheek and frowning brow), was at length over, and the officers withdrew, and were succeeded by the doctor, who was appointed to inspect the health of the crew and passengers, before the ship sailed.

Doctor Mac Adie was a lively, little, red-haired man, with high-cheek-bones; and a large, Roman nose, out of all proportion to the size of his diminutive body, but perfectly harmonizing with his wide, sensible-looking mouth. His sharp, clear, blue eyes, seemed to have crept as close to his nose as they possibly could, in the vain hope of glancing over the high, ridgy barrier it formed between them, which gave to their owner a peculiarly acute, penetrating expression—a glance which appeared to look you through and through; yet, though extremely grotesque, it was a benevolent, pleasing face, full of blunt kindness and ready wit.

The Doctor's snuff-box seemed part and parcel of himself; for

the quaint, old-fashioned horn repository, that contained the pungent powder, *real Scotch*, never left his hand during his professional dialogue with Mrs. Lyndsay.

He shook his head, as his keen eyes read sickness of mind and body in her weary and care-worn face. "Ye are ill, my gude leddy," he said, in broad Scotch; "in nae condition to undertak' sic a lang voyage."

Mrs. Lyndsay answered frankly and truly, that she han been indisposed during the past week, and her recovery was so recent, that she felt much better in health than her looks warranted.

The Doctor examined her tongue, felt her pulse, and still shook his head doubtingly. "Feverish—rapid pulse—bad tongue—jest out o' yer bed, from attack near akin to cholera. I tell ye that ye are mair fit to go to bed again, under the dochtor's care, than to attempt crossing the Atlantic in a close crib like this."

"The fresh sea air will soon restore me to health," said Flora. "You know, Doctor, that we cannot command circumstances, and have things exactly as we could wish;" and she checked the sigh that rose to her lips, as she recalled to mind her dear, comfortable cottage at —, and glanced round the narrow cabin and its miserable accommodations.

The Doctor regarded her with eyes full of compassion. He certainly guessed her thoughts, and seemed as well acquainted with complaints of the mind as with bodily ailments.

"Weel, weel, I ha'e my ain doubts as to your fitness for sic a voyage in your weak state; but I'll e'en jest let ye pass. Are ye married or single?"

"Married."

"An' the guude man?—"

"Is on the deck with the captain. He will be here presently."

"Ha'e ye ony bairns?"

Flora pointed, with a feeling of maternal pride, to the little Josey, who was sleeping upon Hannah's knees, a lovely picture of healthy, happy infancy.

"Aye, she's bonnie," cried the kind Doctor, taking one of the tiny alabaster fingers of the babe in his red, rough hand. "Sma' need o' a dochter in her case. An' wha's this woman?" touching Hannah's shoulder with his forefinger.

"My nurse-girl."

"A married woman?"

"No, Sir."

"She shu'd be, I'm jest thinkin'; it will no be lang before she's a mither," muttered the little man. Then, turning quickly to Flora, he said, "I wull speak to the medical man on board, an' tell him to tak' partic'lar care o' ye during the voyage. What's his name?"

"There is no such person. The vessel is too small to incur such an expensive addition to the comfort of her passengers. The captain said he was his own doctor."

"How many passengers does he tak' out?"

"Seventy-two in the steerage, five in the cabin, besides his crew: eight in number."

"Eighty-five human beings, an' no medical man on board! 'Tis jest a disgrace to the owners, and shu'd be reported. In case o' cholera, or ony other epidemic brakin' out amang ye, wha' wu'd become o' ye a'?"

"We must trust in God. The great Physician of souls will not be forgetful of our bodily infirmities."

"True, true, young leddy; cling close to Him. Ye ha' muckle need o' His care. An' dinna trust your life to the dochtering o' a sullen ignoramus like the captain,—an' obstinate, self-willed brute, that, right or wrang, will ha' his ain way. Dinna tak' ony medicine frae him."

Flora was amused at the idea of calling in a one-eyed Esculapius like the jolly captain. The absurdity of the thing made her laugh heartily.

"It's nae laughing matter," said the little doctor, whose professional dignity was evidently wounded by her mistimed mirth.

"Hout! dinna I ken the ma'n for the last ten years or mair. Thae medicine kist he prizes mair than his sole remaining e'e, an' fancies himself a dochtir fitting a king. Ye canna' please him mair than by gie'n him a job. The last voyage he made in this verra brig, he administered, in his ignorance, a hale pint o' castor oil in ain dose to a lad on board, which took the puir fallow aff his legs completely. Anither specimen o' his medical skill was gie'n ane o' his crew a heaper spun fu' o' colomel, which he mistook for magnesia. I varlie believe that he canna' spell weel eneugh to read the directions in the bulk. An' is it to sic a dunderheid that the lives of eighty-five human beings are to be entrusted?"

Flora was highly entertained by this account of the captain's

skill ; while the doctor, who loved to hear himself talk, continued in a more impressive and confidential tone—

"Now, dinna' be sae ill advised as to be takin' pheesic a' the time, young Jedd. If ye wu'd keep yersel in health, persuade the captain to gie ye the charge o' yon kist o' poisons, an' tak' the first opportunity to drap the key by accident overboard. By sae doin' ye may be the savin' o' your ain life, an' the lives of a' the humanities on board the brig *Anne*."

Flora was fond of a little amateur doctoring. To part with the medicine chest, she considered, would be a great sin, and she was already secretly longing to overhaul its contents.

A few well-established remedies, promptly administered in simple cases of illness, and followed by the recovery of the patients, had made her imagine herself quite a genius in the healing art ; and she rejected the homely little doctor's last piece of advice as an eccentric whim, arising either from ignorance of his profession, or from disappointment in not having been appointed surgeon to the brig.

Doctor MacAdie was neither deficient in skill nor talent. He was a poor man, of poor parentage, who had worked hard to obtain his present position, and provide a comfortable home for his father and mother in their old age. His practice was entirely confined to the humble walks of life, and he was glad to obtain a few additional meals for a large family by inspecting the health of emigrants preparatory to their voyage.

In this case, his certificate of health was very satisfactory ; and he told the Captain that he had seldom seen a heartier, healthier "set o' *decent* bodies in sic a sma' vessel," and he pathetically entreated him not to tamper with their constitutions, by giving them dangerous drugs whose chemical properties he did not understand, declaring emphatically, "that nature was the best *physician* after all." The Captain considered this gratuitous piece of advice as an insult, for he very gruffly bade Doctor MacAdie "Go to h— and take care of his own patients ; he wanted none of his impertinent interference."

The little doctor drew up his shoulders with an air of profound contempt ; then taking a monstrous pinch of snuff, in the most sneezable manner from his old-fashioned box, he shook Mrs. Lyndsay kindly by the hand, and wishing her and her *gude man* a prosperous voyage, vanished up the companion-ladder.

Old Boreas shook his fist after his retreating figure. "You d—d,

insignificant, snuffy little coxcomb ! I'm a d—d sight better doctor than you are. If the government sends you again, poking your long nose among my people, I'll make a surgical case for you to examine at home at your leisure, I will."

In order to divert his ill-humor, Flora inquired at what hour the ship sailed.

"She must wait for that which never yet waited for mortal man—wind and tide. It will be midnight before we get underway."

Boreas always spoke in short sentences. He was a man of few words, rough, ready, and eccentrically blunt. Had his talents been proportioned to his obstinacy of will, he might have ruled over large communities, instead of acting the petty tyrant on the deck of his small craft. Right or wrong, he never gave up his opinion to any one. He certainly did not belong to the "*Aye, Sir—very true, Sir*" school of individuals, who would resign their own souls to agree with their superiors in rank or power. If there was a being on earth that he despised more than another, it was a *sneak*. On one occasion, when a steerage passenger, in order to curry favor, was prostrating himself before him after this fashion, assuring the Captain "that *his* thoughts coincided *exactly* with his own," he burst out in a towering passion : "D— you, sir ! haven't you got an opinion of your own ? I don't want such a sneaking puppy as you to think my thoughts and echo my words. I should despise myself, if I thought it possible that we could agree on any subject."

If really convinced that he was wrong, he would show it by a slight diminution of his ferocious stubbornness ; but would never acknowledge it in words. If he gained even a doubtful advantage over an adversary, he rubbed his hands, clapped his knees, and chuckled and growled out his satisfaction, in a manner peculiarly his own. He was only tolerable as a companion after taking his third glass of brandy and water ; and as he commenced these humanizing doses by daybreak in the morning, repeating them at stated intervals during the four-and-twenty hours, by noon he became sociable and entertaining ; and would descend from his anti-meridian dignity, and condescend to laugh and chat in a dry, humorous style, which, if it lacked refinement, was highly amusing.

Though an inveterate imbibier of alcohol, he was never positively drunk during the whole voyage. The evil spirits seemed to

make no impression upon the iron fibres of his stubborn brain and heart. He judged his morality by the toughness of his constitution, and congratulated himself on being a sober man, while he complained of his second mate, and stigmatised him as a drunken, worthless fellow, because one glass of punch made him intoxicated. This is by no means an uncommon thing both at home and abroad; and men condemn others more for want of strength of head, than strength of heart.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE STATE CABIN.

WHY it was called so, Flora could not imagine, as she retreated to the little domicile which was to be entirely appropriated to her own use. It was a very small closet, about seven feet in length, and a very little broader than it was long. It contained neither stool, bench, nor chair, and there was just room enough after closing the door, to turn round and undress. The top of a large chest of painted deal drawers, with a raised board in front, and screened by faded red stuff curtains, formed the bed; for which Lyndsay had purchased a hair-matress and feather pillows, to render it more comfortable during the voyage for his wife and child. But it was perched up at such an unreachable height from the ground, that the bed was on a level with Mrs. Lyndsay's chin. After Hanzah had arranged the clean bedding, the question naturally suggested itself, "How in the world shall I ever get in?" and as Flora was one of those persons who never left difficulties to be encountered at the last moment, she thought it would be better to make the experiment by daylight. After many ineffectual attempts, in which she so far succeeded that she bruised her chin, and knocked the skin off one of her knees, she gave the task up in despair.

"What am I to do, Hannah?" she said, appealing to her attendant, in a tone half laughing, half crying. "It would require the long legs of Curus Wilson, the London giant, to reach so high. Go into the cabin and fetch hither a chair."

"Why, la, Marn, there arn't such a thing as a chair in the whole ship. There's nothing to set on but them hard benches, which are enough to distract all the bones in your body. They worn't never made for females, them benches—only for rude sailor fellers, whose

skin is as hard and tough as skinocerums. Why it tires one more to sit down than to stand up. My back hakes ever since we comed into this com'd vessel."

"But the child and I can never sleep here as matters are at present. If it is such a difficult thing to get to bed when the ship is at anchor, what will it be when she is plunging about in a storm?"

"You had better hax the captine, Marm. He must know the proper way of climbing up, for it was his own berth."

"It will seem so absurd. He may, however, have a step-ladder to reach it. Go to him, and ask him, with my compliments, how he gets into bed."

Hannah returned laughing, and with flushed cheeks.

"La, Marm, he says "that he gets in like other folks; that where there's a will, there's alers a way." An' he burst out into such a loud roaring laugh that it made me feel quite ashamed. Arter he had had his fun and wiped his eye—he has but one, you knows, Marm—he cries out—"Ifout, lass! let her jest make a flight of steps, by pulling out the drawers one above another for a little way; they answer the purpose of stairs, and if she's in downright earnest to go to bed, she'll soon learn how to get in; but mind she don't knock her head against the ceiling, or fall out and break her neck, or there'll be the devil to pay with her husband, and no pitch hot. And tell her, lass, that the drawers are empty, and at her service to stow away all her little traps; and there's a *cubby hole* jest at the head of the bed, full of books, which she can read when she has a mind."

Flora was highly delighted with the result of Hannah's message. She immediately attempted the method proposed by the rough sailor, and after a trial or two, became quite expert in rolling in and out of the berth; though, in spite of the warning he had given, she rapped her head several times against the low ceiling, which was only a few feet above her pillow.

She then proceeded to fill the large, deep drawers with clothes for herself and Josey during the voyage, and had got everything comfortably arranged before night closed in, and she received a summons from the steward that "tea was ready."

"That's good news," said Hannah; "I feel quite raversome with hunger, and if I don't lay in a good stock to-night I shall feel bad enough to-morrow with the 'orrid sickness. The moment the ship begins to heave, I shall be heaving too."

"Say nothing about it, Hannah—enjoy yourself while you can. Give me the little pocket-glass out of my trunk. My hair is all scattered about my face."

"Yes, Marm, you'd better tidy up a bit, for there's company in the cabin—not 'zactly ladies, but kind of ladies, such as Misses Waddel would call *decent* folk. One of them was sitting upon the Capting's knee when I went in, and drinking punch with him out of the same glass."

"Very *decent* ladies, truly," said Flora, doubtful whether to make one of such a refined party. Just as she had determined to remain where she was for the night, Lyndsay tapped at the door, and she called him in to hold a consultation.

"Come away," said he, laughing; "it is only the captain's wife, and the mate's, with two of their sisters. Nice, good-tempered, natural women, who will behave themselves with due decorum. Old Boreas will be quite hurt if you refuse to come out of your den, and play the amiable to his woman folk."

Flora no longer hesitated; she took her husband's arm, and emerged from her hiding-place into the cabin, which now presented a very different appearance to what it had done some hours before. All the confusion of trunks and packages that had filled up the small available space had been removed, and it looked as neat and comfortable as such a confined crib could possibly look under the most favorable circumstances.

The company, consisting of four smartly-dressed young women, were ranged along the bench opposite the door from which Flora made her *debut*. They regarded her with a nervous, awkward agitation, as they rose simultaneously and dropped as low a courtesy as the narrow space between the bench and the table would allow. Flora returned the salutation with a distant bow, and caught a reproving glance from her husband. The ceremony of introduction then commenced, by the captain rising to his legs, and stretching out his red, right hand with an air of dignity, "Mrs. Lyndsay, cabin passenger in the brig *Anne*—Mrs. Williams, my wife, ma'am—Mrs. Collins, Mrs. Lyndsay,—my wife's sister-in-law,—Miss Nancy and Betsey Collins, Mrs. Lyndsay,—Mr. Collins, my first mate, and brother to Mrs. Williams, Mrs. Lyndsay."

Then came the shaking of hands, which we fear Mistress Lyndsay performed with a very bad grace, for she had not as yet been seasoned by a long residence in a semi-democratic country, where

people get over their prejudices regarding superiority of blood and breeding, and must not only shake hands with, but associate with persons on an equal footing, whom, in the old country, they would consider vastly inferior. Lyndsay, who pitied the embarrassment of the family party assembled in the cabin, received them with a frank courtesy, which soon restored confidence, and set them at their ease, though it was difficult to refrain from a smile at the scared look they cast at each other when Mrs. Lyndsay took her seat among them; and the dead silence which fell upon them, and checked the lively chattering that a few minutes before had rung through the cabin.

Tea and coffee were smoking upon the table, which was covered with all sorts of dainties, that the captain's wife had brought in a basket to make merry with, and which she proffered to the strangers with true Scotch hospitality, assuring them that the rich bun and short bread had been made with her *ain* hands, as a little treat for Jock before leaving the country.

"Meg forgets that I'm a rough English sailor, and don't care a fig for her Scotch sunsets," quoth Boreas, speaking with his mouth full of short bread. "A good red herring and a slice of Gloster cheese is worth them all. But wilful women will have their own way, and I must eat the mawkish trash to please her."

"An' find it varra gude, Jock, an' I'm no mistaken," said the buxom fair-haired woman, tapping his rough cheek. "It wad be something new for him to praise onything made by his own wife."

And then she rattled away about the inconstancy of men, and of sailors especially, in such a droll, provoking manner, that she forced her rude lord to lay aside his dignity and laugh at her nonsense. She was a comely, sonsy dame, neither very young, nor very pretty; but he was her senior by many years, and he bore her raillery with the same grace that a staid old cat submits to the impertinent caresses and cuffs of a frolicsome kitten. When he growled and swore, she clapped her hands and laughed, and called him her dear old sea-bear, and hoped that he would not die of grief during her absence.

"Never fear, Meg, I don't mean to give you the chance of tormenting another fellow out of his wits. I shall live long enough to plague you yet."

"Na' doubt," said Meg, "which thought will console me for

your absence; an' I sall be as merry as a lark until you return to execute your threat."

"Meg, you are a duft woman," said Collies, the mate. "The captain does na' half like your teasing. Can't you leave him alone?"

"Mind your ain business, Wullie, an' take care of your ain wife. I canna' play the fule like Jean, wha's whimperin' by herself in the corner."

This was indeed the case. Mrs. Collins had only been married a few weeks, and the parting with her bridegroom was a heart-breaking affair. They were a very interesting young couple; and the tall, fair girl sat apart from the rest of the group, nursing an agony of fear in her gentle breast, lest her Willie should be drowned, and she should never see him again. She made desperate efforts to control her grief, and conceal her tears that rolled in quick succession down her pale cheeks. Collins sprang to her side, and circling her slender waist with his manly arm, whispered into her ears loving words, full of hope and comfort. It would not do; the poor girl could not be reconciled to the separation, and answered all his tender endearments with low, stifled sobs, filling the heart of the lover-husband with the grief that burthened her own.

Collins had a fine, sensible face, though it had been considerably marred by the small-pox. His features were straight and well cut; his hair dark and curling; his handsome grey eyes full of manly fire. Though not exactly a gentleman, he possessed high and honorable feelings, and his frank manners and independent bearing won for him the good will and respect of all.

Doubtless Jean thought him the handsomest man in a' Scotland, and most women would have said that he was a good-looking, dashing sailor. As he bent over his disconsolate, weeping bride, with such affectionate earnest love beaming from his fine eyes, and tried with gentle words to reconcile her to their inevitable parting, he afforded a striking contrast to his superior, who regarded a temporary absence from his spouse as a thing of course—a mere matter of business, which he bore with his usual affectation of stubborn indifference.

Feeling that her presence must be a restraint upon the family party, the moment the evening meal was concluded Flora bade them good-night and retired to her state cabin; and, worn out with the

fatigue of the day, she undressed and went to bed. The rain was still falling heavily, and she was forced to leave her door partly unclosed to obtain a little air, for the heat was oppressive in the close confined berth. For a long time she lay awake—now thinking sad thoughts and shedding sadder tears—now listening to the hum of voices in the outer cabin, broken occasionally by songs and merry bursts of laughter.

The Captain's wife and her sisters, she found, were on their way to Anster fair, which was to be held on the morrow, at which place they were to be put on shore. And she remembered the old song of Maggie Lauder, and her encounter with the piper on her way to that celebrated fair: and was not a little amused to hear old Boreas, as if he had read her thoughts, roar out the national ditty in a hoarse, deep voice, as rough and unmusical as a norwester piping among the shrouds.

As she reclined on her pillow, she could just see, through a small aperture in the red curtains that concealed her person from observation, the party gathered around the cabin table.

The captain's wife was seated on his knee, and Jean's pale check rested on her bridegroom's manly breast. Old Boreas was in his glory, for the brandy bottle was before him, and he was insisting upon the ladies taking a glass of punch, and drinking success to the voyage. This they all did with a very good grace; even the pensive Jean sipping occasionally from her husband's tumbler.

The captain's wife began teasing him for a fairing, which he very bluntly refused to bestow. She called in the aid of Miss Nancy and Betsy, and they charged down upon him with such a din of voices, that the jolly tar emptied the contents of his leatheren purse into Meg's lap, who clutched the silver, and kissed him, and clapped his broad back, and laughed like a child.

By-and-by he was forced to leave her to go upon deck; when she rose, and went to her brother, and laying her hand upon his shoulder, addressed him in a manner so serious, so different from her former deportment, that Flora could scarcely believe it was the same person that now spoke.

"Wullie, ye maun promise me to keep a gude look-out on Jock during the voyage. He's jest killin' e' himsel wi' drink. Canna' ye persuade him to gie it up ava?"

The mate shook his head. "Ye ken the ma'n, Maggie. He will gang his ain gate."

Maggie sighed heavily. "It's a puir look out for his wife an' the twa' weans. He'll no leave it aff for our sakes. But ye maun put in a word o' advice now and then."

"It's of na' use, Maggie. He's as obstinate as a brute beast. If he wull na' do it for your sake and the bairns—he'll no be convinced by word o' mine. I'm thinkin', that opposition on that heid wud do mair harm than guude."

"An' then, they women folk—Wullie. He's na' to be trusted. Wi' him—out o' sight is out o' mind. He never thinks o' his wife at hame the moment he puts out to sea."

"Dinna' be sae jealous, woman. Ha' ye na' faith?" said Collins, pressing Jean closer to his heart. "Do you think that sailors ar' wa' than ither men?"

"Ye are a' alike," sighed Meg, "thoogh doubtless Jean thinks ye wull ever be true to her, an' keep your eyes shut when you pass a pretty lass for her sake. I ken you better."

"I were nae worthy to be 'your brither's wife, Maggie, an' I doubted his honesty," said Jean, indignantly, as she lifted her long, fair curls from her husband's breast, and regarded him with a glance of profound devotion. "If ye had mair faith in Jock, he wu'd be a better man."

"It's early days wi' ye yet, Jean;—wait a wee while afore ye find faut wi' yer elders. Wullie weel kens that I'm na' mistrustfu' wi'out cause."

Flora did not hear the mate's reply: sleep weighed heavily upon her eyelids, and she dropped off into profound repose.

CHAPTER XXIX.

FLORA'S FELLOW-PASSENGERS.

THE grey dawn glimmered faintly through the bull's-eye of ground glass in the ceiling of Mrs. Lyndsay's cabin, before she again unclosed her eyes. She sat up in her berth and steadied herself, glancing at first wonderingly around her, and marvelling where she was. The heaving of the vessel, and the quick rushing of the waves against her sides, informed her that the ship had sailed during the night, and recalled to her mind the events of the past day.

The voyage, whether for good or ill, had commenced; and the certainty of her present position relieved her mind of a heavy burden of anxiety. She rose and dressed herself, and earnestly, upon her knees, besought the Almighty to protect them from the perils and dangers of the deep, and watch over them for good during their passage across the mighty waters. Nor were her fellow-passengers, although unknown to her, forgotten in her petition to the general Father. Strengthened and refreshed by this act of devotion, she felt her spirits revive and her heart expand with renewed cheerfulness and hope, and trustfully believed that God had given a favorable answer to her prayer.

Early as the hour was, she found watchful eyes awake in the ship. The Captain was already on deck, and Sam Fraser, the steward, a smart lad of eighteen, was cleaning out the cabin. The boards felt cold and wet, and Flora, who was anxious to see all she could of the coast of Scotland, hurried upon deck, where she found her husband up before her, and conversing with the Captain.

The *Anne*, with all her white sails set, was scudding before a favorable wind, which whistled aloft strange solemn anthems in the shrouds. The sun had just climbed above the mountain-heights, that formed a glorious background to the blue, glancing waters, over which the ship glided like a thing of life. It was a splendid July morning, and the white-crested billows flashed and rolled their long sparkling surges beneath a sky of cloudless brilliancy; and all nature glowed with life and beauty, as land and sea looked up rejoicingly, to hail the broad, open eye of day.

"'Twas heaven above—around—below."

The romantic features of the coast, with all the poetical and historical associations connected with it—the deep music of ocean—the very smell of the salt brine, filled the heart of Flora Lyndsay with hope and joy. To have gazed upon such a soul-stirring scene, with a mind burdened with painful regrets, would have been an act of impiety towards the bountiful Creator, whose presence is never more fully recognised than when following the course that His wisdom has shaped out for us across that pathless wilderness of waves—that wonderful mirror of His power, which, whether in storm or shine, faithfully reflects the glory and greatness of its Maker.

With returning health and spirits, Flora's mind recovered its former tone; she felt not only contented, but happy, and submitted herself with child-like confidence to the protecting care of the Universal Father.

"All, doubtless," she thought, "is ordained for the best. If not for us, for our children. Others have toiled for us; it is but meet that we should toil in our turn. It is to the workers, not to the dreamers, that earth opens up her treasures. Life is beset with trials, take which path we may. The brightest sky at times is darkened by clouds; the calmest ocean vexed with storms. What matters it that we are called upon to bear the burden and heat of the day, if we receive the reward of our labors at night? If the sunset is fair and peaceful, who recalls the tempest that darkened the heavens at noon? The quiet grave receives all at last; and those who have worked hardest on earth, will find a brighter morning for their eternal holiday of love and praise."

"What are you thinking of, Flora?" said Lyndsay, drawing her arm within his own.

"I was thinking, dearest, that it was good to be here."

"Your thoughts, then, were an echo of my own. Depend upon it, Flora, that we shall find it all right at last."

For a long time they stood together, silently surveying the magnificent coast that was rapidly gliding from them. Lyndsay's soul-lighted eyes rested proudly upon it, and a shade of melancholy passed across his brow. It was his native land, and he deeply felt that he looked upon its stern, majestic face for the last time. But he was not a man who could impart the inner throbings of his heart (and it was a great heart) to others. Such feelings he considered too sacred to unveil to common observation—and even she, the wife of his bosom, could only read by the varying expression of his countenance the thoughts that were working within.

"Courage, my dear Flora," he said at length, with one of his own kind smiles. "All will be well in the end, and we shall still be happy in each other's love. Yes—as happy in the backwoods of Canada as we have been in England."

Flora felt that with him she could be happy anywhere—that paradise would be a prison, if his presence did not enliven and give interest to the scene.

Few of the emigrants had found their way to the deck at that early hour; and for some time Flora enjoyed a charming *tête-à-tête*

with her husband. Gradually the deck grew more populous ; and men were seen lounging against the bulwarks, smoking their pipes, or performing their ablutions—a wooden tub and canvass bucket serving them for hand-basin and water-jug. Then commenced the great business of cooking the morning meal ; and Hannibal, the black lord of the caboose, was beset by a host of scolding, jabbering women, all fighting and quarrelling for the first chance at the stove. He took their abuse very coolly, settling the dispute by making the auld wives draw lots for precedence. They consented to this arrangement with a very bad grace. Not more than four kettles could occupy the fire at one time ; and though some clubbed, and made their mess of porridge together in one large pot, the rest grumbled and squabbled during the whole operation, elbowing and crowding for more room, and trying to push each other's coffee and teapots into the fire. And then, all in a breath, at the very top of their shrill voices, appealed to Hannibal to act as umpire among them, and establish their claims to the best side of the fire ; his answer was brief and to the point—

" Dere be dis fire. You hab him in so long. Him wait for no one. Your time up. You take off pot, or I pitch pot into sea. Others must eat as well as you ; so keep your breath to cool your porridge ; and if that no suit you, fight it out—fight it out!"

And here he flourished over their heads his iron ladle, full of some scalding liquor, which silenced the combatants for one while, until a new set of applicants emerging from the gangway, made them rush more vigorously than ever to the charge.

As Flora continued pacing the deck, and watching the noisy group round the cooking-stove, she felt no small degree of curiosity respecting them. Rude and unpolished as they appeared to be, they were yet her fellow-voyagers to that unknown land to which all their hopes and fears instinctively turned ; and she could scarcely regard with indifference those whom Providence had thrown together in pursuit of the same object. She wanted to know something about them from their own lips—what their past lives had been, what were their future prospects, and the causes that had led them to emigrate to Canada. Perhaps something of the same feeling is experienced by most persons suddenly thrown together and confined for some weeks in such a narrow space as the interior of a small brig—for the *Anne* contained more passengers for her size and tonnage than many large, three-masted vessels. During the long

voyage her curiosity was amply gratified, and she learned something of the history and characters of most of these people. First, there was an old highland soldier, who had served during the greater part of the Peninsular war, and had seen a great deal of hard service, and received a number of hard knocks in the way of wounds and broken bones, of which—now the pain and danger was over—he was not a little proud, as they formed a never-ending theme of boasting and self-exaltation; and had honest Donald Macdonald charged his fellow-passengers a penny a peep at the scars on his legs, breast, and arms, he might have made enough to pay the expenses of his passage out. “His wounds,” he said, “were all in the right place. He was too well-bred to turn his back to an enemy.”

Macdonald was one of the many unfortunate old pensioners, who had been induced to part with a certain provision for his old age, to try his fortunes in the backwoods of Canada.

He knew as little of hard labor as any officer in his regiment, still less of agricultural pursuits, and perhaps could barely have told the difference between one sort of grain and another, having entered the army a mere boy, quite raw and inexperienced, from his native hills.

He had a wife, and five rude, brawny, coarse children—the three eldest girls from seven to fourteen years of age. “They were not of the right sort,” he said; “but they were strong enough for boys, and would make fine mothers for dragoons, to serve in case of war.”

But as Canada is not at all a belligerent country, these qualifications in his bouncing, red haired lassies, were no reccomendation.

The two spoilt boys were still in short coats, and could afford little help to their veteran father for many years to come.

Donald had formed the most extravagant notions of Canada. In his eyes it was a perfect El Dorado, where gold was as plentiful as blackberries upon the bushes. He never seemed to have given the idea of having to work for his living a thought—and he laughed at a notion so disagreeable and repugnant to his old habits, as absurd—

“Wha’ was the use of ganging to a new country,” he said, “if a bodie had to work as hard there as in the auld?”

After paying his passage-money, and providing provisions for the voyage, he had only the sum of nineteen pounds remaining, which he considered an inexhaustible fund of wealth, from which

he was to obtain, not only a comfortable living in the land of promise, but an independent fortune. He was entitled to a grant of land, which he said, "would make him a laird, and place him on an equal footing with the lairds in the backwoods of Canada."

Flora often wondered, in after years, what became of poor Macdonald and all his high-flown dreams of future greatness.

The wife of the old soldier was a tall, raw-boned, red-fisted virago, who fought with both fists and tongue. She seemed to live in a perfect element of strife; a quarrel could not exist in the ship without her being either the original cause, or the active promoter of it, after it was once set on foot. She would bally the captain, out swear the sailors, and out-scold all the rest of the femalities in the vessel.

The daughter of a soldier, born amidst the horrors of war, and brought up as a camp follower, her ignorance of all the gentler humanities of life was only exceeded by her violence. While assisting in pillaging the dead, after the battle of Waterloo, she had found the sum of a hundred gold Napoleons concealed in a belt upon the person of a dead French officer. This made her a woman of fortune, and led to her marriage with her present husband; for she, like the woman of Samaria, had had several, who doubtless were glad to be released by death from the unnatural tyranny of such a mate. Macdonald was an easy, good-natured man, who, for the sake of peace, let the wilful woman have her own way, and thrash him and the bairns as often as the wicked spirit by which she was possessed, prompted her to exhibit these peculiar marks of her conjugal and maternal love.

Had Macdonald been asked why he submitted to such base treatment from his wife, he might have answered with the tall Canadian backwoodsman, when questioned on the same subject—

"It pleases her, and it don't hurt I."

Mrs. Macdonald was in a delicate situation, and from the very day the ship sailed, she gave out that she was on the eve of an increase to her interesting family—to the great indignation of the Captain, who had a mortal antipathy to babies; and he declared, in his rough way, "That it was an imposition; Mrs. Macdonald had no right to swindle him into taking out more passengers than he had bargained for.

The stalwart dame was enchanted that she had found out a way to annoy the Captain, to whose orders she was forced to submit,

and whom, in consequence, she regarded as a bitter enemy, and she did all in her power to encourage his fears respecting her. Whenever he paced the deck in sullen dignity, she began to sigh and groan, and declare, in a voice loud enough for him to overhear, "that she did na' think that she could hand out anither day ava."

There was another pensioner on board, who was the sworn friend and countryman of Macdonald. Hugh Mackenzie was a dragoon, and a fine, tall, soldierly-looking man. His wife was a little, chatty, gossiping woman, from Berwickshire. A good creature in her way, but sadly addicted to the use of strong waters, drowning the little sense she had in the fumes of whiskey and brandy. She and her husband spent all their time in eating and drinking, when they were not taking snuff and smoking. They were cooking, or preparing for it, from morning till night; and generally headed the forlorn hope that three times a day besieged the carboose, and defied the valiant Aanibal to his very teeth.

Mrs. Mackenzie was the very reverse of her good friend, Mrs. Macdonald, for she stood in perpetual fear of her tall husband, who thrashed her soundly when she got drunk; moreover, she was very jealous of all the young women in the ship, whom she termed "Lazy, bold, gude-for-naught hizzies, who wud na' led a' bodies man alone."

She would sit for hours on deck smoking a short, black pipe, and crooning old border ballads, in a voice anything but musical.

During Flora's long morning promenade upon deck, she more than once caught a pair of yellow, queer-looking eyes peering at her from beneath the shade of one of the boats that were slung to the main-mast, and by-and-by, a singularly disagreeable looking head raised itself from a couch of cloaks, and continued its investigation in a very impertinent and intrusive manner. The head belonged to a little man in a snuff-colored suit, whose small, pert, pugnacious face, eyes, hair and complexion, were only a variety of the same shades as the dress in which he had cased his outer man. Flora quietly pointed him out to her husband, and asked, in a whisper, "What he thought of the little brown man?"

"His appearance is not at all prepossessing," said Lyndsay. "I will ask the Captain, who is coming this way, who and what he is?"

The question seemed to embarrass old Boreas not a little. He threw a frowning glance towards the spot occupied by the stranger,

shrugged his shoulders, whistled a tune, and thrusting his hands into his breeches' pockets, took several turns on the deck before he made any reply. Until seeing the snuff-colored individual about to crawl out of his hiding-place, he called out, in a gruff voice—

"Keep where you are, sir—the longer you remain out of sight the better. By exposing yourself to observation, you may cause trouble to more persons than *one!*"

The person thus unceremoniously addressed, smiled malignantly, and retreating beneath the shade of the boat, snarled out some reply, only audible to the Captain; whose advice did not, however, seem lost upon him, for after the Lyndseys had taken another turn or two, and he had glared at them with his little fiery eyes sufficiently to gratify his insolent curiosity, he again emerged from under the boat, and succeeded in tumbling into it—and drawing a part of a spare sail over his diminutive person, he vanished as completely from sight as if the ocean had suddenly swallowed him up.

"I was a d——d fool!" muttered the Captain, returning to Lyndsay's side, "to let that fellow, with his ugly, sneering phiz, come on board. But as he is here, I must make the best of a bad bargain. You will not peach, so I'll just give you a bit of his history, and explain the necessity of his keeping close until we are out of the sight of land. Hang him! His ugly phiz is enough to sink the ship. Had I seen him before he came on board, he might have rotted in jail before I took charge of his carcase; and then, 'tis such a conceited ass, he will take no advice, and cares as little for his own safety as he does for mine."

"Is he a runaway felon?" asked Flora.

"You have not made a bad guess, Mistress Lyndsay. He was a distiller, who carried on a good business in Edinburgh. He cheated the government, and was cashiered for a large sum—more than he could pay by a long chalk. His friends contrived his escape, and smuggled him on board last night, just as the anchor was being weighed. They offered me a handsome sum to carry him to Quebec; and should he be discovered by any of the passengers before we lose sight of the British coast, he would be seized when the ship puts into Kirkwall, and it would be a bad job for us both. The transaction is entirely between his friends and me; Mr. Gregg knows nothing about it."

"And are we to have the pleasure of his company in the cabin during the voyage?"

"That would be bad indeed. No, he has a berth provided for him in the store-room, and has the privilege of having his grub sent to him from the cabin-table, and the use of the tea and coffee-pot after we have done with it. This is quite good enough for a rogue like him. But I hear Sam Frazer hallowing for breakfast. Come down to the cabin, Mrs. Lyndsay; the sea air must have made you hungry."

"Indeed, I am, captain, and mean to do ample justice to your sea fare."

The little cabin was in apple-pie order. A clean diaper cloth covered the table, on which the common crockery cups and saucers were arranged with mathematical precision, while the savory smell of fried fish and hot coffee promised the hungry emigrants a substantial breakfast.

On inquiring for Hannah and James Hawke, Flora found that both were confined to their berths with sea-sickness. Old Boreas complimented her not a little on her being able to appear at the breakfast table. The fish proved excellent—the coffee, a black, bitter compound, which Flora drank with a very ill grace. The captain, with an air of exultation, produced from his own private cupboard, which formed the back pannelling of his berth, a great stone jar of milk, which his wife had prepared with sugar to last him the voyage.

"Have you no cow on board?" asked Flora, rather anxiously; for little Josey and her comfort were always uppermost in her mind.

"Cow! Who the devil would be bothered with a cow," said Boreas, "when he can procure a substitute like this? Here's my dun cow, she'll give us what we want, without the trouble of milking. Won't she, Sam?" appealing to his steward to second his assertion.

"Yes, sir," and Sam grinned applause. "But I'm jist thinkin', Coptain, that the weather's o'er hot, an' the dun cow may gang drie afore we see Canada."

The captain's cow turned out a very sorry animal; for in less than two days, the milk was so putrid that it had to be thrown overboard, and his cabin passengers were forced to drink the vile coffee, and still viler tea, without milk during the rest of the voyage, with only coarse brown sugar to soften its disagreeable flavor.

It must be confessed that the cabin bill of fare presented no tempting variety. After the first week, the fresh mutton and beef were changed to salt pork and hard junk, ship biscuit and peas, and potatoes of the last year's growth, rancid butter, and oatmeal porridge, with porter and brown sugar for sauce—and sometimes, but this was a very great dainty—a slice of Dunlop cheese. Nothing but hunger, and constant exercise upon the deck in the open air, reconciled Mrs. Lyndsay to this coarse diet. It was not what they had been promised, but complaints were useless. There certainly was no danger of hurting their health by over-indulgence, as it was with difficulty they could satisfy their hunger with the unpalatable fare, which was old, and not even good of its kind.

The Lyndsays were always glad when the homely meal was over, and they could escape once more to the deck, and enjoy the fine coast views and the fresh, invigorating sea breeze.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE LAST GLANCE OF SCOTLAND.

THE weather for the next three days continued as fine as summer weather could be. With wind and tide in her favor, the *Anne* made a splendid run through the Mory Frith, passed the auld town of Aberdeen, and before sunset, sailed close under the dreary Caithness coast.

Flora examined John o' Groat's house with some interest, and for the first time in her life discovered that the fantastic red rock which bears that name, was not a *bona fide dwelling*, which up to that moment she had imagined it to be.

A prospect more barren and desolate than that over which Caithness Castle rises pre-eminent, can scarcely be imagined. Flora turned from the contemplation of the stony waste with an inward thanksgiving, "that it was not her home." But when they rounded Duncansby Head, the scene, before so tame and sterile, became more grand and picturesque every moment. They were now in the stormy Pentland Frith, threading their way, with the aid of a pilot, through its romantic labyrinth of islands, driven onward by a spanking wind.

The bold outline of the coast was so different in its character

from that to which she had been accustomed from a child, that it made a powerful impression upon her mind, and quickly associated itself with all legends of the wild and marvellous that she had ever heard or read. Those beetling crags, those ocean caves, into which the wild sea-waves rushed with such a fearful din, seemed fitting habitations for all the evil demons that abound in the Scandinavian mythology, once dreaded as stern realities, in a darker stage of human progression.

How tame, beside these awful sublimities, appeared the gentle, sloping cliffs at —, and her little cottage fronting the quiet bay!

"Green lie these thickly timber'd shores,
Fair sloping to the sea."

But here rocks upon rocks, in endless confusion, reared their craggy heads towards heaven, their frowning shadows casting a stygian gloom upon the billows that leap and roar around their massive base. A perpetual war of ages these billows have waged against the iron barriers that, with silent, motionless, resistless force, repel their white-crested phalanx, scattering them into shining fragments of snowy spray. Ocean will not be defeated; he calls his legends again and again to the charge, only to be broken and beaten back as before. They retreat with a sullen roar of defiance, that seems to say, " You have beaten us; but we will try our strength against you once more. The day is coming when one of us two must yield."

The rocks assumed all hues in the fiery beams of the setting sun. The red granite glowed with tints of crimson, violet, indigo, and gold, these colors assuming a greater intensity when reflected in the transparent waters of the Firth. It was a scene to see; not to prate about, and the memory of its brilliancy still lies enshrined, like some precious gem in Flora Lyndsay's heart.

As headland after headland flew past, revealing at every point some fresh combinations of grandeur and beauty bursting upon the sight. Flora clapped her hands together in a sort of ecstasy, and could scarcely refrain from shouting aloud with delight.

Lyndsay was standing silently beside her, watching with an air of melancholy interest the scene which excited in her nature-loving breast such intense enthusiasm.

" Flora, do you see that old-fashioned mansion that crowns the green amphitheatre, surrounded by those lofty hills in front of us?

Oh, 'tis a lovely, romantic place—with that giant hill that looks like an old man in a highland bonnet, towering above it, away there in the back ground. That is the old man of Hoy. That old house is M——, where I was born and brought up." He drew a deep, inward sigh, and turning his face from his wife, continued to gaze with an earnest longing, and could she have seen his eyes that were shaded by his hand, perhaps with a tearful glance on the home of his childhood, of many generations of his family. The shades of night drew a veil over the stern landscape, and the moon rose up and bathed rock and crag and mountain height with a flood of silver glory, adding a ghost-like, awful sublimity to the scene; but Lyndsay still leant upon the vessel's side, watching with the same intense expression the black outline of the receding coast, which, in that uncertain light, presented an aspect of rugged, frowning desolation.

The Captain expected to put into Kirkwall, at which place he had been requested by the owners to take in a supply of fresh provisions and water for the voyage—the water casks having been filled with the execrable waters o' Leith, under the ostensible reason of keeping them from leaking until they could obtain a better supply. But the wind and tide being in his favor, and enabling him to make a rapid run through the Firth, he thought it best to keep straight on. This, in the end, by leaving the vessel short of provisions and water, proved a short-sighted policy, while it greatly disappointed Flora, whom Lyndsay had promised to introduce to some of his friends, and give her a nearer view of the romantic islands, which, seen from the water, had excited her curiosity to the utmost.

But the *Anne* spread her white wings to catch the fresh breeze that was piping its hoarse song among the shrouds, and sped far upon her westward way, leaving Mrs. Lyndsay to upbraid the captain with having cheated her hopes, which now could never be realised.

Boreas only laughed, and said—"that he was d——d sorry, for that he would have to drink bad water and eat salt junk the rest of the voyage."

"And what has become of the little man in brown?" asked Flora; "I have not seen him since he crept into the boat."

"We had a blow up this morning," said Boreas. "When I came on deck, my gentleman was marching about as bold as you

please, and had the impudence to threaten to kick one of the emigrant children overboard, if he found him in his path again. When I remonstrated with the scoundrel on his impudence, as the father of the child knew him, and might report him to the pilot, he bade me 'Go to h—, and take care of my own people. He would not submit to my low tyranny.' He would do as he pleased, without asking my leave!" And then the fellow began to rave and swear in such an outrageous manner, that I could hardly resist the inclination I felt to pitch him plump into the sea. But I had my revenge. "Ha! ha! I had my revenge."

"In what way?" asked Lyndsay.

"The best way in the world; and the snarling puppy had no one to blame but himself. My dog Oscar is d—d ugly, but he's the most sagacious beast in the world. He can tell an honest man at a glance, and he hates rogues. Oscar sat on his haunches, eyeing the little man with no very amiable squint during the row; every now and then uttering a significant growl, and making a preparatory snap at Mr. Lootie's legs, as if he longed to take the quarrel under his own especial management. In the heat of anger, Mr. Lootie kept raising his hands, and shaking them at me in a threatening manner. Oscar let it pass for what it was worth the first time; but the moment the fist was raised a second time, he dashed into the little brute with tooth and claw, and pulling him to the ground, he gave him such a tousling, that the distiller was fain to roar aloud for mercy; and I proved just then very deaf, and he got enough of it, I can tell you."

"Served him right," said Flora; "I expect he will afford us some amusement during the voyage. Captain, where did you procure this codfish? I never tasted anything so delicious in the fish way in my life."

"Ah, I thought you'd find that a treat. Those fish were alive under the blue waters of the Firth an hour ago. Talk of the fine flavor of the Newfoundland cod! they are not comparable to the fish caught in these rapid waters."

Flora was on deck by sunrise the next morning. The sky was still cloudless, but the breeze had freshened, and the sea was covered with short, rolling billows, which recalled to her mind a beautiful line in Ossian, where the old bard compares these white-crested, short waves to a flock of sheep coming tumbling over one

another from the hills ; and in another place he terms the wind that moves them—

"The shepherdess of the sea driving her flocks on shore."

A tall, dark man, that was at the wheel, and bore the very appropriate name of Bob Motion, whether real or assumed, it would be hard to say, called this short chopping sea, "the white mice being out."

Flora found it no easy matter to keep her feet on the deck while the vessel was going sideways through the water, but she hung on to the bulwarks, and was rewarded by the sight of the wild Sutherland coast on the left, its brown heath-covered hills and fantastic rocks, conjuring up the form of the Norna of the fitful Head—

"And of every wild shore that the northern winds knew."

Very few of the emigrants had ventured out of the steerage, being down with sea-sickness ; but Flora never suffered once from this distressing malady during the voyage. This morning, in particular, she felt well and in high spirits. A sense of glorious freedom in thus bounding over the free, glad waves, in feeling their spray upon her lips, and the fresh, wild breath of the wind fanning her cheeks, and whistling through her hair. The ship seemed endowed with life as well as motion, as she leaped from wave to wave, and breasted the flashing brine as if it were her servant, and sworn to do her bidding.

"Well, Flora, what do you think of Lord Rae's country?" said Lyndsay.

"It is terrific!" returned Flora ; I cannot look at that confusion of hills, lifting their tall heads to heaven, but I fancy that the earth has rebelled against her Maker, and dares to defy Him to his face. It is odd—a strange madness, you will think—but the sight of these mountains thrills me with fear. I feel myself grow pale while looking at them, and tremble while I admire."

To me, who was born among the hills, Flora, these sensations of yours are almost incomprehensible. But look, that broken arch of stone formed by those immense black rocks round which the wild waves revel, and leap in a glad frenzy, is the entrance to Loch Gribol. It is one of the grandest objects on this rugged coast."

How often amid the dark woods of Canada did the stern sublimity of that awful scene return to Flora Lyndsay in her dreams ! The

barren coast of Anticosti, the pine-covered precipices of free-stone that frown over Chaleur Bay, and the mountain range that extends on the north of the St. Lawrence from the Gulf to Quebec, though they present every variety of savage scenery, cannot compete with the lonely, sterile grandeur that marks the indashing of the ocean waves into that Highland loch.

The long, bright summer day wore to its close, and before the moon looked down upon the heath-clad hills, the light-house on Cape Wrath had diminished to a star amid the waves, and the coast of Scotland looked like a dim wreath of blue smoke upon the verge of the horizon.

The little islands of Barra and Rona dimly distinguished above the waves, were the last of the British Isles that met Flora's anxious glance; and when they faded into the immensity of ocean, and were lost to sight, and the vessel fairly stood to sea, a sense of loneliness, of perpetual exile, pressed so heavily upon her heart, that she left the deck, and sought her bed, that she might bewail in solitude her last passionate adieu to her native land.

CHAPTER XXXI.

STEPHEN CORRIE.

Now that the fear of detection was over, the little brown man fearlessly emerged from his hiding-place in the boat, and promenaded the deck from morning till night, sneering at the steerage passengers, and abusing the sailors in the most arrogant and assured manner.

He was the most contrary, malicious, waspish elf that could well be imagined. If he could not find an opportunity for stinging and teasing with his ill-natured sarcasms and remarks, he buzzed around his victims like an irritated mosquito, whose shrill notes of defiance and antagonism are as bad as its bite. The more Flora saw of Mr. Lootie, the less she wished to see of him; but she could not come upon the deck without his pestering her with his company, and annoying her with observations on his fellow-passengers, which were as unjust as they were cruel.

It was in vain that she turned her back upon him, and gave him curt, ungracious answers, often affecting not to hear him at all.

The little snuff-colored wretch was too much at heart a sneak, with all his impudence, to be readily shook off.

It was only when Oscar, who had attached himself to Mrs. Lyndsay and her child, accompanied her to the deck, that Mr. Lootie kept his distance. The fierce terrier had only to draw up his lip and show his ivories, hissing through them a short, ominous snarl, and the brown dwarf retreated with a growl and a curse into his boat.

I am sorry to say that Flora actually fostered the deadly enmity that existed between Oscar and the recreant distiller, which seemed the more unjustifiable, as there was a positive personal likeness between the biped and quadruped. They had the same short, pert contour of face, the same petulant curl of the nostrils, the same fiery-red flash in the small yellow-brown eyes, and the very same method of snarling and showing off their white, malicious-looking teeth. The very color of Oscar's low, rough coat was nearly the same with the scanty beard and hair of his inveterate foe. Could Oscar have spoken with a human tongue, he would have declared himself very little flattered by the resemblance; for, rough as he was, he was an honest dog, and loved honesty in others. There was only one mental feature common to both—their capacity to hate and to annoy those they disliked.

Occasionally the little brown man indulged in a fit of mirth. When retreating under the shade of his ark of safety—the boat—he would sing in a low bow-wow tone some ditty only known to himself, the upper notes of which resembled a series of continued snarls; and Oscar would stop just in front of him, and snarl in return, till the patience of the musician was utterly exhausted, and he would rush out of his hiding-place, and pursue his hairy foe round the deck with a cudgel, uttering unmistakable curses at every blow.

These skirmishes were nuts for old Boreas to crack, who, putting his arms akimbo, would encourage the pugnacity of his dog with loud cries—

"At him, Oscar!—at him! Give it him strong, my boy!" to the no small indignation of Mr. Lootie, who would retire, muttering to himself—

"I don't know which is the greatest brute of the two, you or your cur!"

"My dog is a good physiognomist; he knows best," would be

the rejoinder ; and the war would recommence with greater fury than ever.

Mr. Lootie was not the only mysterious passenger on board the brig *Anne*. There was another who made his appearance among the steerage-passengers the moment the vessel was out of sight of land, to the astonishment of old Boreas and his crew—a young, handsome, dare-devil sort of a chap, who might have numbered six-and-twenty years, who called himself Stephen Corrie. He made his *debut* upon deck as suddenly and as unexpectedly as if he had fallen from the stars, and possessed the power of rendering himself visible or invisible at will.

No one knew, or pretended to know, who he was, or from whence he came. He had been smuggled on board by the women folk. It was their secret, and, though it must have been known to many of them, they kept it well.

No luggage had he to encumber the hold, not a copper in his pockets, nor a change of raiment for his back ; the clothes he wore being of the lightest and cheapest description—a checked shirt and coarse white canvass jacket and trowsers comprising his whole wardrobe. He had laid in no provisions for the voyage, but lived upon the contributions of the poor emigrants, with whom he was the most popular man on board ; and no one was better fed, or seemed to enjoy better health or spirits. The latter commodity appeared perfectly inexhaustible. He laughed and sung, told long yarns, and made love to all the young women, whose especial darling and idol he seemed to be. The first on deck, and the last to leave, he was a living embodiment of the long-sought-for principle of perpetual motion ; his legs and tongue never seemed to tire, and his loud, clear voice and joyous peals of laughter, rang unceasingly through the ship. When not singing, whistling, shouting, or making fun for all around him, he danced hornpipes, making his fingers keep time with his feet, by a continual snapping, which resembled the strokes of the tamborine or castinetts. A more mercurial, jovial fellow never set old Time at defiance, or laughed in the grisly face of Care.

Tall and lithe of limb, his complexion was what the Scotch term sandy ; his short, curling hair and whiskers resembling the tint of red gravel, profuse in quantity, fine in quality, and clustering round his high, white forehead with most artistic grace. His features were regular and well cut, his large, bright, blue eyes overflowing with

mirth and reckless audacity ; and when he laughed, which was every other minute, he showed a dazzling set of snow-white teeth, and looked so happy and free from care, that every one laughed with him, and echoed the droll sayings that fell from his lips.

Stephen Corrie was one whom the world generally calls an "excellent-hearted fellow—an enemy to no one but himself."

We must confess that our faith in this class of excellent fellows is very small—these men who are always sinning, and tempting others to sin, in the most amiable manner. There are few individuals who do more mischief in their day and generation than these *good-hearted* young men, these sworn enemies to temperance and morality. Like phosphoric wood, they only shine in the dark, concealing under a gay, brilliant exterior, the hallowness and corruption that festers within.

Stephen Corrie was one of those men, whose heart is always proclaimed to be in the *right place*, whose bad deeds men excuse and women adore.

The day he made his first appearance upon the deck, the Captain flew into a towering passion, and marching up to him, demanded, with a great oath, " How the devil he came on board, and what money he had to pay his passage?"

Stephen showed his white teeth, and replied with a provoking smile—

" Not as the fair Cleopatra did to the great Cæsare, rolled up in a feather-bed ; but under cover of a woman's petticoat, most noble Captain."

" Have done with your d—d fooling ! Who was the bold hussy that dared to smuggle you on board ?"

" I never betray a woman's secret," returned the audacious youth, bowing very low, with an air of mock gravity. " God bless the dear sex ! it has befriended me ever since I could run alone. Women have been my weakness from the hour that I had discrimination enough to know the difference between a smooth cheek and a hairy one."

" And pray how do you intend to live ?"

" Under the favor and patronage of the dear angels, who will never suffer their faithful slave and admirer to perish for lack of food."

" I wish them joy of their big baby," cried the rough seaman :

"a most hopeful and promising child he seems, by this light! And your name, sir?"

"Stephen Corrie."

"Your profession?"

"A saddler by trade, an actor by choice, and a soldier by necessity. I hated the first of these, and never took well to the saddle; the second pleased me, but not my audience; and the last I took French leave of the other night, and determined to try how salt water would agree with my constitution."

"How do you think a rawhide would agree with you?" growled the Captain.

"He would be a brave fellow who would attempt to administer it," said Stephen, with a flashing eye. "But, to tell you the truth, I had too much of it at home in the shop. It was my father's receipt for every sin of the flesh; and the free administration of this devilish weapon made me what I am. But softly, Captain; it is of no use putting yourself into a passion. You can't throw me overboard, and you may make me useful, since Providence has placed me here."

"Confound your impudence!" roared out old Boreas, in his stentorian voice. "Do you think that Providence cares for such a young scamp as you?"

"Doubtless with reference to my improvement; and, as I was going to say, Captain, I am willing to work for my lodging. The women will never let such a pretty fellow as me starve; and the ship is not so crowded but that you may allow me house-room. Reach here your fist, old Nor'-wester, and say 'tis a bargain."

The Captain remained with his hands firmly thrust into his breeches' pockets; but Flora knew, by the comical smile on his face, that he was relenting.

"You can't help yourself, Captain, so we had better be friends."

"And you have no money?"

"Not a sixpence."

"Nor clothes?"

"None but of nature's tanning, I did not choose to walk off with the king's coat on my back; and these duds were lent me by a friend. You see Captain, I am entirely dependent on your bounty. You can't have the heart to be less generous than a parcel of silly women."

" You may well say, silly women. But how the deuce did you escape my observation?"

" Ah, Captain, that was easy enough. I had only to keep on the blind side."

Boreas winced, he didn't half like the joke.

" Well, sir, keep on the blind side of me still."

" Don't let me find you cutting up any capers among the women, or by Jove you'll have to swim some dark night to Quebec without the help of a lauthorn."

" Thank you, Captain; I'll take your advice, and keep in the dark. If you want security for my good conduct, all the women in the steerage will go bail for me."

" Pretty bail, indeed! They first cheat me out of my just dues by smuggling you on board, and then promise to give security for your good conduct. But I'll take the change out of you, never fear." And away walked the Captain, secretly laughing in his sleeve at his odd customer, who became as great a favorite with the blunt sailor as he was with his female friends.

" The fellow's not a sneak, Mrs. Lyndsay; I like him for that; and if the women choose to feed him at their own charges, he's welcome to what he can get. I shan't trouble my head with prying into his private affairs.

The truth of the matter was, that Corrie was desperately in love with a very pretty girl, called Margaret Williamson, who, doubtless, had smuggled her lover on board in female attire. The family of the Williamsons consisted of a father, two awkward rough lads, four grown-up daughters, and an old grandmother. Nannie and Jeannie, the elder daughters of the old man, were ugly, violent women, on the wrong side of thirty; Lizzie and Margaret were still in their teens, and were pretty, modest looking girls, the belles of the ship. The old grandmother, who was eighty years of age, was a terrible reprobate, who ruled her son and grandchildren with the might of her tongue—and a wicked, virulent tongue it was as ever wagged in a woman's mouth. Constant was the war of words going on between Nannie and her aged relative, and each yied in out-cursing and scolding the other. It was fearful to listen to their mutual recriminations, and the coarse abuse in which they occasionally indulged. But, violent as the younger fury was, her respectable grand-dame beat her hollow; for when her tongue failed, her

hands supplied the deficiency, and she beat and buffeted the younger members of the family without mercy.

These two women were the terror of the steerage passengers, and the torment of the Captain's life, who was daily called upon to settle their disputes. The father of this precious crew was so besotted with drink, and so afraid of his mother and eldest daughter, that he generally slunk away into a corner, and left them the undisturbed possession of the field. How a decent-looking, well-educated young fellow, like Stephen Corrie, got entangled with such a low set, was a matter of surprise to the whole ship. But, desperately as they quarreled among themselves, they always treated their handsome dependent with marked respect, and generously shared with him the best they had.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE CAPTAIN'S PRENTICE.

FOR the first ten days the *Anne* made a capital run, and the Captain predicted that if nothing went wrong with her, the port of Quebec would be made in a month, or five weeks at the farthest.

James Hawke had recovered his health and spirits, and before many days had elapsed, had made friends with every one in the ship, but the little brown man, who repelled all the lad's advances with the most dogged ill-humor. James had accomplished the feat of climbing to the top of the mast, greatly to his own satisfaction, and had won golden opinions from the Captain and all the sailors on board. He had examined every hole and corner in the ship, knew the names of most of the ropes and sails, and could lend a hand in adjusting them, with as much promptness and dexterity as if he had served an apprenticeship to the sea for years.

"That lad was born for a sailor," was the Captain's constant cry. "I have no son of my own. If his parents would give him to me, I would make him a first rate navigator."

James was flattered by the Captain's remarks; but he saw too much of his tyrannical conduct to a prentice lad on board, to wish to fill such a disagreeable post.

Benjie Monro was a tall, thin, sickly-looking lad of sixteen, the son of a poor widow in New Haven, who had seen better days.

The boy was proud and obstinate, and resisted the ill-treatment of his superior and his subordinates with a determination of purpose that did him no good, but only increased his own misery.

The sailors, who knew that he was no favorite with the Captain, half-starved him, and played him a thousand ill-natured tricks. He was ill and unhappy, and tasked beyond his strength; and Mr. Collins, kind as he generally was to others, was cruel and overbearing to the wretched boy. Flora often saw the tears trembling in Benjie's eyes, and she pitied him from her very heart.

One morning Benjie had received orders to do something in his particular calling from the mate; but his commands were expressed in such a tyrannical manner, that he flatly refused to comply. Flinging himself upon the deck, he declared, "he would die first."

"We shall soon see who's master here," cried Mr. Collins, administering sundry savage kicks to the person of the half-clad boy, who lay as motionless before him as if he was really dead.

After diverting himself for some time in this fashion, and finding that it produced no more effect in making the lad stir than if he had been wasting his strength on a log, he called up the Captain.

"Dead is he?" said old Boreas. "Well, we'll soon bring him to life. Call Motion to fetch a light."

The light was brought, and applied to the toes and finger-ends of the boy, until they were severely scorched; but his obstinate spirit bore the torturing punishment without moving a muscle or uttering the faintest moan.*

"By George! I believe he is gone at last, and a good riddance of a bad bargain," said the Captain. "If he had a spark of life left in him, he could not stand that."

Lyndsay, who had been writing in the cabin, now came upon deck, and inquiring of the second mate what was going on, ran forward, and warmly interceded for the boy, telling the Captain and mate, in no measured terms, what he thought of their conduct.

"You would not say a word in his behalf, Mr. Lyndsay," said Collins, "if you knew what a sulky rascal he was. Insensible as he appears, he is as wide awake at this moment as you are."

"He is a miserable, heart-broken creature," said Lyndsay; "and if he had not been treated very badly, he would never attempt acting such a part."

* A fact.

"He's a sullen, ill-conditioned brute," said Boreas—"that's what he is."

"I know enough of human nature, Captain Williams, to feel certain that the treatment to which he has just been subjected will never produce any beneficial change in his character."

"Who cares a curse about him?" cried Boreas, waxing wrathful. "He may go to the devil for me! If he's dead, its time the fishes had his ugly carcase. Wright (this was his second mate), tell the carpenter to get Monro's hammock, and sew him up, and throw him overboard."

A slight motion heaved the shirt about the breast of the unfortunate lad.

"You see he is coming to himself," said Lyndsay. "My lad, how do you feel now?"

The boy did not speak. The muscles of his mouth twitched convulsively, and large tears rolled down his cheeks.

"Captain," said Lyndsay, "do you see no wrong in treating a fellow-creature, and one, by your own account, born and brought up as well as yourself, like a slave?"

"He's such a disobedient rascal, that he deserves nothing better."

"Did you ever try *kindness*?"

The lad opened his large, sunken, heavy eyes, and looked at his protector with such a sad, woe-begone expression, that it had the effect of touching the heart of Mr. Collins.

"I'm afraid," he said, in an aside to Lyndsay, "that we have not acted quite right in this matter. But he provokes one to anger by his sullenness. When I was a prentice on board the *Ariadne*, I was not treated a bit better; but I never behaved in that way."

"And did not the recollection of your own sufferings, Mr. Collins, plead somewhat in behalf of this orphan boy? His temper, naturally proud, has been soured by adverse circumstances, and driven to despair by blows and abusive language. I think I may pledge myself that if he is used better, he will do his duty without giving you any further trouble."

"Get up, Benjie," said the Captain, "and go to your work. I will look over your conduct on Mr. Lyndsay's account. But never let me see you act in this mutinous manner again."

The boy rose from the deck, stammered out his thanks, and begged Mr. Collins to forgive his foolish conduct, limped off.

The next day the lad was reported to the captain as seriously ill, and Mr. Collins, as he detailed his symptoms, said, "that he was sorry that he had used such violence towards him the preceding day, as the poor fellow had expressed himself very grateful for the non-execution of the Captain's threat of throwing him overboard."

"Oh," said Boreas, "that was only to frighten the chap. I am not such a Turk as all that, though Mrs. Lyndsey has looked very seriously at me ever since. Well, Collins, what had we better give the fellow?" And he started from the sea-chest on which he was sitting astride, and produced the medicine-chest.

Flora had forgotten all about the little red-haired doctor, Mac Adie, and the *rist o' persons*, till the sight of the condemned article met her eyes.

It was a large, handsome mahogany case, inlaid with brass. The captain opened it with a sort of mysterious awe, and displayed a goodly store of glass-bottles and china-boxes.

"The lad's in a high fever," said Collins. "You had better give him something that will cool his blood—Epsom-salts or cream of tartar."

"Perhaps a little of both?" said Boreas, looking up at his prime minister with an inquiring, comical twinkle in his one eye.

"A single dose of either would do."

"Let it be salts then. Get me some hot water, and I'll mix it directly."

The bottle of salts was produced, and the Captain proceeded to weigh out a quarter of a pound of salts.

"Into how many doses do you propose to divide that quantity?" asked Flora, who was watching his proceedings with considerable interest.

"Divide?" said Boreas, emptying the salts into a small tea-cup, which he filled with boiling-water; "he must take it at one gulp."

"Captain," said Flora, rising, and laying her hand on his arm, as he was leaving the cabin, "you will kill the boy!"

"Do you think that such a drop as that would hurt an infant?" said Boreas, holding out the cup. "Why, bless the woman! sailors are not like other folks; they require strong doses."

"Captain, I entreat you not to be so rash. Divide the quantity into four parts; add as much more water to each, and give it every four hours, and it will do good. But if you persist in administering it your way, it may be attended with very serious consequences."

"Fiddle-de-dee! Mrs. Lyndsay; I'm not going to make a toil of a pleasure. He has to take it, and once will do for all." In spite of her remonstrances, the obstinate old fellow went out to administer the terrible dose with his own hands to the patient. It operated as untowardly as Flora had predicted, and the lad came so near dying that the Captain grew frightened, and perhaps his conscience tormented him not a little, as his previous harsh conduct had been the cause of the lad's illness—and he gave up all faith in his own medical skill, and resigned the chest, and all its pernicious contents, into Flora's safe keeping.

The lad did ultimately recover from the effects of the Captain's doctoring, but he was unable to do much during the rest of the voyage, and crawled about the deck like a living-skeleton.

If the Captain took little notice of him, he never treated him, or suffered others to treat him, with the brutality that had marked his former conduct towards him.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE LOST JACKET, AND OTHER MATTERS.

The routine of live on board ship, especially on board such a small vessel as the brig *Anne*, was very dull and monotonous, when once they lost sight of land. The weather, however, continued cloudless; and though, after the first week, the favorable wind that had wafted them so far over their watery path in safety deserted them, and never again filled their sails, or directed them in a straight course, they had no cause to complain. The Captain grumbled at the prevalence of westerly winds; the mates grumbled, and the sailors grumbled at having to tack so often; yet the ship slowly and steadily continued to traverse the vast Atlantic, with the blue sky above, and the deep green sea below, both unruffled by cloud or storm. The health of both passengers and crew continued excellent; the prentice lad, Monro, and Mrs. Lyndsay's maid, Hannah,

forming the only exceptions. As to the latter, Flora soon discovered that her illness was all apocryphal. She chose to lie in her berth all day, where she was fed from the cabin table, and duly dosed with brandy-and-water by the Captain, who did not attempt to conceal his partiality for this worthless woman. At night she was always well enough to get up and dance till after midnight on the deck with the passengers and sailors. Her conduct was a matter of scandal to the whole ship, and Mr. Collins complained of his brother-in-law's unprincipled behaviour in no measured terms. "But she's a bad woman—an infamous woman, Mrs. Lyndsay. You had better part with her the moment you reach land."

This Flora would gladly have done; but they had laid out so much money in her passage and outfit, that she did not like to incur such a heavy loss. She still hoped that, when removed from the bad influence of the Captain, she would behave herself with more propriety. A sad mistake—for this woman proved a world of trouble and sorrow as she was both weak and wicked, and her conduct after they reached Canada occasioned Flora much anxiety and uneasiness.

She remonstrated with her—but she found her insolently indifferent to her orders. "She was free," she said, "from all engagement the moment she landed in Canada. She should be a lady there, as good as other folks—(meaning her mistress)—and she was not going to slave herself to death as a nurse girl, tramping about with a heavy child in her arms all day. Mrs. Lyndsay could not compel her to wait upon her on board ship, and she might wait upon herself for what she cared."

"But," said Flora, "how do you expect to get your living in Canada? You must work there, or starve."

"Indeed!" said Hannah, tossing up her head. "It's not long that I shall stay in Canady. I'm going home with Captain Williams. He has promised to divorce his wife, and marry me when he gets back to Scotland."

"Marry you, and divorce his wife—the nice, kind woman you saw on board the night we sailed! Can you lend a willing ear to such idle tales? He can neither divorce his wife nor marry you—poor, foolish girl!—wicked, I should add; for your conduct, when your situation is taken into consideration, is an aggravation of hardened guilt."

"It's no business of yours, at any rate," sobbed Hannah, who

had tears always at command. "I don't mean to lose the chance of being a lady, in order to keep my word with you. You may get somebody else to wait on you and the child ; I won't."

And she flounced back to her berth, and cried till the Captain went to console her.

This matter led to a serious quarrel with old Boreas. Lyndsay reproached him with tampering with his servant, and setting her against her employers, and threatened to write to Mr. Gregg and expose his conduct.

Boreas was first in a towering passion. He bullied, and swore, and cursed the impudent jade, who, he declared, was more competent to corrupt his morals than he was to corrupt hers. That she was his mistress, he did not deny ; but as to the tale of divorcing his Jean for such a —— as her, none but a fool could believe it for a moment."

He promised, however, but very reluctantly, to let the girl alone for the future ; and he remained as sulky and as rude as a bear to the Lyndsays for the rest of the voyage.

As to little Josey, she did not at all miss the attentions of her nurse. Mrs. Lyndsay gave her a bath of salt water night and morning, in a small tub, which Sam Fraser duly brought to the little cabin-door for *the baby!* making a profound salaam, and proffering his aid to cook her food, and carry her upon deck when dressed. On deck she found abundance of nurses, from old Bob Motion to the stately Mr. Collins, who, when off duty, carried her about in his arms, singing sea songs or Scotch ballads, while she crowed and talked to him in the most approved baby fashion. But her kindest and best friend was Mr. Wright, the second mate. He had been brought up a gentleman, and had served his time as midshipman and master on board a king's ship, and had been broken for some act of insubordination, which had stopped his further promotion in that quarter. He had subsequently formed an imprudent marriage with some woman much beneath himself, and had struggled for many years with poverty, sickness, and heart-breaking cures. He had, in the course of time, buried this wife and seven children, and was now alone in the world, earning his living as the second mate of a small brig like the *Anne*.

The Captain hated him, but said, "that he was an excellent seaman, and could be depended upon." The mate was jealous of him, and thought that the Captain preferred Wright to him, and con-

sidered him the ablest man of the two. But old Boreas only hated him for being a gentleman of superior birth and breeding to himself. In speaking of him, he always added—"Ah, d—n him, he's a gentleman! and writes and speaks Dic. I hate gentlemen on board ship!"

Mr. Wright, with his silver hair and mild, pale face, was a great favorite with Flora; and while he carried Josey in his arms to and fro the deck, she listened with pleasure to the sad history of his misfortunes, or to the graphic pictures he drew of the countries he had visited during a long life spent at sea. He fancied that Josey was the image of the last dear babe he lost—his pet and darling, whom he never mentioned without emotion—his blue-eyed Bessy. She lost her mother when she was just the age of Josey, and she used to lie in his bosom of a night, with her little white arms clasped about his neck. She was the last thing left to him on earth, and he had loved her with all his heart; but God punished him for the sin of his youth by taking Bessy from him. He was alone in the world now—a grey-haired, broken-hearted old man, with nothing to live for but the daily hope that death was nearer to him than it was the day before, and he should soon see his angel Bessy and her poor mother again.

And so he took to Josey, and used to call her Bessy, and laugh and cry over her by turns, and was never so happy as when she was in his arms, with her little fingers twined in his long, grey locks; and he would dance her, and hold her over the vessel's side to look at the big green waves, as they raced past the ship, dashing their white foam-wreaths against her brown ribs; and Josey would regard them with a wondering, wide-open glance, as if she wanted to catch them as they glided by.

"Always towards home!" as Flora said; for the westerly winds still prevailed, and they made slow progress over the world of waters.

The Captain now found it necessary to restrain the great amount of cooking that was constantly going on at the caboose; and as a matter of prudence, to inspect the stores of provision among the steerage passengers. He found many of these running very low, and he represented to all on board, the necessity of husbanding their food as much as possible, as he began to be apprehensive that the voyage would prove long and tedious, and the ship was only provided for a six-weeks' voyage.

The good folks listened to him with an incredulous stare, as if such a calamity as starvation overtaking them was impossible. From that day—and they had been just three weeks out—the people were put upon short allowance of water, which was gradually diminished from day to day; Lyndsay was allowed half a pint extra for shaving, and this Flora was glad to appropriate for the baby's use, and get her kind husband to shave with salt water and prepared soap.

Unfortunately for the people on board the weather was very warm, and no rain had fallen of any account since they left Scotland. Lyndsay and Flora had been greatly amused by a venture which an honest Northumbrian laborer was taking out to Canada, at which they had laughed very heartily. It was neither more nor less than nine barrels of potatoes, which they had told him was "taking coals to Newcastle." But droll as this investment of his small capital appeared, the hand of Providence had directed his choice. At the time when most of the food provided for the voyage was expended in the ship, the Captain was glad to purchase the laborer's venture at three dollars a bushel; and as each barrel contained four bushels of potatoes, the poor fellow made twenty-seven pounds of his few bushels of the "soul-debasing root," as Cobbett chose to style it; and as he was a quiet, sensible fellow, this un-hoped-for addition to his means must have proved very useful in going into the woods. A young fellow from Glasgow, who carried out with him several large packets of kid gloves, was not half so fortunate; for though they appeared a good speculation, they got spotted and spoiled by the sea water, and he could not have realised upon them the original cost.

Among the steerage passengers there was a little tailor, and two brothers who followed the trade of the awl, that always afforded much mirth to the sailors. The little tailor, who really might have passed for the ninth part of a man, he was so very small and insignificant, was the most aspiring man in the ship; climbing seemed born in him, for it was impossible to confine him to the hold or the deck; up he must go—up to the clouds, if the mast would only have reached so high; and there he would sit or lie, with the sky above, and the sea below, as comfortable and as independent as if he were sitting crosslegged upon his board in a garret of one of the dark, lofty wynds of the ancient town of Leith.

The Captain was so delighted with Sandy Rob's aspiring spirit, that he often held jocose dialogues with him from the deck.

" Hallo, Sandy ! what news above there ? Can't you petition the clerk of the weather to give us a fair wind ? "

" Na', Captain, I'm thinkin' it's of na' use until the change o' the mune. I'll keep a gude look out, an' gie ye the furst intelligence o' that event."

" And what keeps yo' broiling up there in the full blaze of the sun, Sandy ? The women say that they are wanting you below."

" That's mair than I'm wantin' o' them. My pleasure's above their's is a' below. I'm jist thinkin', it's better to be here basking in the broad sunshine, than deefened wi' a' they clavers ; breathin' the cellar air, than suffocated wi' the stench o' that pit o' iniquity, the hould. An' as to wha' I'm doin' up here, I'm jest lookin' out to get the furst glint o' the blessed green earth."

" You'll be tanned as black as a nigger, Sandy, before you see the hill-tops again. If we go on at this rate, the summer will slip past us altogether."

Often during the night he would cry out, " Ho, Sandy ! are you up there, man ? What of the night, watchman—what of the night ? "

" Steady, Captain—steady. No land yet in sight."

And Boreas would answer with a loud guffawn, " If we were in the British Channel, tailor, I'd be bound that you'd keep a good look-out for the needle's eye."

The shoemakers, in disposition and appearance, were quite the reverse of the little tailor. They were a pair of slow coaches, heavy, lumpish men, who would as soon have attempted a ride to the moon on a broomstick, as have ventured two yards up the mast. They were indefatigable eaters and smokers, always cooking, and puffing forth smoke from their short, brass-lidded pipes. They never attempted a song, still less to join in the nightly dance on deck, which the others performed with such spirit, and entered into with such a keen relish, that their limbs seemed strung upon wires. They seldom spoke, but sat upon the deck looking on with listless eyes, as the rest bounded past them, revelling in the very madness of mirth.

Gordie Muckleroy, the elder of the twain, was a stout, clumsy-made man, whose head was stuck into his broad, rounded shoulders, like the handle of his body, that had grown so stiff from his stolid

way of thinking (if indeed he ever thought) and his sedentary habits, that he seemed to move it with great difficulty, and, in answering a question, invariably turned his whole frame to the speaker. He had a large, flabby, putty-colored face, deeply marked with the small-pox, from which cruel, disfiguring malady, he and his brother Jock seemed to have suffered in common. A pair of little, black, meaningless eyes looked like blots in his heavy visage—while a profusion of black, coarse, dirty hair, cut very short, stuck up on end all over his flat head, like the bristles in a scrubbing-brush. He certainly might have taken the prize for ugliness in the celebrated club which the *Spectator* has immortalized. Yet this hideous, unintellectual-looking animal had a wife, a neat, sensible looking woman, every way his superior, both in person and intelligence. She was evidently some years older than her husband, and had left a nobleman's service, in which she had been cook for a long period, to accompany Gordie as his bride across the Atlantic. Like most women, who late in life marry very young men, she regarded her mate as a most superior person, and paid him very *loving* attentions, which he received with the most stoical indifference, and at which the rest of the males laughed, making constant fun of Gordie and his old girl. Jock was the counterpart of his brother in manners and disposition; but his head was adorned with a red scrubbing-brush, instead of a black one, and his white, freckled face half covered with carrotty whiskers. The trio were so poor, that after having paid their passage money, they only possessed among them a solitary sixpence.

Flora had hired Mrs. Muckleroy to attend upon her and the child during the voyage, at a dollar a week, which the poor woman looked upon as a Godsend, and was kind and attentive in proportion to the gratitude she felt for this unexpected addition to their scanty means.

The day after they reached the banks of New-Foundland, and the ship was going pretty smartly through the water, Geordie hung his woollen jacket over the ship's side while he performed his ablutions, and a sudden puff of wind carried it overboard.

Mrs. Lyndsay was sitting upon the deck with Josey in her arms, when she heard a plunge into the water, followed by a loud shriek, and Mrs. Muckleroy fell to the deck in a swoon.

The cry of "a man overboard!—a man overboard!" now rang through the ship. Every one present sprang to their feet, and

rushed to the side of the vessel, looking about in all directions, to see the missing individual rise to the surface of the water, and Flora among the rest.

Presently a black head emerged from the waves, and two hands were held up in a deplorable, bewildered manner, and the great blank face looked towards the skies with a glance of astonishment, as if the owner could not yet comprehend his danger, and scarcely realised his awful situation. He looked just like a seal, or some uncouth monster of the deep, who, having ventured to the surface, was confounded by looking the sun in the face, and was too much frightened to retreat.

Lyndsay, the moment he heard the man plunge into the sea, had seized a coil of rope that lay upon the deck, and, running forward, hurled it with a strong arm in the direction in which Mackleroy had disappeared. Just at the critical moment when the apparition of the shoemaker rose above the waves, it fell within the length of his grasp. The poor fellow, now fully awake to the horrors of his fate, seized it with convulsive energy, and was drawn to the side of the vessel, where two sailors were already hanging in the chains, with another rope fixed with a running noose at one end, which they succeeded in throwing over his body, and drawing him safely to the dock.

And then, the joy of the poor wife, who had just recovered from her swoon, at receiving her dead to life, was quite affecting, while he, regardless of her caresses, only shook his wet garments, exclaiming—"My jacket! my jacket, Nell, I have lost my jacket. What can a man do, wantin' a jacket?"

This speech was received with a general roar of laughter, the poor woman and her spouse being the only parties from whom it did not win a smile.

"Confound the idiot!" cried old Boreas; "he thinks more of his old jacket, that was not worth picking off a dunghill, than of his wife and his own safety. Why man," turning to the shoemaker, who was dripping like a water-dog, "what tempted you to jump into the sea when you could not swim a stroke?"

"My jacket," continued the son of Crispin, staring wildly at his saturated garments; "It was the only one I had. Oh, my jacket! my jacket!"

Strange that such a dull piece of still life should risk his life for a jacket, and an old one that had seen good service and was quite

threadbare : but necessity replies, it was his only garment. A rich person can scarcely comprehend the magnitude of the loss of an only jacket to a poor man.

No one was more amused by the adventure of the jacket, than Stephen Corrie, who wrote a comic song on the subject, which Duncan the fiddler set to music, and used to sing, to the great annoyance of the hero of the tale, whenever he ventured in his shirt sleeves upon the deck.

The Duncans, for there were two of them, were both Highlanders, and played with much skill on the violin. They were two fine, honest, handsome fellows, who, with their music and singing, kept all the rest alive. Directly the sun set, the lively notes of their fiddles called young and old to the deck, and Scotch reels, highland flings, and sailors' hornpipes were danced till late at night—often until the broad beams of the rising sun warned the revellers that it was time to rest.

The Captain and the Lyndsays never joined the dancers ; but it was a pretty sight to watch them leaping and springing, full of agility and life, beneath the clear beams of the summer moon.

The foremost in these nightly revels, was a young Highlander called Tam Grant, who never gave over while a female in the ship could continue on her legs. If he lacked a partner, he would seize hold of the old beldame, Granny Williamson, and twist and twirl her around at top speed, never heeding the kicking, scratching, and skrieking of the withered old crone. Setting to her, and nodding at her with the tassel of the red nightcap he wore, hanging so jauntily over his left eye, that it would have made the fortune of a comic actor to imitate—a perfect impersonification of mischief and wild mirth.

By-and-by the old granny not only got used to his mad capers, but evidently enjoyed them, and used to challenge Tam for her partner ; and if he happened to have engaged a younger and lighter pair of heels, she would retire to her den below, cursing him for a rude fellow, in no lullaby strains.

And there was big Marion—a tall, stout, yellow-haired girl, from Berwickshire—who had ventured out all alone to cross the wide Atlantic to join her brother in the far west of Canada, who was the admiration of all the sailors on board, and the adored of the two Duncans. Yet she danced just as lightly as a cow, and shook

her fat sides and jumped and bounded through the Scotch reels, much in the same fashion that they did, when—

" She up and wallop'd o'er the green,
Far brawly she could frisk it."

Marion had had many wooers since she came on board ; but she laughed at all her lovers, and if they attempted to take any liberties with her, she threatened to call them out if they did not keep their distance, for she had " a lad o' her ain in Canada, an' she didna care a boddle for them an' their clavers."

Yet, in spite of her boasted constancy, it was pretty evident to Flora that Rab Duncan was fiddling his way fast into the buxom Marion's heart ; and she thought it more than probable that he would succeed in persuading her to follow his fortunes, instead of seeking a home with her brother and her old sweetheart in the far west.

There was one sour-looking, puritanical person on board, who regarded the music and dancing with which the poor emigrants beguiled the tedium of the long voyage with silent horror. He was a minister of some dissenting church ; but to which of the many he belonged, Flora never felt sufficiently interested, in the man to inquire.* His countenance exhibited a strange mixture of morose ill-humor, shrewdness, and hypocrisy. While he considered himself a vessel of grace, chosen and sanctified, he looked upon those around him as vessels of wrath, only fitted for destruction. In his eyes they were already damned, and only waited for the execution of their just sentence. Whenever the dancing commenced, he went below and brought up his Bible, which he spread most ostentatiously on his knees, turning up the whites of his eyes to heaven, and uttering very audible groans between the pauses in the music. What the subject of his meditations were is best known to himself ; but no one could look at his low head, sly, sinister-looking eyes, and malevolent scowl, and imagine him a messenger of the glad tidings that speak of peace and good-will to man. He seemed like one who would rather call down the fire from heaven to destroy, than to learn the meaning of the Christ-spoken text—" I will have mercy and not sacrifice."

Between this man and Mr. Leatie a sort of friendship had sprung up, and they might constantly be seen about ten o'clock, P. M., seated beneath the shade of the boat, wrangling and disputing

about contested points of faith, contradicting and denouncing their respective creeds in an unchristianlike manner, each failing to convince the other, or gaining the least upon his opponent.

"That is the religion of words," said Lyndsay, one day to Flora, as they had been for some time silent listeners to one of Mr. S——'s fierce arguments on predestination—"I wonder how that man's actions would agree with his boasted sanctity?"

"Let him alone," said Flora; "time will perhaps show. I have no faith in him."

For three weeks the *Anne* was becalmed upon the banks. They were surrounded by a dense fog, which hid even the water from their sight, while the beams of sun and moon failed to penetrate the white vapor that closed them in on every side. It was no longer a pleasure to pace the deck in the raw, damp air and drizzling rain, which tamed even the little tailor's aspiring soul, and checked the merry dancers and the voice of mirth. Flora retreated to the cabin, and read all the books in the little cupboard at her bed-head. A "Life of Charles XII. of Sweden," an odd volume of "Pamela," and three of "The Children of the Abbey," comprised the Captain's library. What could she do to while away the lagging hours? She thought and rethought. At length she determined to weave some strange incidents, that chance had thrown in her way, into a story, which might amuse her mind from dwelling too much upon the future, and interest her husband. So, unpacking her writing-desk, she drew forth a quire of genuine *fool's-cap*, and set to work; and we here give to our readers, as a literary curiosity, the tale that Flora Lyndsay wrote at sea. If the character of the story should prove rather vapory, consider the circumstances under which it first saw the light—in the confined cabin of a little brig, and written amidst fog and rain, becalmed upon that dreary portion of the Atlantic, yclept "the banks of Newfoundland."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

NOAH COTTON.

[THE STORY FLORA WROTE AT SEA.]

THE WIDOW GRIMSHAWE AND HER NEIGHBORS.

On the road to —, a small seaport town on the east coast of England, there stood, in my young days, an old-fashioned, high-gabled, red-brick cottage. The house was divided into two tenements, the doors opening in the centre of the building. A rustic porch shaded the entrance to the left from the scorching rays of the sun and the clouds of dust that during the summer months rose from the public road in front. Some person, whose love of nature had survived amidst the crushing cares of poverty, had twined around the rude trelliswork the deliciously-fragrant branches of the brier-rose, which, during the months of June and July, loaded the air with its sweet breath.

The door to the right, although unmarked by sign or chequer-board, opened into a low hedge-tavern of very ill repute, well known through the country by the name of the "Brig's Foot," which it derived from its near proximity to the bridge that crossed the river. A slow-moving, muddy stream, whose brackish waters seemed to have fallen asleep upon their bed of fat, black ooze, while creeping onward to the sea, through a long flat expanse of dreary marshes.

The "Brig's Foot" was kept by the Widow Mason and her son, both persons of notoriously bad character. The old man had been killed a few months before, in a drunken brawl with some smugglers; and his name was held in such ill odor that his ghost was reported to haunt the road that led to C—— churchyard, which formed the receptacle, but it would seem not the resting-place, of the dead.

None but persons of the very lowest description frequented the tavern. Beggars made it their head-quarters; smugglers and poachers their hiding-place; and sailors, on shore for a spree, the

scene of their drunken revels. The honest laborer shunned the threshold as a moral pest-house, and the tired traveller, who called there once, seldom repeated the visit. The magistrates, who ought to have put down the place as a public nuisance, winked at it as a necessary evil—the more to be tolerated, as it was half a mile beyond the precincts of the town.

Outwardly the place had some attractive features—it was kept so scrupulously clean. The walls were so white, the floor so neatly sanded, and the pewter pots glittered so cheerily on the polished oak table that served for a bar, that a casual observer might reasonably have expected very comfortable and respectable accommodation from a scene which, though on an humble scale, promised so fair. Even the sleek, well-fed tabby cat purred so peacefully on the doorsill, that she seemed to invite the pedestrian to shelter and repose.

Martha Mason, the mistress of the domicil, was a bad woman, in the fullest sense of the word—cunning, hard-hearted, and avaricious, without pity, and without remorse—a creature so hardened in the ways of sin, that conscience had long ceased to offer the least resistance to the perpetration of crime. Unfeminine in mind and person, you could scarcely persuade yourself that the coarse, harsh features, and bristling hair about the upper lip, belonged to a female, had not the tameless tongue, ever active in abuse and malice, asserted its claim to the weaker sex, and rated and scolded through the long day, as none but the tongue of a bad woman can rate and scold. An accident had deprived the hideous old crone of the use of one of her legs, which she dragged after her with the help of a crutch; and though she could not move quickly in consequence of her lameness, she was an excellent hand at quickening the motions of those who had the misfortune to be under her control.

Her son Robert, who went by the familiar appellation of "Bully Bob," was the counterpart of his mother—a lazy, drunken blackguard, who might be seen from morning till night lounging, with his pipe in his mouth, on the well-worn settle at the door, humming some low ribald song to chase away the lagging hours, till the shades of evening roused him from his sluggish stupor, to mingle with gamblers and thieves in their low debauch. The expression of this young man's face was so bad, and his manners and language so coarse and obscene, that he was an object of dislike and dread to his low associates, who regarded him as a fit subject for the

gallows. In the eyes of his mother, Bob Mason was a very fine young man—a desirable mate for any farmer's daughter in the country.

The old Spanish proverb, "Poverty makes a man acquainted with strange bedfellows," was never more fully exemplified than in the case of these people and their next door neighbors.

Dorothy Grimshawe was the widow of a fisherman, whose boat foundered in the dreadful storm of the 10th of October, 1824. Like many others, who sailed from the little port high in health and hope, expecting to reap a fine harvest from the vast shoals of herrings that annually visit that coast, Daniel Grimshawe fell a prey to the spoiler, Death, that stern fisher of men.

The following morning, after the subsidence of the gale, the beach for miles was strewn with pieces of wreck, and the bodies of forty drowned men were cast ashore. Most of these proved to be natives of the town, and the bodies were carried to the town-hall, and notice was sent to the wives of the absent fishermen to come and claim their dead.

This awful summons quickly collected a crowd to the spot. Many anxious women and children were there, and Dorothy Grimshawe and her little ones came with the rest.

"Thank the good God! my man is not there," said a poor woman, coming out with her apron to her face. "The Lord save us—'tis a fearsome sight."

"He may be food for the crabs at the bottom of the sea," said a hoarse voice from the crowd. "You are not going to flatter yourself, Nancy, that you are better off than the rest."

"Oh, oh, oh!" shrieked the poor woman, thus deprived by envy of the anchor of hope to which she clung. "I trusted in the mercy of God; I could not look to the bottom of the salt deep."

"Trust to Him yet, Nancy, and all will be well," said an old, weather-beaten tar. "It is He who rules the winds and waves, and brings the storm-tossed ship into a safe harbor."

"But what has He done for these poor men? Were they worse han the rest?" sobbed Nancy.

"It is not for us to bring to light what He has left in darkness," said the old sailor. "He took three fine lads of mine in one night, and left me childless. But it is not for the like o' me to murmur against *Him*. I always trusted to His providence, and I found that it gave me strength in the hour of danger."

"Dorothy," he cried, turning to Mrs. Grimshawe, "it is your turn to go in. It's no use crying and hanging back. Mayhap Dan has escaped the storm, an' is spreading a white sheet to the fine, fresh breeze this morning."

"My heart feels as cold as a stone," sobbed Dorothy; "I dare not go forward; I feel—I know that he is there."

"Shall I go for you? I have known Dan from a boy."

"Oh, no, no; I must see with my own eyes," said Dorothy; "nothing else will convince me that he is either saved or lost;" and she hurried into the hall.

Trembling with apprehension, the poor woman entered the melancholy place of death. The bodies were arranged in rows along the floor, and covered decently with coarse, clean sheets. The mournful and mysterious silence which always broods above the dead, was broken by sighs and sobs—wives, mothers, sisters, and little children were collected in heartrending groups around some uncovered and dearly-loved face, whose glassy eyes, staring and motionless, were alike unconscious of their presence and their tears.

Mrs. Grimshawe recoiled with a sudden backward step—"What if Dan is here?" She pressed her hands tightly upon her breast—the stifled cry of agony and fear that burst from her lips, nearly choked her; she clutched at the bare walls for support, and panted and gasped for breath.

A little humpbacked child, after casting upon her mother a look of unutterable pity, slowly advanced to the first shrouded figure, and, kneeling down, reverentially lifted the sheet, and gazed long and sadly upon the object beneath. "Father!" murmured the child; no other word escaped her quivering lips. She meekly laid her head upon the dead seaman's breast, and kissed his cold lips and brow with devoted affection. Then, rising from her knees, she went to her pale, weeping, distressed mother, and, taking her gently by the hand, led her up to the object of her search.

The winds and waves are sad disfigurers; but Mrs. Grimshawe instantly recognised, in the distorted features, so marred in their conflict with the elements, the husband of her youth, the father of her orphan children; and, with a loud shriek, she fell upon the bosom of the dead. Rough, pitiful hands lifted her up, and unclasped the rigid fingers that tightened about his neck; and bore the widow tenderly back to her desolate home.

Weeks went by, and the fisherman slept in his peaceful grave. His little children had ceased to weep and ask for their father, before Dorothy Grimshawe awoke to a consciousness of her terrible loss and altered fortunes. During the period of her mental derangement, her wants had been supplied by some charitable ladies in the neighborhood. Shortly after her restoration to reason, a further trial awaited her : she became the victim of palsy ; in the meridian of life she found her physical strength prostrate, and her body a useless, broken machine, no longer responsive to the guidance, or obedient to the will of its possessor. An active mind, shut up in a dead body—an imprisoned bird, vainly beating itself against the walls of its cage. Human nature could scarcely furnish a more melancholy spectacle ; speech, sight and hearing, were still hers, but the means of locomotion were lost to her for ever.

The full extent of her calamity did not strike her at first. Hope whispered that the loss of the use of her lower limbs was only temporary, brought on by the anguish of her mind—that time and the doctor's medicines would restore her to health and usefulness.

Alas, poor Dorothy ! How long did you cling to these vain hopes ! How reluctantly did you at last admit that your case was hopeless—that death could alone release you from a state of helpless suffering ! Then came terrible thoughts of the workhouse for yourself and your children ; and the drop was ever upon your cheek—the sigh rising constantly to your lips. Be patient, poor, afflicted one : God has smitten, but not forsaken you. Pity still lives in the human heart, and help is nearer than you think.

In her early life Dorothy had lived for several years nursery-maid in a clergyman's family. One of the children, entrusted to her care, had loved her very sincerely ; he was now a wealthy merchant in the town. When Mr. Rollins heard of her distress, he hastened to comfort and console her. He gave her part of the red-brick cottage, rent free, for the rest of her life ; sent her two youngest daughters to school, and settled a small annuity upon her, which, though inadequate to the wants of one so perfectly dependent, greatly ameliorated the woes of her condition. Dorothy had resided several years in the cottage, before the Masons came to live under the same roof. They soon showed what manner of people they were, and annoyed the poor widow with their rude and riotous mode of life. But complaints were useless. Mr. Rollins was travelling

with his bride on the continent; and his steward, who had accepted the Masons for tenants, laughed at Dorothy's objections to their character and occupation, bluntly telling her "that beggars could not be choosers—that she might be thankful that she had a comfortable, warm roof over her head, without having to work hard for it like her neighbors." She acknowledged the truth of the remark, and endeavored to submit to her fate with patience and resignation.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE SISTERS.

Mrs. GRIMSHAWE's eldest daughter, Mary, the poor hunchback before alluded to, was a great comfort to her afflicted parent. She seldom left her bed-side, and was ever at hand to administer to her wants. Mary was a neat and rapid plain sewer; and she contributed greatly to her mother's support, by the dexterity with which she plied her needle. Her deformity, which was rendered doubly conspicuous by her diminutive stature, was not the only disadvantage under which Mary Grimshawe labored. She was afflicted with such an impediment in her speech, that it was only the members of her own family that could at all understand the meaning of the uncouth sounds in which she tried to communicate her ideas. So sensible was she of this terrible defect, and the ridicule it drew upon her from thoughtless and unfeeling people, that she seldom spoke to strangers, and was considered by many as both deaf and dumb.

Poor Mary! she was one of the meekest of God's creatures—a most holy martyr to patience and filial love. What a warm heart—what depths of tenderness and affection dwelt in the cramped confines of that little misshapen body! Virtue in her was like a bright star seen steadily shining through the heavy clouds of a dark night. The traveller, cheered by its beams, forgot the blackness and gloom of the surrounding atmosphere.

How distinctly I can recall that plain, earnest face, after the long lapse of years! the dark, sallow cheeks; the deep, sunken, pitiful, pleading eyes; those intelligent, deep-set, iron-grey eyes, that served her for a tongue, and were far more eloquent than speech, as they gleamed from beneath her strongly-marked, jet-black eyebrows;

the thin lips that seldom unclosed to give utterance to what was passing in her mind, and that never smiled, yet held such a treasure of pearls within. Nature had so completely separated her from her kind, that mirth would have appeared out of place. She was plain in form and feature, but the beauty of the soul enshrined in that humble, misshapen tenement, shed over her personal deformities a spiritual and holy light.

From the time of her father's death, Mary had worked steadily at her needle to support herself and the rest of the family. The constant assiduity with which she plied her task, greatly increased the projection of her shoulder, and brought on an occasional spitting of blood, which resulted from a low, hacking cough. The parish doctor, who attended her bed-ridden mother, and who felt interested in her good, dutiful child, assured her that she must give up her sedentary employment, or death would quickly terminate her labor.

"But how, then," asked Mary, "can I contribute to the support of the family? My mother's helpless condition requires my constant exertions. If I cease to work, she must starve."

The good doctor suggested respectable service as a more remunerative and healthier occupation.

"Alas!" said Mary, "to go into service is impossible. Who will hire a domestic who is in delicate health, is deformed, and to strangers unintelligible? You, sir, have known me from a child. You understand my broken words. You never hurry me, so that I can make you comprehend the meaning of my jargon. But who else would have the patience to listen to my uncouth sounds?"

The doctor sighed, and said that she was right, that going out would only expose her to constant mortification and ridicule; and he felt very sorry that his own means were so limited, and his family so large, that he could only afford to keep one servant, and that an active, stirring, healthy woman, able to execute, without much bodily fatigue, her multitudinous daily tasks. He left the cottage with regret; and Mary, for the first time, felt the bitter curse of hopeless poverty, and a sense of her own weakness and helplessness fell heavily on her soul.

In this emergency, Mrs. Mason offered her a trifling weekly stipend, to attend during the day upon the customers, and to assist her in washing glass and crockery and keeping the house in order.

She knew her to be honest and faithful, and she was too homely to awaken any interest in the heart of her worthless, dissipated son.

Mary hesitated a long time before she accepted the offer of her repulsive neighbor; but her mother's increasing infirmities, and the severe illness of her youngest sister Charlotte, left her no choice. Day after day you might see the patient hunchback performing the menial drudgeries of the little inn, silent and self-possessed—an image of patient endurance, in a house of violence and crime. It was to her care that the house owed its appearance of neatness and outward respectability. It was her active, industrious spirit that arranged and ordered its well-kept household stuff, that made the walls so cheery, the grate so gay with flowers, that kept the glittering array of pewter so bright. It was her taste that had arranged the branches of the wild rose to twine so gracefully over the rustic porch that shaded her sick mother's dwelling, who, forbidden by the nature of her disease to walk abroad, might yet see from her pillow the fragrant boughs of the brier bud and blossom, while she inhaled their fragrance in every breeze that stirred the white cotton curtains that shaded her narrow casement.

Mary's native sense of propriety was constantly shocked by unseemly sights and sounds; but their impurity served to render vice more repulsive, and to strengthen that purity of heart from which she derived all her enjoyment. Night always released her from her laborious duties, and brought her back to be a ministering angel at the sick bed of her mother and sister.

These sisters I must now introduce to my readers, for with one of them my tale has mostly to do. Unlike Mary, they were both pretty, delicate-looking girls, ready of speech, and remarkably pleasing in person and manners.

Mr. Rollins had paid for the instruction of these girls at the village school, in which they had been taught all sorts of plain work; had mastered all the difficulties of Mavor's Spelling-book, had read the Bible, the Dairyman's Daughter, Pilgrim's Progress, and Goldsmith's abridged History of England, and all the books in the shape of penny tracts and sixpenny novels they could borrow from their playmates when school was over.

Sophy, the elder of the two, who was eighteen years of age, had been apprenticed for the last two years with a milliner of an inferior grade in the little seaport town; and her term of service hav-

ing expired, she had commenced making dresses in a humble way, for the servants in respectable families. She had to work very hard for a small remuneration, for the competition was very great, and without lowering her prices to nearly one-half, she could not have obtained employment at all. She could easily have procured a service as a nurse girl or housemaid in a gentleman's family, but the novels she had read during her residence with Mrs. Makewell, the milliner, had filled her head with foolish notions of her own beauty and consequence, and given her ideas far above her humble station, quite unfitting her to submit patiently to the control of others. Besides being vain of a very lovely face, she was very fond of dress. A clever hand at her business, she contrived to give a finish and style to the homely materials she made, and which fitted so well her slender and gracefully-formed person.

Her love of admiration induced her to lay out all her scanty earnings in adorning herself, instead of reserving a portion to help provide their daily food. Her sewing was chiefly done at home, and she attended upon her mother and sister, and prepared their frugal meals during the absence of Mary, whose situation in the "Brig's Foot" she considered a perfect degradation.

Such was Sophy Grimshawe, and there are many like her in the world. Ashamed of poverty, in which there is no real disgrace, and repining at the subordinate situation in which she found herself placed, she made no mental effort to better her condition by endeavoring to surmount it by frugal and patient industry, and a cheerful submission to the Divine will. She considered her lot hard, the dispensations of Providence cruel and unjust. She could not see why others should be better off than herself—why women with half her personal attractions should be permitted to ride in their carriages, while she had to wear coarse shoes and walk through the dust. She regarded every well-dressed female that passed the door, with feelings of envy and hatred, which embittered her life, and formed the most painful feature in the poverty she loathed and despised.

Charlotte, the sick girl, was two years younger than Sophy, and very different in person, mind and character. A fair, soft, delicate face, more winning than handsome, but full of gentleness and sweetness, was a perfect transcript of the pure spirit that animated the faithful heart in which it was enshrined. She might have been described in those charming lines of Wordsworth, as—

"The sweetest flower that ever grew
Beside a cottage door."

Contented in the midst of poverty, happy in the consciousness of moral improvement, patient under suffering, and pious without cant or affectation of superior godliness, she afforded, under the most painful circumstances, a rare example of Christian resignation to the will of God.

While reading the Gospel at school, as a portion of her daily task, it had pleased the All-Wise Dispenser of that blessed revelation to man, to open her eyes to the importance of those noble truths that were destined to set her free from the bondage of sin and death. She read, and believing that she had received a message from the skies, like the man who found the pearl of great price, she gave her whole heart and soul to God, in order to secure such an inestimable treasure. The sorrows and trials of her lowly lot were to her as stepping-stones to the heavenly land on which all her hopes were placed, and she regarded the fatal disease which wasted her feeble frame, and which had now confined her to the same bed with her mother, as the means employed by God to release her from the sufferings of earth, and open for her the gates of heaven. How earnestly, yet how tenderly, she tried to inspire her afflicted mother with the same hopes that animated her breast! She read to her, she prayed with her, and endeavored to explain in the best way she could that mysterious change which had been wrought in her own soul, and which now, on the near approach of death, filled her mind with inexpressible joy.

This reading of the Scriptures was a great consolation to the poor widow; and one day she remarked, in a tone of deep regret and with many tears—

"Who will read the Bible to me, Charlotte, when you are gone? Mary cannot read, and if she could, who could understand what she read, and Sophy hates everything that is serious, and is too selfish to trouble herself to read aloud to me."

"Mother, I have thought much about that of late," said the sick girl, raising herself on the pillow into a sitting posture, and speaking with great earnestness. "The doctor said yesterday that I might survive for six or seven weeks longer—perhaps," he added, "until the latter end of Autumn." During that time, could I not teach you to read?"

"At fifty years of age, Charlotte!" and the poor widow smiled at the enthusiasm of her child.

"And why not, mother?" said Charlotte, calmly. "It would be a great comfort to you, during the long, lonely hours you pass in bed; the thing may appear difficult, but I assure you that it is not impossible."

"And then your weak state; think how it would fatigue you, my dear child."

"So far from that, mother, it would afford me the greatest delight;" and the sick girl clasped her thin, wasted hands together, and looked upward with an expression of gratitude and love beaming on her pale, placid face.

"Well, I will try to please you, my dear Charlotte," said Dorothy, whose breast was thrilled to its inmost core by the affectionate solicitude which that glance of angelic benevolence conveyed to her heart; "but you will find me so stupid that you will soon give it up as a bad job."

"With God all things are possible," said Charlotte, reverentially. "With His blessing, mother, we will begin to-morrow."

It was a strange but beautiful sight* to see that dying girl lying in the same bed instructing her helpless mother—a sight which drew tears from sterner eyes than mine. And virtue triumphed over obstacles which at first appeared insurmountable. Before death summoned the good daughter to a better world, she had the inexpressible joy of hearing her mother read distinctly to her Christ's Sermon on the Mount. As the old woman concluded her delightful task, the grateful Charlotte exclaimed gently, in a sort of ecstasy—"Now, Lord, let thy servant depart in peace." Her prayer was granted; and a few minutes after, this good and faithful disciple entered into the joy of her Lord.

This event, though long expected by Dorothy Grimshawe, was felt with keen anguish. The tuneful voice was silent that day and night which for many weeks had spoken peace to her soul. The warm young heart was still, that had so ardently hoped and prayed for her salvation, that had solved her doubts and strengthened her wavering faith; and to whom now could she turn for comfort and consolation? To Mary, whispered the voice in her soul; but Mary was absent during the greater part of the day, and Sophy was too busy

* This touching scene was witnessed by the Author.

with her own affairs to pay much attention to her heart-broken parent.

But deep as was the mother's grief for the loss of her dutiful child, the sorrow of the poor hunchback for this her beloved sister, who had been the idolized pet of her joyless childhood, was greater still. Worn down with an incurable disease, Mrs. Grimshawe looked forward to a speedy reunion with the departed; but years of toil and suffering might yet be reserved for the patient creature, who never was heard to murmur over her painful lot.

The death of the young Charlotte, the peacemaker, the comforter and monitor to the rest of the household, was as if her good angel had departed, and the sunshine of heaven had been dimmed by her absence.

"Oh, my sister!" she murmured, in the depths of her soul, "thou wert justly dear to all; but oh! how dear to me! No one on earth loved the poor hunchback, or could read the language of her heart, like you. To others dumb and uncouth, to you my voice was natural; for it spoke to you of feelings and hopes which you alone could understand."

Mrs. Mason scolded and grumbled that, for weeks after Charlotte's death, Mary Grimshawe performed her daily tasks with less alacrity, and wandered to and fro like one in a dream. Sometimes the pent-up anguish of her heart found a vent in sad and unintelligible sounds—"A gibberish," her mistress said, "that was enough to frighten all the customers from the house."

Mary had other causes of annoyance to grieve and perplex her, independent of the death of her sister. For some weeks past, the coarse, dissolute Robert Mason had shown a decided preference for her sister Sophy, whom he proclaimed, in her hearing, to his bad associates, "to be the prettiest gal in the neighborhood—the only gal that he cared a bit for, or deemed worth a fellow's thoughts. But then," he added, carelessly, and with an air of superiority which galled Mary not a little, "the wench was poor—too poor for him. He wanted some 'un with lots of tin, that would enable him to open a good public-house in town."

Mary, as she listened, secretly blessed God that they were poor, while the ruffian continued :

"His mother, the old jade, would never consent to his marrying one so much beneath him. If she only suspected him of casting a sheep's eye at Sophy Grimshawe, she would set marks on the gal's

face that would spoil her beauty. But if the gal had not been so decidedly poor, he would please himself, without asking Mammy's leave, he could tell her."

His coarse comrades received his disrespectful insubordination to his mother's authority as an excellent joke, while Mary only shuddered at his indecent avowal of his liking for her sister, which filled her mind with a thousand indefinite fears.

Sophy, of late, had been able to obtain but little work in the neighborhood; she was silent and dejected, and murmured constantly against her poverty, and the want of every comfort that could render life tolerable. Sometimes she talked of going into service, but against this project, so new from her mouth, her mother objected, as she had no one else during the day to wait upon her, or speak to her. More generally, however, she speculated upon some wealthy tradesman making her his wife, and placing her at once above want and work.

"I care not," she would say, "how old or ugly he might be, if he would only take me out of this, and make a lady of me."

Mary shook her head, and tried, in hoarse ejaculations, to express her disapprobation of such an immoral avowal of sentiments she could but regard with horror; while she fixed upon her sister those piercing eyes, which seemed to look into her very soul—those eyes which, gleaming through fast-falling tears, made the vain girl shiver and turn away.

"Sophy," said Mrs. Grimshawe, gravely—for the remark was made one evening, by her mother's bed-side—"Mary cannot speak her thoughts, but I understand her perfectly, and can speak them for her, and would seriously ask you, if you think it a crime to sell your soul for money."

"Certainly not; I would do anything to get rid of the weary life I lead. All day chained down to my needle, and all night kept awake by the moans of the sick. At eighteen years of age, is it not enough to drive me mad?"

"It is what the Lord has been pleased to appoint—a heavy burden, doubtless, but meant for your good. Look at Mary; her lot is harder than yours, yet she never repines."

Sophy flashed a scornful look at her sister, as she replied—

"Mary is not exposed to the same temptations. Nature has placed her beyond them. I am handsome, and several years younger than her. She is deformed, and has a frightful impedi-

ment in her speech, and is so plain that no one could fall in love with her, or wish to make her a wife. Men think her hideous, but they do not laugh at her for being poor and shabby as they do at me."

This speech was made under the influence of vehement passion, and was concluded with a violent burst of tears.

Her cruel words inflicted a deep wound in the heart of the poor deformed girl. For the first time she felt degraded in her own eyes; and the afflictions under which she labored seemed disgraceful; and she wished she had been deaf as well as unintelligible. But these feelings, so foreign to her nature, were of short duration; after a brief but severe mental struggle, she surmounted her just resentment, and forgave her thoughtless sister for the unmerited reproach. Wiping the tears from her pale, dark cheeks, she smoothed the pillows for her sick mother, and murmured with a sigh—"Lord, it was Thy hand that made me as I am; let me not rebel against Thy will."

The old woman was greatly excited by Sophy's unworthy conduct. With a great effort she raised herself nearly upright in her bed, gazing sternly upon her rebellious child.

"Mary, my darling!" she cried, at last, when she saw the deformed vainly striving to control the emotion which convulsed her whole frame—"bear with patience the sinful reproaches of this weak, vain girl. The time will come when she will be severely punished for her cruelty and injustice. It would be well for her if the image of her God were impressed upon her soul as it is upon yours, my good, dutiful child. The clay perishes, but that which gives value to the clay shall flourish in immortal youth and beauty, when the heavens shall be no more. 'Then shall the righteous shine forth like the sun'—Ah, me! I have forgotten the rest of the text, but you, Mary, know it well; let it console you, my dear girl, and dry these useless tears. I was pretty, like Sophy, once, and, like her, I thought too highly of myself. Look at me now. Look at these wrinkled, care-worn cheeks—these wasted, useless limbs; are they not a lesson to human pride and vanity? I never knew my real character until I knew grief. Sorrow has been blessed to my soul, for had I never tasted the cup of affliction, I had never known the necessity of a Saviour. May his peace and blessing fortify your heart to endure every trial which his wisdom may appoint, my poor afflicted lamb!"

Sophy's heart was softened by her mother's passionate appeal,

Heartily ashamed of herself, she approached nearer to her weeping sister.

"Mary," she faltered, in a tone of deep self-reproach, "I did not mean to vex you. I know that you are better than me, and you must not take so to heart my wild words; I am miserable and unhappy; I do not always know what I say."

The eyes of the sisters met; Sophy flung her arms about Mary's neck and kissed her.

"You forgive me, Mary?"

The hunchback smiled through her tears—and such a smile—so eloquent—so full of love and grateful affection, that Sophy felt she was more than forgiven.

"Why are you unhappy, Sophy?" asked Mrs. Grimshawe, seizing the favorable moment to make a more lasting impression on her mind.

"Because we are so poor."

"We have endured many evils worse than poverty."

"None, none. That one word comprises them all. To be hungry, shabby, despised; and you wonder that my soul rebels against it?"

"Are not unkind words and reproaches more hard to bear?"

Sophy hung her head, and was silent.

"Mary would eat dry bread for a week, and be cheerful and resigned, and wear a coarse, shabby garment, without shedding a single tear. These are hardships, my girl; but they do not affect the heart, or cause one pang of remorse. But, seriously, Sophy, do you think that you would improve your present condition, or render yourself happier, by marrying a man you did not love, for money?"

"Yes." This was said emphatically.

"Oh, do it not, my child! It is a great sin to enter into a solemn covenant, and swear at God's holy altar to love and honor and obey a man for whom you have neither affection nor respect. No blessing from God can follow such an union. Nature would assert her rights, and punish you severely for having broken her laws."

"Nonsense, mother! The thing is done every day, and I see none of these evil results. Johanna Carter married old George Hughes for his money, and they live very comfortably together. I will accept, like her, the first good offer that comes in my way."

Mary writhed, and tried for some time to make her thoughts audible: at last she succeeded in gasping out—

“ Robert Mason!—not him—not him!”

“ Robert Mason! What, Bully Bob? Does he admire me? Well, Mary, I will quiet your apprehensions by assuring you that the regard is not mutual. And what would the old witch his mother say?”

“ Let her never have it to say, that her bad son married Daniel Grimshawe’s daughter,” said Dorothy, indignantly.

“ Oh, but I should like to plague that old fiend, by letting her imagine that I encouraged her son. She has always something spiteful to say to me. It would be rare fun to torment her a little. I will be very sweet to Master Bob for the time to come.”

Mary caught her arm, and looked imploringly in her face.

“ So you are afraid of my marrying Bob Mason? What foolish women you are! He is not rich enough for me—a drunken spendthrift! When I sell my soul for money, as mother calls my getting a rich husband, it shall be to one who is better able to pay for it.”

And in high spirits the hitherto discontented grumbler undressed and retired to bed, leaving Mary to pray for her during the greater part of the night, to entreat God to forgive her volatile sister, and make her sensible of her sin.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE GHOST.

A SHORT time after this conversation took place by the sick-bed of Dorothy Grimshawe, a report got abroad that the road between the town of —— and C—— churchyard was haunted by the ghost of old Mason, the apparition of that worthy having been seen and spoken to by several of his old friends and associates, who had frequented the “ Brig’s Foot” during his occupation of it, and to whom his person was well known. The progress of the stage coach had been several times stopped by the said ghost, the horses frightened, the vehicle overturned, and several of the passengers seriously injured. Those who retained their senses boldly affirmed that they had seen the spectre—that it was old Mason,

and no mistake—a man so remarkable for his ill-looks in life, that even in death they could not be forgotten. These tales, whether true or false, were generally believed among the lower classes, and were the means of bringing a great influx of guests to the "Brig's Foot." All the idlers in the town flocked hither after the night had closed in, to ask questions, and repeat what they had heard during the day about the ghost.

Martha Mason looked sourly on her new customers, and answered all their questions regarding her departed husband with an abrupt, "What concern is it of yours what the man was like? He is dead. I know nothing about him now; nor do I want to know. I don't believe one word of your foolish lies."

One circumstance struck Mary as very singular: young Mason was always absent of an evening, and seldom returned before day-break, particularly on those nights when the coach from N— was expected to pass that road, which was only twice during the week. This was the more remarkable, as he had always been the foremost in the scenes of riot and misrule that were constantly enacted beneath that roof. When he did make his appearance, he was unusually sober, and repeated all the pranks performed by the ghost as an excellent joke, mimicking his looks and actions amid loud bursts of indecent laughter, to the no small horror of his superstitious guests.

"What do the ghost look like, Bob?" asked Joshua Spilman, an honest laborer, who had stepped in to drink his pint of ale and hear the news; and having tarried later than his wont, was afraid to return home. "I never seed a ghost in all my born days."

"Why, man, ghosts, like owls, only come abroad of a night, and you have little chance of having your curiosity gratified during the day. But if you are very anxious to see one, and are not afraid of leaving the chimney corner, and stepping out into the dark, just go with me to the mouth of the Gipsy lane, and look for yourself. It was there the old 'un appeared last night, and there most likely he'll be to-night again."

"The Lord ha' mercy upon us. Do you think, Bob, I'd put myself in the way of the ghost? I would not go there by myself for all the world."

"It would not hurt you."

"Not hurt I? Sure it broke the leg of Dick Simmons, when it skeared the hoses, and overturned the coach last Monday night.

I'd rather keep myself in a whole skin. But when you seed it, Bob, worn't you mortal feared?"

"Not I."

"An' did you speak to 'un?"

"Ah, to be sure. Do you think I'd run away from my own dad? 'Old boy,' says I, 'is that you? How are you getting on below?' He shakes his head, and glowers at me, 'an his one eye looked like a burning coal.

"You'll know one day," says he.

"That's pleasant news," says I. "You'll be sure to give me a warm welcome at any rate. There's nothing like having a friend at head-quarters." When he saw that I was not afraid of him, he gave a loud screech and vanished, leaving behind him a most infernal stench of brimstone, which I smelt all the way from the cross-road as far as the bridge. He had got his answer, and I saw no more of him for that night.

Josh thrust his chair back to the wall, and drawing a long breath, gazed upon the reprobate with a strange mixture of awe and terror in his bewildered countenance.

"Why, man, an' my feather had said sic like words to me, I should have gone stark, staring mad with fear and sheame."

"The shame should be all on his side then," quoth the incorrigible Bob. "I did not make him the bad man he was, though he made me. He was always an ugly fellow, and the scorching he has got down there (and he pointed significantly to the ground) has not improved his looks. But mother would know him in a minute."

"I never want to see your father again, Robert," said Martha, doggedly; "so you need not address any such impertinent remarks to me. I had enough of his company here. I don't know why he should leave his grave to haunt me after his death."

"For the love he bore you while on earth," said the dutiful son, glancing round the group with a knowing look. "Dad is sure of a kind reception from you, mother."

"The day he was buried," said Martha, "was the only happy one I had known for twenty years, and you know it well. One of his last acts was to make me a cripple for life."

"How did he come by his death, Mother Mason?" asked a young sailor, Tom Weston by name.

"He was killed in a row with the smugglers," said Bob. "He had helped them to land some brandy, and they wanted to cheat him

out of his pay. Father had lots of pluck. He had lost an eye once before in such a frolic. He attacked the whole band single handed and got knocked on the head in the scuffle. The smugglers ran away, and left mother to bury the dead."

"He only got what he deserved," muttered Martha. "It is a pity he did not get it twenty years before. But he is gone to his place, and I am determined to keep mine. A ghost has no legal claim to the property of the living, and he shall never get possession of this house, living or dead, again."

"But suppose, Martha, he should take it into his head to haunt it, and make it too hot to hold you," said Tom Weston, "what would you do then?"

"I think I know a secret or two that would lay the ghost," returned Martha; and hobbling across the kitchen on her crutch, she lifted down an old horse-pistol that was suspended to one of the low cross-beams, and wiping the dust from it with her apron, she carefully examined the lock.

"This should speak my welcome to all such unwelcome intruders. It has released more than one troublesome spirit from its clay tenement, and I have no doubt that it would be found equally efficacious in quieting others—that is if they have the audacity to try their strength against me;" and she glanced disdainfully at her son from beneath her bushy, lowering brows. "This brown dog is old, but he can still bark and bite!"

"How vicious mother looks!" said Bob, with a loud laugh. "It would require a ghost with some pluck to face her."

"What time did the spectre appear last night?" said Tom Weston, who saw that mischief was brewing, and was anxious to turn the subject into another channel. "I should like amazingly to see it."

"That's all bosh!" said Bob. "You would soon cut and run. But if you are in earnest, come with me to the cross-road, and I promise to introduce you to the old gentleman. The clock has just struck eleven; he will be taking his rounds by the time we get there."

The young man drew back. "Not in your company, Mason. It would be enough to raise the devil."

"Well, please yourself. "I knew you would funk out. I shall go, however. I want to have a few minutes' conversation with the ghost before he appears in public. Perhaps he will show me where

to find a hidden treasure. Good-bye, mother; shall I give your compliments to the old gentleman? Love, I know, is out of the question. You had none to spare for him when he was alive."

"Away with you for a blasphemous reprobate that you are!" cried the angry old woman, shaking her crutch at him.

"Mammy's own darling son!" cried the disgusting wretch, as, with a loud oath, he sprang through the open door and vanished into the dark night.

The men looked significantly at each other, and a little tailor rose cautiously and shut the door.

"Why do you do that?" said Tom Weston.

"To keep out bad company."

"It is stifling hot!" cried Tom, kicking it open with his foot. "I shall die without a whiff of fresh air."

"But the ghost?" and the little tailor shook his head mysteriously.

"Does not belong to any of us," rejoined Tom. "My relations are all sound sleepers; good, honest people, who are sure to rest in their graves. There is a storm brewing," he continued, walking to the open door; "that thunder-cloud will burst over our heads in a few minutes, and Master Bob will get a good drenching."

"Its awsome to hear him talk as he do of his feather's spirit," said honest Josh. "It makes my flesh creep upon my bones."

"Provided there's any truth in his statements," said a carpenter, who had been smoking his pipe by the table, and silently listening to the conversation—"which I much doubt. For my own part I would be more afraid of meeting Robert Mason alone in that dark lane, than any visitant from another world. I don't believe in ghosts. I never saw one, and I never met with any person, on whose word you could attach much credit, that could satisfactorily prove to you that *he* had: when you pushed him hard, it always came out that he was not the person who had seen it; but some one else who had related the tale to him; and he had every reason to believe it true. The farther you searched into the matter, the more indistinct and improbable the story became."

"Ay, Bill Corbett; but you heard Bob declare that he has both seen and spoken to it, and the lad must know his own father."

"I don't take for gospel what I hear Bob say; I don't believe one word of the story—no, not if he was to swear to the truth of

it upon the Bible," said the carpenter, waxing warm. Before Tom Weston could reply, a loud peal of thunder burst suddenly over their heads, and the room was so vividly lighted up by the electric flash that preceded it, that Mary, who was intently listening to the conversation, rose from her seat with a loud scream.

"By the living Jingo! what's that?" cried the laborer, starting to his feet, while the pipe he was smoking fell from his nerveless grasp and shivered to atoms on the hearth.

"Pshaw!" said Tom Weston, recovering from the sudden tremor which had seized him, "'tis only the poor dummy. I thought the gal had been deaf as well as dumb."

"Why, man, the dead in their graves might have heard that!" said the terror stricken Josh.

He had scarcely ceased speaking, when Sophy Grimshawe sprang into the room—her eyes fixed and staring, and her usually rosy cheeks livid with fear. "The thunder," she gasped, "the dreadful thunder!" and would have fallen to the ground, had not Tom Weston caught her in his arms. The unexpected sight of such a beautiful apparition, seemed to restore the young man's presence of mind. He placed her in a chair, while the little tailor hustled up to get a glass of cold water, with which he copiously bathed her face and hands. In a few minutes her limbs ceased to tremble, and opening her eyes, she glanced timidly round her. The first object that encountered her gaze, was the scornful, fiendlike face of Mrs. Mason, scowling upon her.

"So," she said, sneeringly, "you make the thunder a pretext for showing your painted doll's face to the fellows here. Your mother would do well to keep you at home."

"Mother was asleep, and she is not afraid of thunder like me. When that dreadful flash of lightning came, I dared not stay alone in the house."

"Are you a bit safer, think you, here?" sneered the witch-like woman. "It was monstrous kind of you to leave your poor old mother exposed to danger, while you run away from it like a coward! A bad excuse, however, I've heard, is better than none. In your case I think it worse."

"I did not think of that," said Sophy, with unaffected simplicity, rising to go. "Mother never cares for it, but it makes me tremble from head to foot, and almost drives me beside myself. I can't tell why, but it has always been so with me since I was a little child."

As she finished speaking, another long protracted peal of thunder rolled through the heavens and shook the house, and Sophy sank down gasping in her chair. The handsome young sailor was at her side with a glass of ale.

"Never mind that cross old woman, my dear; she scolds and rules us all. Take a sup of this—it will bring the roses back to your cheeks. Why, you are as pale as the ghost we were talking of when you came in."

"Oh, I'm such a coward!" sobbed Sophy. "Ah, there it comes again—the lightning will blind me!"—and she shrieked and threw her apron over her head, as another terrific peal burst solemnly above them. "I would rather see twenty ghosts than hear the like of that again. Did not you feel the earth shake?"

"Now for the rain!" cried the little tailor, as a few heavy drops first splashed upon the door-sill; then there was the rush and roar of a hurricane, and the water burst from the skies in torrents, streaming over the door-sill, and beating through the chinks in the ill-glazed windows.

"Shut the door, man! can't you?" vociferated Tom Weston to the tailor. "The rain pours in like a flood, and it will give the young lady cold."

"Poor, delicate creature!" said Martha; "as if a few drops of rain could hurt the like o' her!"

As the tailor rose to shut the door, two men, bearing a heavy burthen between them, filled up the vacant space. All eyes were turned upon the strangers, as, through the howling wind and rushing rain, they bore into the room and placed upon the back floor a man struggling in a fit of epilepsy.

"Well, measter, how is it with 'un?" said the foremost, who was a stout, rosy fellow from the laboring class.

No answer was returned to the inquiry made in a kindly tone. The person thus addressed still continued writhing in convulsions, and perfectly unconscious of his own identity, or of that of any person around him.

"Put a tablespoonful of salt into his mouth, man," said Corbett, the carpenter; "that will bring him to, if anything will."

The simple, but powerful remedy was promptly administered by Mary, and after some minutes, the paroxysms of the disorder grew less violent, and the sick man, with a heavy groan, unclosed his large, dark eyes, and gazed vacantly around him—his teeth still

chattering, and his muscular limbs trembling like one in an ague fit.

"Courage, measter," said the laborer, giving him a friendly slap on the shoulder. "There's nought that can hurt thee here. See, the fire burns cheerfully, and 'tis human creturs an' friends that are about thee."

"Is it gone," groaned the prostrate form, closing his eyes, as if to shut out some frightful apparition—"gone for ever?"

"Ay, vanished clean away into the black night."

"What did he see?" cried a chorus of eager voices; and every one in the room crowded round the fallen man.

"He seed old Mason's ghost on the bridge," said the laborer, "an' I seed it too. An ugsome-looking cretur it wor, an' I wor mortal skeared; howdsomever, when measter screeched an' fell, I forgot to look on 'un agin, I wor so skeared about 'un. This good man com'd along, as luck wud ha' it, and helped me to carry 'un in here. For my part, I thought as how Measter Noah was dead; an' as he owed me four pounds an' three shillins for my harvestin' with 'un, an' I had no writin' to show for it, I thought it wud be a bad job for me an' the fam'ly."

"True, neibor," said the other bearer, sententiously; "the sight of the ghost wor nothin' to that."

"And did the ghost speak to you?" said the little tailor.

"Na, na, I b'leeve that them gentry from the other world are sworn over by Satan to hold their tongues, an' never speak unless spoken to. Howdsomever, this 'ghost never said a word; it stood by centre arch o' bridge, wrapped up in a winding sheet, that flickered all over like moonlight; an' it shook ter heed, an glowered on us with two fiery eyes as big as saucers, an' then sunk down an' vanished."

"Oh, it was him—him!" again groaned forth the terror-stricken man, rising to a sitting posture. "He looked just as he did, that night—that night we found him murdered!"

"Of whom do you speak, Master Cotton?" said the little tailor.

"Of Squire Carlos."

"Squire Carlos! Did the ghost resemble him? He has been dead long enough to sleep in peace in his grave. It is more than twenty years agone since he was murdered by that worthless scamp Bill Martin. I was but a slip of a lad then. I walked all the way

from — to Ipswich, to see him hung. How came you to think of him?"

"It was him, or some demon in his shape," said Noah Cotton—for it was the hero of my tale—now able to rise and take the chair that the gossiping little tailor offered him. "If ever I saw Mr. Carlos in life, I saw his apparition on the bridge to-night."

"A man should know his own father," mused the tailor; "and yet here is Bob Mason takes the same appearance for the ghostly resemblance of his own *respectable* progenitor. There is some strange trickery in all this."

"What the dickens should bring the ghost of Squire Carlos so far from his own parish? He wor shot in his own preserves by Bill Martin. I mind the circumstance quite well. A good man wor the old Squire, but over-particular about his game. If I mistake not, you be Measter Noah Cotton, whose mother lived up at the porter's lodge?"

Noah nodded assent, but he didn't seem to relish these questions and reminiscences of the honest laborer, while Josh, delighted to hear his tongue run, continued—

"I kind o' spect you've forgotten me, Mister Cotton. I used to work in them days at Farmer Humphrey's, up Wood-lane. You have grow'd an old-looking man since I seed you last. You were young and spry enough then. I didna' b'leeve the tales that volk did tell of 'un—that you were the Squire's own son. But you be as loike him now as two peas. The neebors wor right, arter all."

The stranger winced, and turned pale.

"They say as how you've grow'd a rich man yoursel' since that time. Is the old 'uman, your mother, livin' still?"

"She is dead," said Noah, turning his back abruptly on the interrogator, and addressing himself to the mistress of the house.

"Mrs. Mason, I have been very ill. I feel better, but the fit has left me weak and exhausted. Can you give me a bed and a room to myself, where I could sleep the effects of it quietly off?"

"My beds are engaged," was the curt reply of the surly dame. "Pray, how long have you been subject to those fits?"

"For several years. Ever since I had the typhus fever. And now the least mental anxiety brings them on."

"So it appears. Particularly the sight of an old friend when

least expected. This is strange," and she smiled significantly; "for he was, both living and dead, a kind friend to you."

"He was, indeed," sighed the stranger. "It was not until after I lost him, that I knew how much I was indebted to him." Then suddenly turning from her, he looked steadfastly towards the open door. "It rains cats and dogs, mother; you surely cannot refuse me a bed on such a night?"

"I have already told you, I have no bed to spare. To speak the plain truth," she added, with a grim smile, "I don't like your hang-dog face, and want none of your company. If you're afraid of a shadow, you are either a great coward or a big fool. I despise both characters. If not, you are a designing rogue, and enough of such folks come here every night."

"I will pay you well for the accommodation," urged Noah, without noticing or resenting Martha's malignant speech.

"Mother, he be as rich as a Jew;" whispered Josh, in her ear.

The hint, disregarded by Mrs. Mason, was not unheeded by Sophy Grimshawe, who, gliding across the room, said, in a soft, persuasive voice: "Mr. Cotton, if you will step into the next house, I will give you my bed for the night."

"The bold hussy!" muttered Martha.

"Is it far to go?" and Noah shuddered, as he glanced into the black night.

"Only a step; just out of one door into the other. If you be afraid," she continued, looking up into his gloomy but handsome face with an arch smile, "I will protect you. I am afraid of thunder, but not of ghosts. Come along; depend upon it, we shall not see anything worse than ourselves."

"There's many a true word spoken at random," said Martha, glancing after the twain, as the door closed upon them. "I'll bet all I'm worth in the world that that fellow is not afraid of nothing; he's troubled with a bad conscience. He's a hateful, unlucky-looking wretch! I'm glad that bold girl relieved me of his company."

"Martha," said Josh, "you're far wrong this time. Noah Cotton do bear an excellent character; an' then he has lots o' cash." This circumstance, apparently, gave him great importance in the poor man's eyes. "That Squire Carlos, who wor murdered by Bill Martin, left in his will a mort o' money to Noah Cotton. People dew say that he wor his son."

"A likely story, that!" cried the woman, tossing up her head.
"He is very like the Squire, at any rate," said the little tailor.
"I knew him for several years, and always found him a decent, quiet fellow—rather proud, and fond of dressing above his rank, perhaps; but then, he always paid his tailor's bill like a gentleman. Indeed, many that I make for, who call themselves gentlemen, might take pattern by him. He was a very handsome young fellow in those days—tall, straight, and exceedingly well made; as elastic and supple as an eel, and was the best cricket-player in the county. I don't know what can have come across Noah, that he looks so gaunt and thin, and is such an old man before his time. He has been given to those terrible fits ever since he made one of the party that found the body of Mr. Carlos. It's no wonder; for he loved the Squire, and the Squire was mortal fond of him. He became very religious after he got that shock, and has been a very strict Methodist ever since."

"He's not a bit the better for that," said Martha. "The greatest sinners stand in need of the longest prayers. I thought that he had been a Methodist parson, by the cut of his jib. Where, my lads," turning to the two men who had brought him in, "did you pick the fellow up?"

"Why, do you see, mistress, that I've been a harvesting with 'un, an' he tuk me in the taxed cart with 'un to the bank, to get change to pay me my wages. Going into town this morning, the hoss got skeared by some boys playing at ball. The ball struck the beast plump in the eye, an' cut it so shocking bad, that measter left 'un with the hoss doctor, and proposed for us to walk home in the cool o' the evening, as the distance is only eight miles or thereabouts. Before we starts home, he takes me to the Crown Inn, and treats me to a pot of ale, an' while there he meets with some old acquaintance, who was telling him how he knew his father, old Noah, in Mericky; an' how he had died very rich, an' left his money to a wife he had there, that he never married. An' I thought as how measter didn't much like the news, as his father, it seems, had left him nothing—not even his blessing. Well, 'twas nigh upon twelve o'clock when we started. 'You'd better stay all night, measter,' says I; 'tis nigh upon morning.' 'Sam Smith,' says he, 'I cannot sleep out o' my own bed,' and off we sets. On the bridge we heerd the first big clap o' thunder; the next minute we sot the ghost, and my measter gives a screech which might have roused

old Squire Carlos from the dead, and straight fell down in a fit. The ghost vanished in the twinkling of an eye ; an' I met this good man, who helped me to bring Noah up here. He's a kind measter, Noah Cotton, but a wonderful timersome man. I've heerd him, when we've been at work in the fields, start at the shivering of an aspen leaf, and cry out, 'Sam ! what's that ? '

"Did not Noah say summat about having lost his yellow canvas bag with his money ? " asked the other man ; " and that the ghost laid hold on him with a hand as cold as ice ? "

"What, did a ? " and Sam Smith opened his large, round eyes, and distended his wide, good-natured mouth, with a look of blank astonishment.

"If the ghost robbed Noah Cotton of his canvas bag, that was what no living man could do ! " cried Bob Mason, bursting into the room, and cutting sundry mad capers round the floor. "Hurrah for the ghost ! "

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE PROPOSAL.

We will now step into the widow Grimshawe's cottage, and see how Sophy disposed of her guest.

The lower room was in profound darkness, and the little sempstress bade her companion stay at the door while she procured a light from the rush-candle that always burned in her mother's chamber above.

"Do not leave me in the dark !" he cried, in a voice of childish terror, and clutching at her garments. "I dare not be alone ! "

"Nonsense ! There are no ghosts here. I will not be gone an instant."

"Let me go with you."

"What ! to my sick mother's bed-room ? That cannot be. Perhaps," she continued, not a little astonished at his extreme timidity, "the ashes may still be alive in the grate. I think I perceive a faint glimmer ; but you had better allow me to fetch a light from mother's room ? "

"Oh no ! not for the world. I beseech you to stay where you are."

Sophy knelt down by the hearth, and raking among the ashes,

succeeded at last in finding a live coal, which she blew into a blaze; and lighting a candle she had left on the table, placed it before him.

Her strange guest had sunk down into a large wooden arm-chair beside it, his head bent upon his clasped hands, his eyes shut, and traces of tears upon his death-pale cheeks; his lips were firmly compressed, and his countenance immovable and rigid.

Sophy gazed long and silently upon him. The sympathy of woman, be she good or bad, is always touched by the sight of a man's tears. Sophy was selfish and vain—all her faults might be comprised under those two heads; but she could not bear to witness sorrow and suffering without trying to alleviate it, unless it demanded the sacrifice of some personal gratification that she wanted strength of mind to relinquish.

The stranger had awakened her sympathy, which the knowledge that he was comparatively rich did not tend to diminish; and she examined his countenance with a degree of interest and attention which hitherto had been foreign to her nature, who had never seen anything to love or admire beyond herself.

For a person in his station, Noah Cotton was a remarkable man. His features were high and regular, his air and demeanor that of a gentleman, or rather of one who had been more used to mingle with gentlemen, than with the class to which his dress indicated him to belong. His age exceeded forty. His raven hair, that curled in close masses round his high temples, was thickly sprinkled with grey; his sallow brow deeply furrowed, but the lines were not those produced by sorrow, but care. He looked ill and unhappy; and though his dress was of the coarse manufacture generally adopted by the small yeoman or farmer, his linen was fine and scrupulously clean; in short, he was vastly superior to any of the men that frequented the "Brig's Foot."

"You are ill," said Sophy, laying her hand upon his shoulder, and speaking in a soft, gentle tone. "Let me get you something to eat. I can give you some new bread, and a bowl of fresh milk."

"Thank you, my kind girl," he replied, unclosing his large, dark, melancholy eyes, and regarding her neat little figure, and fair, girlish face, with fixed attention; "I am not hungry."

"Oh, do take a little." And Sophy placed the simple conte-

of the cupboard on the table before him. "It would give me real pleasure to see you eat."

"Then I will try to please you."

But, after taking a draught of the milk, Noah pushed the bowl from him, and turning gloomily to the fire, which was now brightening into a ruddy glow, throwing cheerful red gleams to every distant corner of the room.

"And did you really see the ghost?" asked Sophy, who was dying with curiosity to hear the tale from his own mouth. And she drew a low bench beside him, and gazed earnestly up into his face. "I thought the stories about it were all humbug—a trick played off upon the public by that worthless scamp, Bob Mason."

The man started from his abstracted fit.

"Don't speak of it now, my pretty maid. Let you and I talk of something else."

"But I should like so to know all about it. You said, when you were coming to, out of that frightful fit, that it was the ghost of a Mr. Carlos."

"Then I was a fool!" muttered Noah; but, recovering himself, he said, "I was one of the band of men who found the body of Squire Carlos, on the night he was murdered in his own plantation, by Bill Martin, a notorious smuggler and poacher. I was very young at the time; the Squire had been a kind friend to me and my mother, and the horrid sight made such a powerful impression on my mind that it almost deprived me of my senses, and it has haunted me ever since. I see him at all hours of the day, but most generally the vision comes before me at night, and produces these terrible fits. The doctors call it disease—I think it fate."

"How dreadful!" and Sophy recoiled involuntarily a few paces from her guest.

There was a long silence. Sophy tried to shake off the chill that had fallen upon her heart, by vigorously poking the fire. At length she ventured a glance at her silent companion. He was looking down intently at her."

"You seem pretty old," she said, with that bluntness so common to uneducated people, and from which those above them wince in disgust—"are you married?"

"No, my dear; a bachelor, at your service."

"If you had a wife and children, they would cure you of these strange fancies."

"Do you really think so?"

"I am sure of it."

There was another long silence.

Her companion heaved a deep, melancholy sigh, and his thoughts seemed to break out into words, without any intention on the part of their owner.

"I have plenty to keep both wife and children, and I would gladly marry to-morrow, if I thought any good woman would have me."

Sophy smiled, and looked down into her lap. She twisted the strings of her checked apron round her fingers, the apron itself into every possible shape. At length she started from her seat.

"Where are you going?" cried the stranger, in a tone of alarm.

"To make you up a bed."

"I would rather remain by the fire all night, if you will promise to stay with me."

"But my mother would wonder what had become of me. I must leave you, and go to bed."

Noah caught her little hand as she glided past him, and pulled her violently back—

"I will not part with you—you must stay."

"Bless me, how timid you are! How you shake and tremble! I cannot understand this fear in a big man like you."

"I should grow courageous if you were always by my side."

"Perhaps you would soon be as much afraid of me as of the ghost," said Sophy, looking up into his sad eyes with a playful smile.

"The ghost again! But tell me, my pretty maid, have you a sweetheart?"

"What girl of eighteen, who is not positively ugly, has not?" returned Sophy, evasively.

"But one whom you prefer to all others?"

"I have never yet seen that fortunate individual."

"And is there no one for whom you feel any particular liking?"

"None, I assure you."

"Good," said Noah, musingly. "Have you a father?"

"He was drowned in a heavy gale, during the fishing season, some years ago."

"A mother?"

"Yes; but she has been bed-ridden with the palsy ever since

father died. Grief for his sudden loss brought it on. There are no hopes of her ever regaining the use of her limbs now."

"Any brothers or sisters?"

"One sister, the hunch-backed girl you saw in the next house; the rest are all dead. I lost a young sister about six weeks ago. She was only sixteen years of age, and as good as she was beautiful. Every body loved and respected Charlotte, and she died so happily. It was well for her. I have often envied her since she left us. I never knew what an angel she was, until after we lost her."

Noah sighed again, and was silent for some minutes. At length he said—

"Is it only good people that die in peace?"

"I don't know," said Sophy. "Charlotte was the only person I ever saw die; and her last words to us I shall never forget. 'Dear ones,' she said, while a smile from heaven rested upon her lips, 'do not weep for me. These lost moments of my life are the most joyful, the happiest I have ever known. I can now fully realize that peace which our blessed Redeemer promised to all His faithful followers—a peace which surpassteth human understanding. May that His peace and blessing rest upon you all.'"

Again Noah sighed, and covered his face with his hands, and remained so long in that attitude, that Sophy imagined he had fallen asleep. At length he raised his head, and said—

"Your father is dead, your mother infirm and old, your only sister sickly and deformed, and yourself so young and pretty, with no brothers to protect or work for you—how do you contrive dear girl to maintain yourself and them?"

"Alas! we are very poor," said Sophy, bursting into tears. "I do all I can to supply the wants of the family. I have to work day and night, and Mary too, who has a cruel mistress, in order to earn our bread, yet we are often on the point of starvation; both of us are tasked beyond our strength—and I for one am heartily weary of my life."

"Dear child," and Noah wound his arm about her waist, and kissed away the tears from her bright blue eyes—"if you could love and cherish an old man—old at any rate to you, although barely turned of forty, I could give both you and your afflicted mother and sister a comfortable home. I have a pleasant cottage at F—, and fifty acres of good arable land, a horse and gig, six fine milk cows, and plenty of pigs and poultry, an income of two hundred per an-

"num in the bank, which is increasing every year, simply because I have enough to supply my household without touching either capital or interest. This property I will settle upon you at my death, if you will become my wife."

Sophy's hand trembled in his. A bright crimson suffused her cheek, her heart leapt wildly within her breast; but she could not find a word of answer.

"I have been a bachelor all my life," continued Noah, "and a dull, cheerless life it has been to me. I had a mother to take care of in her old age, and I loved her too well to place a wife over her, who had been so long the mistress of my home. She is only lately dead, and I feel lonely and sad without her. I have often thought that I could love a wife very much. I am sure I could love you. What say you to it, my girl? Is it to be a match?"

Sophy thought of the horse and gig, and the six cows, of the pigs and poultry, of the comfortable home; and above all this, she hugged closely to her heart the £200 per annum that was to be hers, besides all the rest of the worldly goods and chattels at his death. She looked down upon her faded, shabby calico dress, and round upon the scantily furnished room, and thought of the cold, dark winter nights that were coming, and how ill-prepared they were to meet them. She remembered the days of toil, the nights of waking, watching beside the feverish bed of a querulous old woman, and she knew how fretful and impatient she was, and how her soul abhorred the task; and she turned her bright eyes to the face of her melancholy lover, and placed her small hand in his, and said in a low, soft voice, that was music to his heart—

"I will try to love you, and will be your wife, if you will only be kind to mother and Mary, and take us from this hateful place."

Transported with joy, he promised all that she asked.

All night they sat by the fire, hand in hand, talking over their future prospects; and the next morning Sophia introduced Noah Cotton to her mother and sister, as her future husband, and bade them rejoice in their altered fortunes. Human nature is full of strange contradictions, and it so happened that the mother and sister did not rejoice; and instead of approving of the match, they remonstrated vehemently against it.

Sophy thought them foolish and ungrateful. She grew angry, and remained obstinately fixed to her purpose, and the affair ended in a family rupture.

Mrs. Grimshawe refused to live with Sophy, if she married Noah Cotton ; and Mary could not leave her mother. Mary, who was a shrewd observer of human character, was greatly struck with the scene she had witnessed in the public house. She did not like Noah Cotton. She suspected him to be a bad man, who was laboring under the pangs of remorse rather than of disease. She had communicated these fears to her mother, and to this circumstance might be attributed her steady refusal to sanction a marriage so advantageous, in a pecuniary point of view, to them all.

Sophy was determined to secure the rich husband, and have her own way ; and the very next week she became the wife of the wealthy farmer, and the newly-wedded pair left — in a neat gig, to spend the honeymoon in Noah Cotton's rural homestead, in the pretty parish of F —

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE DISCLOSURE.

TWENTY months passed away, and the young bride had never once been home to visit her old friends. Her mother grew more infirm and feeble every day, and pined sadly after her absent child ; and the tears were often upon Mary's cheeks. Sophy's act of wilful disobedience had been forgiven from the hour that the thoughtless rebel had become a wife ; but her neglect rankled in the heart of both mother and sister.

"She has forgotten us quite," said the ailing old woman. "The distance is not great. She might come, especially as her husband keeps a horse and chaise ; and what are ten miles after all ? I have often walked double that in my young day to see a friend, much more a mother and sister. Well, I shall not be here long—I feel that. The day of my release will be a welcome one to me, and she will be sorry when I am gone that she neglected to come and see me."

Now, though Dorothy Grimshawe, in her nervous, querulous state, grumbled over the absence of her daughter, she was never so dear to the heart of her faulty child as at the very time she complained of her neglect.

Sophy Cotton never knew the real value of a mother's love until she felt upon her own shoulders the cares and responsibilities of a

house. She longed intensely to see her mother and Mary again, as the nice presents of butter, ham, and eggs that she was constantly sending to —, might have testified for her; but there were painful reasons that made a meeting with her mother and sister everything but desirable to the young wife.

She was changed since they parted. Her marriage had been contrary to their wishes; she did not like that they should know all—but if she did not go over to — in the chaise, she went nowhere else—never did the most loving bride keep more closely at home.

Once Mrs. Grimshawe asked of her daughter's messenger, a rough clodhopper, whom she had summoned to her bed-side in order to gratify her curiosity and satisfy her doubts, the reason of Mrs. Cotton's long silence—"Was she well?"

"Yes; but she had lost her rosy-cheeks, and was not so blithe as when she first came to the porched-house."

"Did her husband treat her ill?"

"Na, na; he petted her like a spoilt child; yet she never seemed happy, or contented-like."

"What made her unhappy then?"

"He could na' just tell—women were queer creturs. Mayhap it was being an old man's wife that fretted her, and that was but natural, seeing that a pretty young thing like her might have got a husband nearer her own age, which, for sartin, would ha' been more to her taste."

"Was she likely to have any family?"

"No signs o' the like. It had na' pleased the Lord to multiply Noah's seed upon the earth."

"Was he stingy?"

"Na, na; they had allers plenty to eat. He was a kind master, an' good pay. There was only their two selves, and Mrs. Cotton was dressed like a lady, and had everything brave and new about her; but she looked mortal pale and thin, an' he b'lieved that she was in the consumption."

The man went his way, and the old woman talked to Mary about her daughter half the night.

"She was always discontented with her lot," she remarked, "when single. Change of circumstances seldom changed the disposition. Perhaps it was Sophy's own fault that she was not happy."

Mary thought that her mother was right; but she felt so anxious about her sister, that she determined to leave her mother, for a few days, to the care of a kind neighbor, and walk over to F—, to ascertain how matters really stood. But her mother became seriously ill, which hindered her from putting this scheme into practice; and her uneasiness on her account banished Sophy and her affairs out of her mind.

Other events soon took place that made a material alteration in their circumstances. Mr. Rollins, their benefactor, died suddenly abroad, and, leaving no will, the pension allowed to Mrs. Grimshawe died with him. His nephew and heir had given them, through his steward, orders to quit their present abode, and poverty and the workhouse stared them in the face.

Hearing of their distress, Noah Cotton came over himself to see them, and generously offered them a home with him and his wife as long as they lived. This was done so kindly, that the sick woman forgot all her old prejudices, and she and Mary thankfully accepted his offer. But when the time came for their removal, the old woman was too ill to be taken from her bed, and the surly steward reluctantly consented that she might remain a few days longer.

Mary was anxious to leave the house. Since the appearance of old Mason's ghost, a most unpleasant notoriety was attached to it, and the most disorderly scenes were constantly being enacted beneath its roof. Persons had been robbed to a considerable amount upon the road leading to —, which at last attracted the attention of the tardy magistrates, and a large reward was offered for the apprehension of the person who performed the principal part in this disgraceful drama. Still, no discovery was made, until one night Bob Mason was shot by Tom Weston, who had sworn to take the ghost alive or dead. The striking resemblance this profligate young man bore to his father had enabled him to deceive many into the belief that he was the person he represented. His mother, who was not in the secret, had never been on good terms with her son since he had personated the ghost; and the remarks he made upon his father she considered as peculiarly insulting to herself, and his dreadful end drove her mad, and this nest of iniquity was broken up. Such is the end of the wicked.

Let us now relate what had happened at the Porched House, to change the worldly Sophy Grimshawe into a pale and care-worn

woman. She did not love Noah Cotton, when she consented to become his wife ; but he was superior to her in wealth and station, and his presence inspired her with respect and awe. He was grave and taciturn ; but to her he was invariably generous and kind. Every indulgence and luxury he could afford was lavishly bestowed on his young wife ; and if he did not express his attachment with the ardor of a youthful lover, he paid her a thousand little tender attentions which sufficiently proved the depth of his affection and esteem.

He was grateful to her for marrying him ; and Sophy was not insensible to his efforts to render her comfortable and happy. But happy she was not, nor was ever likely to be.

Noah was a solitary man—had been so from his youth. He had been accustomed to live so many years with his old mother, and to mix so little with his neighbors, that it had made him silent and unsociable. After the first week of their marriage, he had particularly requested his young wife to try and conform to his domestic habits, and she endeavored, for some time, to obey him. But, at her age, and with her taste for show and gaiety, it was a difficult matter. Yet, after a while, she mechanically sank into the same dull apathy, and neither went from home, nor invited a guest into the house.

Twelve months passed away in this melancholy, joyless sort of existence, when an old woman and her daughter came to reside in a cottage near them. Mrs. Martin was a kind, gossiping old body ; her daughter Sarah, though some years older than Mrs. Cotton, was lively and very pretty, and gained a tolerably comfortable living for herself and her mother by dress-making. They had once or twice spoken to Sophy, on her way to the Methodist chapel, but never when her husband was present, and she was greatly taken by their manners and appearance.

"Noah, dear," she said, pressing his arm caressingly, as they were coming home one Wednesday evening from the aforesaid chapel, "may I invite Mrs. Martin and her daughter Sarah to drink tea with us ? They are strangers, and it would but be kind and neighborly to show them some little attention."

"By no means, Sophy," he cried, with a sudden start ; "these people shall not enter my house."

"But why?"

"I have my reasons. They are no friends of mine. They are

no strangers to me. They lived here long ago, and were forced to leave the place, after her son, a mischievous, turbulent fellow, was hung."

"Mrs. Martin's son hung!—what for? I thought they had been decent, respectable people!"

"There is no judging people by appearance," said Noah, bitterly. "I look a decent fellow, yet I have been a great sinner in my early days. And, with regard to these Martins, the less you have to do with them, Sophy, the better. I tell you, once for all, I will have no intimacy with them."

He spoke in a sterner voice than he had ever before used to his young wife. Sophy was piqued and hurt by his look and manner; and though she felt very curious to ask a thousand questions about these Martins, and on what score they had given him such offence, Noah grew so cross, and spoke so angrily whenever she alluded to the subject, that she thought it most prudent to hold her tongue.

From the hour that these Martins came to reside at F—, Noah Cotton seemed a different creature. He was more sullen and reserved, and his attendance at the chapel was more frequent. His countenance, always pale and care-worn, now wore a troubled and anxious expression, and his athletic form wasted until he became perfectly haggard—the very spectre of his former self.

In spite of his stern prohibition, Sophy, if she did not ask the Martins to the house, often, during her husband's absence, slipped in to chat and gossip with them. Ere long, her own countenance underwent a visible change, and her wasted figure and neglected dress led a stranger to suspect that she was either in a decline, or suffering from great mental depression.

Several weeks elapsed, and Mrs. Cotton had not been seen outside her dwelling by any of the neighbors. Mrs. Martin and Sarah wondered what ailed her, and both at length concluded that she must be seriously ill. But, as no doctor was seen visiting at the house, and Noah went about his farm as usual, this could hardly be the case. They were puzzled, and knew not what to think. At last, on the day that Noah went over to —, in order to remove Mrs. Grimshawe and Mary to his own abode, the mystery was solved, and Sophy came across the road to visit her neighbors.

"Mercy, child! what aileth thee?" cried the old woman, hobbling to meet her, perfectly astonished at the melancholy alteration which a few weeks of seclusion had made in Mrs. Cotton's appearance.

"You are ill, Mrs. Cotton," said Sarah, placing the easy-chair for her guest beside the fire.

"I have not felt well for some time," returned Sophy, trying to seem composed; "and now, the alarming illness of my poor mother has quite upset me. I would have gone with Noah to —— to see her, but indeed I was not able,"—and she burst into tears.

"How long hath she been sick?" asked the inquisitive old dame.

"Only a few days. Noah took the horse and cart to fetch her and Mary home to live with us. It is kind of Noah—very kind. But, God forgive me! I almost wish they mayn't come."

"Why child, it would cheer thee up a bit. I am sure thee wantest some one to take care o' thee."

"I would rather be alone," sighed the young wife.

"What has come over thee, Sophy Cotton?" said the old woman coming up to her and laying her hand on her shoulder, while she peered earnestly into her face. "I never saw such a cruel change in a young cretur in the course of a few weeks! But there may be a cause—a natural cause," and she smiled significantly.

"No, no, thank goodness! You are wrong—quite wrong, Mrs. Martin. No child of mine will ever sport upon my threshold, or gather daisies beside my door; and I am thankful—so thankful, that it is so!"

"That's hardly in natur'. Most o' woman-kind love young children—'specially their own."

"My dear Mrs. Cotton," said Sarah, soothingly, "you look ill and miserable—do tell us what makes you so unhappy."

"Indeed, Sarah, I can't." And Sophy wept afresh.

"Is Noah cross to you?"

"Quite the reverse—he's the kindest of men."

"He looks very stern."

"His looks belie him."

"And do you love him?"

"If I did not, I should not be so miserable;" and Sephy laid her head down upon her knees and wept aloud.

"Mrs. Cotton, you distress us greatly," continued Sarah, taking her cold, passive hand. "Won't you tell a friend and neighbor the reason of this grief?"

But Sophy only wept as if her heart were breaking. The mother and daughter looked at each other.

The old woman returned again to the charge :

" Tell one who loves thee like a mother." A deep, long-drawn sigh was the only answer.

" Speak out your mind, dear," said Sarah, pressing affectionately the thin, wasted hand that lay so passively within her own. " It will ease your heart."

" Ah, if I thought you would tell no one," and Sophy raised her death-pale face, and fixed her earnest eyes mournfully upon her interrogator, " I would confide to you my trouble ; but oh, if you were so cruel as to betray me, it would drive me mad."

" Sure we can be trusted, Mistress Cotton," and the old woman drew herself up with an air of offended dignity. " What interest could Sarah and I have to betray thee ? we be no idle gossips going clacking from house to house about matters that don't concern us. What good could it do us to blab the secrets of other folk?"

" It is only anxiety for your welfare, dear Mrs. Cotton," whispered Sarah, " that makes us wish to know what it is that troubles you."

" I believe you, my kind friends," replied Sophy. " I know I should feel better if I had the thing off my mind. It is dreadful to bear such a burden alone."

" Does not your husband know it?"

" That is what occasions me such grief ; I dare not tell him what vexes me ; I once hinted at it, and I thought he would have gone mad. You wonder why I look so pale and thin ; how can it be otherwise, when I never get a sound night's rest?"

" What keeps you awake?" exclaimed both women in a breath.

" My husband ! He does nothing but rave all night in his sleep about some person he murdered years ago."

The women exchanged significant glances.

" Oh, if you could but hear his dreadful cries—the piteous moans he makes—the frantic prayers he puts up to God to forgive him for his great crime, and take him out of the fires of hell, it would make your hair stand on end ; it makes me shiver and tremble all over with fear. And then to see, by the dim light of the rush candle, (for he never sleeps in the dark,) the big drops of sweat that stand upon his brow and trickle down his ghastly face ; to hear him grind and gnash his teeth in despair, and howl in a wild sort of agony, as he strikes at the walls with his clenched fists; it would make you pray, Mrs. Martin, as I do, for the light of day. Yes,

yes, it is killing me—I know it is ; it is horrible to live in constant dread of the coming night—to shrink in terror from the husband in whose bosom you should rest in peace."

"Doth this happen often?" asked Mrs. Martin.

"Every night for the last two months ; ever since you came to live near us. He used always to be afraid of the dark, and sometimes made a noise in his sleep, but he never acted as he does now. Once I asked him what he was dreaming about, and why he always fancied that he had murdered some one, when asleep. He flew at me like a maniac, and swore that he would throttle me if he ever heard me ask such foolish questions again ; that people could not commit murder in their sleep—that they must be wide awake to shed blood."

"Ay, ay," said the old woman, with a malignant smile, "doubtless he knows. Does he ever mention the name of the person he murdered, in his sleep?"

"Constantly. Did you ever, Mrs. Martin, hear of a person of the name of Carlos?"

But the old woman did not answer. A change had passed over her face, as with a cry of triumph she sprang from her seat and clapped her hands in an ecstasy of joy—it might rather be termed of gratified revenge. "Ay! 'tis out at last! tis out at last! My God! I thank thee! I thank thee! Yes, yes, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord!' My Bill! my brave Bill! and thee hadst to die for this man's crime! but God has righted thee at last—at last, in spite of this villain's evidence, who swore that thy knife did the deed, when he plunged it himself into the rich man's heart. Ha, ha, I shall live to be revenged upon him—I shall, I shall!"

"What have I done?" shrieked the unhappy wife. "I have betrayed my husband into the hands of his enemies!" and she sunk down at the old woman's feet like one dead. Gloating over her anticipated revenge, Mrs. Martin spurned the prostrate form with her foot, as she scornfully commanded her more humane daughter "to see after Noah Cotton's dainty wife, while she went to the magistrate's to make a deposition of what she had heard."

Shocked beyond measure at what she had heard and seen, ashamed of her mother's violence, and sorry for Sophia's unhappy disclosure ; as she well knew that, whether the actual murderer of Squire Carlos or only an accomplice, her brother was a bad man,

who deserved his fate. Sarah tenderly raised the fainting Sophy from the ground, and placed her on her own bed. Long ere the miserable young woman returned to a consciousness of the result of her own imprudence, her husband, who had returned from — without her sister or mother, was on his way to the county jail.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE NIGHT ALONE.

SOPHY returned to her desolate home, the moment she recovered her senses ; for the sight of the Martins filled her mind with inexpressible anguish. On entering the little keeping-room, she shut the door, and covering her head with her apron, sat down in Noah's chair by the old oak table, on which she buried her face in her hands, and remained silent and astonished during the rest of the day.

"Shall I sleep with you to-night, Mrs. Cotton?" said Sarah Martin, in a kind, soft voice ; as towards the close of that long, blank day, she opened the door, and looked in upon

"That desolate widow—but not of the dead."

"No, Sarah, thank you ; I would rather be alone," was the brief reply.

Sarah lingered with her hand still on the lock. Sophy shook her head impatiently, as much as to say, "Go, go ; I must be obeyed ; I know the worst now, and wish no second person to look upon my remorse—my grief—my bitter humiliation." Sarah understood it all. The door slowly closed, and Sophy was once more alone.

Many hours passed away, and the night without, dark and starless, had deepened around her cold hearth, and Sophy still sat there with her head bowed upon the table, in a sort of despairing stupor, unconscious of everything but the overwhelming sense of intense misery.

Then came painful thoughts of her past life ; her frequent quarrels with her good sisters ; her unkindness and neglect to her suffering mother ; her ingratitude to God ; and the discontented repinings over her humble lot, which had led to her present situation. She

had sold herself for money ; and the wealth she had so criminally coveted, was the price of blood, and from its envied possession no real enjoyment had flowed. The poverty and discomfort of her mother's cottage were small, when compared to the heart-crushing misery she at that moment endured.

Then she thought of her husband ; thought of her selfish imprudence in betraying his guilt—that in his approaching trial she must appear as a principal witness against him ; and that her testimony would, in all probability, consign him to the scaffold.

She felt that, however great the magnitude of his crime, he had bitterly repented of it long ago ; that he had suffered untold agonies of remorse and contrition ; that his punishment had been more than his reason could well bear ; that he had suffered more from the pangs of conscience than he ever could experience from the hands of man. All his kindness to her, since the day she became his wife, returned to her with a sense of tenderness she never had felt for him before. She never suspected how deeply she loved him, till she was forced to part from him for ever ; and her soul melted within her, and she shed floods of tears.

She saw him alone in the dark dungeon, surrounded by the frightful phantoms of a guilty conscience, with no pitying voice to soothe his overwhelming grief, or speak words of peace or comfort to his tortured spirit, and she only exclaimed, “I will go to him to-morrow ; I will at least say to him, ‘I pity you, my dear, unhappy husband. I pray you to forgive me for the great evil I have brought upon you.’”

And with this thought uppermost in her mind, the miserable girl, overcome by her long fast, and worn out by the excitement of the past day, fell into a profound sleep.

And lo, in the black darkness of that dreary room, she thought she beheld a bright, shining light. It spread and brightened, and flowed all around her like the purest moonlight, and the centre condensed into a female form, smiling and beautiful, which advancing, laid a soft hand upon her head, and whispered in tones of ineffable sweetness—

“Pray—pray for *him* and thyself, and thou shalt find peace.” And the face and the voice were those of her dead sister Charlotte, and a sudden joy shot into her heart, and the vision faded away, and she awoke, and behold it was a dream.

And Sophy rose up, and sank down upon the ground, and buried

her face in her hands, and tried to pray, for the first time in her life, earnestly and truthfully, in the firm belief that He to whom she addressed her petition was able to help and save her, in her hour of need. Few and imperfect were her words ; but they flowed from the heart, and He who looks upon the heart, gave an answer of peace.

Memory, ever faithful in the hour of grief, supplied her with a long catalogue of the sins and follies of a misspent life. Deeply she acknowledged the vanity and nothingness of those things in which she had once felt such an eager childish delight ; and she asked forgiveness of her Maker for a thousand faults that she had never acknowledged as faults before.

The world to the prosperous has many attractions. It is their paradise, they seek for no other ; and to part with its enjoyments comprises the bitterness of death. Even the poor work on, and hope for better days. It is only the wounded in spirit, and sad of heart, that reject its allurements, and turn with their whole soul to God. Out of much tribulation they are new-born to life—that better life promised to them by their Lord and Saviour.

Sophy was still upon her knees, when the grey light of a rainy October morning gradually strengthened into day. Gloomy and lowering, it seemed to regard her with a cheerless scowl as, shivering with cold and excitement, she unclosed the door, and stepped forth into the moist air.

"How like my earthly destiny!" she sighed. "But there is a sun behind the dark clouds, and hope exists, even for a wretch like me."

The sound of horses' hoofs approaching rapidly struck upon her ear, and the next moment she had caught hold of the bridle of the nearest rider. They were the constables, who had conducted Noah to prison, returning to the village.

"Tell me," she cried, in a voice which much weeping had rendered hoarse, and almost inarticulate, "something about my poor husband—will he be hung?"

"Nothing more certain," replied the person thus addressed. "Small chance of escape for him. The foolish fellow has confessed all."

"Then he did really commit the murder?"

"Worse than that, Mistress, he drew his own neck out of the noose, and let another fellow suffer the death he richly deserved."

By his own account, hanging is too good for such a monster. He should be burnt alive."

"May God forgive him!" exclaimed Sophy, wringing her hands.
"Alas! alas! He was a kind, good man to me."

"Don't take on, my dear, after that fashion," said the other horseman, with a knowing leer. "You were no mate for a fellow like him. Young and pretty as you are, you will soon get a better husband."

Sophy turned from the speaker with a sickening feeling of disgust at him and his ribald jest, and staggered back into the house. She was not many minutes in making up her mind to go to her husband; and hastily packing up a few necessaries in a small bundle, she called the old serving man, who had lived with her husband for many years, and bade him harness the horse and drive her to B—

The journey was long and dreary, for it rained the whole day. Sophy did not care for the rain; the dulness of the day was more congenial to her present feelings: the gay beams of the sun would have seemed a mockery to her bitter sorrow.

As they passed through the village, a troop of idle boys followed them into the turnpike road, shouting, at the top of their voices—

"There goes Noah Cotton's wife!—the murderer's wife! Look how grand she be in her fine chaise."

"Ay," responded some human fiend, through an open window, loud enough to reach the ears of the grief-stricken woman; "but pride will have a fall."

The penitent Sophy wept afresh at these insults. "Oh," she sighed, "I deserve all this. I was too proud. But they don't know how miserable I am, or they would not causelessly inflict upon me another wound."

"Doan't take on so, Missus," said the good old serving-man, who, though he said nothing to her on the subject, felt keenly for her distress. "Surely it's no fault o' yourn. You worn't born, I guess, when Measter did this fearsome deed. I ha' lived with Noe these fourteen years, an' I never 'spect'd him o' the like. He's about as queat a man as ever I seed. He wor allers kind to the dumb beasts on the farm, an' you know, Missus, that's a good sign. Some men are sich tyrants, that they must vent their bad humors on suffin. If the survant doan't catch it, why the poor dumb creatures in their power dew. Now, I say, Noe wor a good

Measter, both to man an' beast, an' I pray they may find him innocent yet."

Sophy had no hopes on the subject. She felt in her soul that he was guilty. The loquacity of honest Ben pained her, and in order to keep him silent, she remained silent herself, until they reached the metropolitan town of the country, in which the assizes were always held, which was not until late in the evening.

She could gain no admittance within the jail that night, and Sophy put up at a small but neat public house near at hand. From the widow who kept the house, she heard that the assizes were to be held the following week, and that there was no doubt but what the prisoner, Noah Cotton, would be found guilty of death. But her son, who was the jailor, thought it more than probable that he would cheat the hangman, as he had scarcely tasted food since he had been in prison. Mrs. Cotton then informed the widow that she was the wife of the prisoner, and confided to her enough of her history to create for her a strong interest in the breast of the good woman. She did not fail to convey the same feeling with regard to Sophia, to her son, who promised her an early interview with her husband on the following morning, and to do all for her and him that lay in his power.

Cheered with this promise, the weary traveller retired to her chamber, and slept soundly. Before six in the morning, she found herself in the presence of her husband.

CHAPTER XL.

THE MEETING.

"My husband! my dear husband! and it was my imprudence that brought you to this!" cried Sophy, as she fell weeping upon the neck of the felon, clasping him in her arms, and kissing with passionate grief the tears from his haggard, unshaven face.

"Hush, my precious lamb," he replied, folding her in his embrace. "It was not you who betrayed me, it was the voice of God speaking through a guilty conscience. I am thankful!—oh, so thankful that it has taken place—that the dreadful secret is known at last! I enjoyed last night the first quiet sleep I have known for years—slept without being haunted by him!"

"And with death staring you in the face, Noah?"

"What is death, Sophy, to the agonies I have endured?—the fear of detection by day—the eyes of the dead glaring upon me all night? No; I feel happy, in comparison, now. I have humbled myself to the dust—have wept and prayed for pardon; and oh, my sweet wife, I trust I am forgiven—have found peace——"

"When was this?" whispered Sophy.

"The night before last."

"How strange!" murmured Sophy. "We were together in spirit that night. I never knew how dear you were to me, Noah, until that night. How painful it would be to me to part with you for ever!"

"It was cruel and selfish in me, Sophy, to join your fate to mine—a monster, stained with the blackest crimes. But I thought myself secure from detection—thought that my sin would never find me out, that I had managed matters with such incomparable skill that discovery was impossible, that the wide earth did not contain a witness of my guilt. Fool that I was. The voice of blood never sleeps; from out the silent dust it calls night and day in its ceaseless appeals for vengeance at the throne of God. I have heard it in the still, dark night, and above the roar of the crowd in the swarming streets of London at noon-day; and ever felt a shadowy hand upon my throat, and a cry in my ear—*Thou art the man!*

"There were moments when, goaded to madness by that voice, I felt inclined to give myself up to justice; but pride withheld me, and the dismal fear of those haunting fiends chasing me through eternity, was a hell I dared not encounter. My soul was parched with an unquenchable fire; I was too hardened to pray."

"Noah," said Sophy, looking earnestly into his hollow eyes, "you are not a cruel man; you were kind to your old mother—have been very kind to me. How came *you* to commit such a dreadful crime?"

The man groaned heavily, as he replied—

"It was pride—a foolish, false shame of low birth and honest poverty, that led me to the desperate act."

"I have felt something of this," said Sophy, and her tears flowed afresh. "I now see that sinful thoughts are but the seeds of sinful deeds, ripened and matured by bad passions. Perhaps I only need-

ed a stronger temptation to be guilty of crimes as great as that of which you stand charged?"

"Sophy," said her husband, solemnly, "I wish my fate to serve as a warning to others. Listen to me. In the long winter evenings after my mother died, I wrote a history of my life. I did this in fear and trembling, lest any human eye should catch me at my task, and learn my secret. But now that I am called upon to answer for my crime, I wish to make this sad history beneficial to my fellow-creatures."

"After I am gone, dear Sophy, and you return to F——, lose no time in taking to your home and making comfortable your poor afflicted mother and sister for the remainder of their days. This key"—and he drew one from his pocket—"opens the old-fashioned bureau in our sleeping-room. In the drawer nearest to the window you will find my will, in which I have settled upon you all that I possess. I have no relations who can dispute with you the legal right to this property. There is a slight indenture in the wood that forms the bottom of this drawer; press it hard with your thumb, and draw it back at the same time, and it will disclose an inner place of concealment, in which you will find a roll of Bank o' England^{notes} to the amount of £500. This was the money stolen from Mr. Carlos the night I murdered him. It is stained with his blood, and I have never looked at it or touched it since I placed it there, upwards of twenty years ago. I never had the heart to use it, and I wish it to be returned to the family."

"In this drawer you will likewise find the papers containing an account of the circumstances that led to the commission of the crime. You and Mary can read them together; and oh! as you read, pity and pray for the unhappy murderer."

He stopped, and wiped the drops of perspiration from his brow; and the distress of his young wife almost equalled his own, as she kissed away the tears that streamed down his pale face. His breath came in quick, convulsive sobs, and he trembled in every limb.

"I feel ill," he said, in a faint voice; "these recollections make me so. There is a strange fluttering at my heart, as if a bird beat its wings within my breast. Sophy, my wife—my blessed wife! can this be death?"

Sophy screamed with terror, as he reeled suddenly forward, and fell to the ground at her feet. Her cries brought the jailer to her

assistance. They raised the felon, and laid him on his bed ; but life was extinct. The agitation of his mind had been too great for his exhausted frame. The criminal had died self-condemned under the arrows of remorse.

CHAPTER XLI.

THE MURDERER'S MANUSCRIPT.

Who am I, that I should write a book ? a nameless, miserable and guilty man. It is because these facts stare me in the face, and the recollection of my past deeds goads me to madness, that I would fain unburthen my conscience by writing this record of myself.

I do not know what parish in England had the discredit of being my native place. I can just remember, in the far off days of my early childhood, coming with my mother to live at F—, a pretty rural village in the fine agricultural county of S—. My mother was called Mrs. Cotton, and was reputed to be a widow, and I was her only child. Whether she had ever been married, the gossips of the place considered very doubtful. At that period of my life, this important fact was a matter to me of perfect indifference.

I was a strong, active, healthy boy, quite able to take my own part and defend my own rights, against any lad of my own age who dared to ask impertinent questions.

The great man of the village—Squire Carlos as he was called—lived in a grand hall, surrounded by a stately park, about a mile from F—, on the main road leading to London. His plantations and game preserves extended for many miles along the public thoroughfare, and my mother kept the first porter's lodge nearest the village.

The Squire had been married, but his wife had been dead for some years. He was a tall, handsome man, in middle life, and bore the character of having been a very gay man in his youth. It was whispered, among the aforesaid village gossips, that these indiscretions had shortened the days of his lady, who loved him passionately ; at any rate, she died of consumption before she had completed her twenty-fourth year, without leaving an heir to the estate, and the Squire never married again.

Mr. Carlos often came to the lodge—so often, that he seldom passed through the gate on his way to and from the Hall, without

stepping in to chat with my mother. This was when he was alone, accompanied by strangers, he took no notice of us at all. My mother generally sent me to open the gate. The gentlemen used to call me a pretty, curly-headed boy, and I got a great deal of small change from them on hunting days. I remember one afternoon, when opening the gate for a large party of gentlemen, with the Squire at their head, that one of them tapped my cheek with his riding whip, and exclaimed—

“By Jove! Carlos, that’s a handsome boy.”

“Oh, yes,” said another; “the very picture of his father.”

And the Squire laughed, and they all laughed; and when I went back into the lodge, I showed my mother a handful of silver I had received, and said—

“Mother, who was my father?”

“Mr. Cotton, of course,” she answered, gravely, “but why, Noah, do you ask?”

“Because I want to know something about him.”

But my mother did not choose to answer impertinent questions; and, though greatly addicted to telling long stories, she seemed to know very little about the private memoirs of Mr. Cotton. She informed me, however, that he had been a fellow-servant with her in the Squire’s employ; that he quarrelled with her shortly after I was born, and left her, and she did not know what had become of him, but she believed he went to America, and from his long silence, she concluded that he had been dead for some years; that out of respect for his services, Mr. Carlos had placed her in her present comfortable situation, and that I must show my gratitude to Mr. Carlos for all he had done for us, by the most dutiful and obliging behaviour. I likewise learned from her, that I was called Noah, after my father. ◎

This brief sketch of our family history was perfectly satisfactory to me at that time. I remember feeling a strong interest in my unknown progenitor, and used to castle-build and speculate about his fate.

In the meanwhile, I found it good policy strictly to obey my mother’s injunctions, and the alacrity which I displayed in waiting upon the Squire and his guests, never failed in securing a harvest of small coin, which gave me no small importance in the eyes of the lads in the village, who waited upon me with the same diligence that I did upon the Squire, in order, no doubt, to come in for a

share of the spoil. Thus a love of acquiring without labor, and of obtaining admirers without any merit of my own, was early fostered in my heart, which led to a taste for fine dress and a boastful display of superiority, by no means consistent with my low birth and humble means.

In due time I was placed by Mr. Carlos at the village school, and the wish to be thought the first scholar in the school, and excel all my companions, stimulated me to learn with a diligence and determination of purpose, which soon placed me at the top of my class.

There was only one boy in the school that dared to dispute my supremacy, and he had by nature what I acquired with great toil and difficulty—a most retentive memory, which enabled him to repeat, after once reading, a task which took me several days of hard study to learn. How I envied him this faculty, which I justly considered possessed no real merit in itself, but was a natural gift. It was not learning with him, it was mere reading. He would just throw a glance over the book, after idling half his time in play; and then walk up to the master, and say it off without making a single blunder. He was the most careless, reckless boy in the school, and certainly the cleverest. I hated him. I could not bear that he should equal, and even surpass me, when he took no pains to learn.

If the master had done him common justice, I should never have stood above him. But for some reason, best known to himself, he always favored me, and snubbed Bill Martin, who, in return, played him a thousand impish tricks, and taught the other boys to rebel against his authority. Bill called me the *obsneakious* young gentleman, and Mr. Bullen, the master, the Squire's Toady.

There was constant war between this lad and me. We were pretty equally matched in strength; for the victor of to-day, was sure to be beaten on the morrow; the boys generally took part with Martin. Such characters are always popular, and he had many admirers in the school. My aversion to this boy made me restless and unhappy. I really longed to do him some injury. Once, after I had given him a sound drubbing, he called me “a base-born puppy! a beggar, eating the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table.”

Foaming with rage—for a wound to my pride was far worse in my estimation than any personal injury—I demanded what he

meant by such insulting language ; and he sneered in my face, and told me to go home and ask my *virtuous* mother, as she, doubtless, was better qualified to give me the information I desired. And I did ask my mother, and she told me "I was a foolish boy to heed such nonsense, spoken in anger by a lad I had just thrashed ; that Bill Martin was a bad fellow, and envious of my being better off than himself ; that if I listened to such senseless lies about her, it would make her miserable, and I should never know a happy hour myself."

I felt that this was true. I loved my mother better than anything in the world. Her affection and kindness to me was boundless. She always welcomed me home with a smiling face, and I never received a blow from her hand in my life.

My mother was about six-and-thirty years of age. She must have been beautiful in youth, for she was still very pretty. Her countenance was mild and gentle, and she was scrupulously neat and clean. I was proud of my mother. I saw no woman in her rank that could be compared with her ; and any insult offered to her I resented with my whole heart and strength. I was too young to ask of her an explanation of the frequency of the Squire's visits to our house ; and why, when he came, I was generally dispatched on some errand to the village ; and had the real explanation been given, I would not have believed it.

Mr. Carlos had no family, but his nephew and niece came twice a-year to spend their holidays at the old hall. Master Walter, who was his heir, was a fine, manly fellow, about my own age ; and Miss Ella, who was two years younger, was a sweet, fair girl, as beautiful as she was amiable.

I had just completed my fourteenth year, and was tall and stout for my age. Whenever these young people were at the Hall, I was dressed in my best clothes, and went up every day to wait upon them. If they went fishing, I carried their basket and rods, baited their hooks, and found out the best places for their sport, and managed the light row-boat if they wished to extend their rambles further down the river.

Often we left boat and tackle, and scampered through the groves and meadows. I found Miss Ella birds' nests and wild strawberries, and we used to laugh and chat over our adventures on terms of perfect equality—making a feast of our berries, and telling fairy tales and ghost stories. Not unfrequently we frightened ourselves

with these wild legions, and ran back to the boat, and bright river, and the gay sunshine, as if the evil spirits we had conjured up were actually after us, and preparing to chase us through the dark wood. And then, when we gained the boat, we would stop and pant, and laugh at our own fears.

Walter Carlos was a capital shot, and very fond of all kinds of field sports. His skill with a gun made me very ambitious to excel as a sportsman. Mr. Carlos was very particular about his game. He kept several gamekeepers, and was very severe in punishing all poachers who dared to trespass on his guarded rights—yet, when his nephew expressed a wish that I might accompany him in his favorite diversion, to my utter astonishment and delight, he took out a licence for me, and presented me with a handsome fowling-piece, which I received on my birthday from his own hand.

"This, Noah," he said, "you may consider in the way af business, as it is my intention to bring you up for a gamekeeper."

Oh, what a proud day that was to me! With what delight I handled my newly-acquired treasure! How earnestly I listened to Joe, the head gamekeeper's directions about the proper use of it! How I bragged and boasted to my village associates of the game that *I and Master Walter* had bagged in those sacred preserves that they dared not enter, for fear of those mysterious objects of terror—man traps and spring guns!

"The Guy—he thinks that no one can shoot but himself," sneered Bill Martin, as he turned to a train of blackguards that were lounging with him against the pales of the porter's lodge, as I returned one evening to my mother's with my gun over my shoulder, and a hare and brace of pheasants in my hand. "I guess there be others who can shoot hares and pheasants, without the Squire's leave, as well as he. He fancies himself quite a gem-man, with that fine gun over his shoulder, and the Squire's licence in his pocket."

These insulting remarks stirred up the evil passions in my breast. My gun was unloaded, but I pointed it at my tormentor, and told him to be quiet, or I'd shoot him like a dog. "Shoot and be —— to you!" says he, "it's a better death than the gallows, and that's what you'll come to."

This speech was followed by a roar of coarse laughter from his companions.

"I shall live to see you hung first!" I cried, lowering the gun,

while a sort of prophetic vision of the far-off future swam before my sight. "The company you keep, and the bad language you use, are certain indications of the road on which you are travelling. I have too much self-respect to associate with a blackguard like you."

"Dirty pride and self-conceit should be the words you ought to use," quoth the impudent fellow. "My comrades are poor, but they arn't base-born sneaks like you."

With one blow I levelled him to the ground. Just at that moment the Squire rode up, and prevented further mischief. That Bill Martin was born to be my evil genius. I wished him dead a hundred times a day, and the thought familiarized my mind to the deed. He was the haunting fiend, ever at my side to tempt me to commit sin.

CHAPTER XLII.

MY FIRST LOVE.

MERE boy as I was, my heart had been deeply moved by the beauty of Miss Ella Carlos. I often waited upon her all day without feeling the least fatigue ; and at night my dreams were full of her. I don't think that she was wholly insensible to my devotion, but it seemed a matter of amusement and curiosity to her.

I remember, one day—oh, how should I forget it ! for it formed a strong link of evil in my unhappy destiny—that I was sitting on the bank of the river, making a cross-bow for my pretty young lady out of a tough piece of ash—for she wanted to play at shooting at a mark, and she and Master Walter were sitting beside me watching the progress of my work—when the latter said—

"I wish I were two years older."

"Why do you wish that, Watty?" asked Ella.

"Because papa says I am to go into the army at sixteen, and I do so long to be a soldier."

"But you might be killed."

"And I might live to be a great man like the Duke of Wellington," said he, with boyish enthusiasm. "So, Madame Ella, set the one chance against the other."

"But it requires more than mere courage, Walter, to make a

great man like him. I have heard papa say—and he fought under him in Spain—that it takes a century to produce a Wellington."

"I think papa did the Duke great injustice," said Walter. "There is not one of the heroes of antiquity to compare with him. Julius Cæsar was not a greater conqueror than Napoleon, and Wellington beat him. But great as the Duke is, Miss Ella, he was a boy once—a soldier of fortune, as I shall be—and who knows but that I may win as great a name."

"It is a good thing to have a fine conceit of one's-self," said the provoking girl. "And what would you like to be, Noah?" she cried, with a playful smile, and turning her bright, blue eyes on me. "An Oliver Cromwell at least, as he was a man of the people; and you seem to have as good a headpiece as my valiant brother."

"I wish," I said with a sigh, which I could not repress, "that I were a gentleman."

"Perhaps you are as near obtaining your wish as Walter is. And why, Noah, do you wish to be a gentleman? You are much better off, if you only knew it, as you are."

I shook my head.

"Come answer me, Noah; I want to know."

"Indeed, Miss Ella, I cannot."

"You can, and shall."

I looked earnestly into her beautiful face.

"Oh, Miss Ella, can you ask that?"

"Why not? Your reasons, Mr. Noah—your reasons."

My eyes sought the ground. I felt the color glow upon my cheeks, and I answered in a voice trembling with emotion—"Because if I were a gentleman, Miss Ella, I might then hope that you would love me, and that I might one day ask you for my wife."

The young thing sprang from the ground as if stung by a viper, her eyes flashing, and her cheek crimson with passion. "You are an impudent, vulgar fellow," she cried. "You dare to think of marrying a lady! You, who have not even fortune to atone for your plebeian name and low origin! Never presume to speak to me again!"

She swept from us in high dudgeon. Her brother laughed at what he termed a funny joke. I was silent, and for ever. The subject was the most important to me in life. That flash of dis-

dain from the proud, bright eye—that haughty, sarcastic curve of her beautiful young lip, had annihilated it. Yet her words awoke a strange idea in my mind, that finally lured me onward to destruction. They led me to imagine that the want of fortune was the only real obstacle between me and the attainment of my presumptuous hopes—that common as my name was, I only required the magic of gold to enoble it; and proud as she was, if I were but rich, even she would condescend to listen to me, and become mine.

From that hour Miss Ella walked and talked with me no more. I saw her daily at the hall, but she never cast upon me a passing glance; or if chance threw us in the same path, she always turned disdainfully away. The distance which every hour widened between us only served to increase the passion that consumed me. I tried to feel indifferent to her scorn—in fact, to hate her, if I could; but my efforts in both cases proved abortive.

Shortly after this conversation, Mr. Walter joined the army, and Miss Ella accompanied her mother to France to finish her education; and I was placed under the head gamekeeper, to learn the art of detecting snares and catching poachers.

I filled the post assigned me with such credit to myself, and so completely to the satisfaction of my master, that after a few years, on the death of old Joe Hunter, I was promoted to his place, with a salary of one hundred pounds per annum, and the use of this cottage and farm rent free.

I now fancied myself an independent man, and my old crave for being a gentleman returned with double force; and though I had not seen Miss Ella for years, my boyish attachment was by no means diminished by absence. I determined to devote all my spare time to acquiring a knowledge of books. Our curate whs a poor and studious man; to him I made known my craving for mental improvement; and as my means were more than adequate to my simple wants, and I never indulged in low vices, I could afford to pay him well for instructing me in the arts and sciences;

If Mr. Abel found me a willing pupil, I found in him a kind, intellectual instructor. Would to God I had made him a confidant of the state of my mind, and given him the true motives which made me so eager to improve myself. But from boyhood I was silent and reserved, and preferred keeping my thoughts and opinions to myself. I never could share the product of my brain with another; and this unsociable secretiveness, though it invested me

with an outward decency of deportment, fostered a mental hypocrisy and self-deception far more destructive to true godliness than the most reckless vivacity.

Mr. Abel entertained a high respect for me—I was the model young man of the parish—and wherever he went, he spoke in terms of approbation of my talents, my integrity, my filial duty to my mother, and the laudable efforts I was making to raise myself in society. This was all very gratifying to my vanity. I firmly believed in the verity of my own goodness, and considered the good curate only did me justice.

Our conversation often turned on religious matters, but my orthodoxy was so correct, my outward conduct so unimpeachable, that my title to piety of a superior cast made not the least item in the long catalogue of my virtues. And the heart all this time—that veiled and guarded heart, whose motions none ever looked upon or suspected—was a blank moral desert—a spot in which every corrupt weed had ample space to spread and grow without let or hindrance.

As long as Mr. Abel remained in F——, I maintained the reputation I had acquired ; and long after he left us, I was a regular church-goer, and prosecuted my studies both at home and abroad. At that time my personal appearance was greatly in my favor ; and I was vain of my natural advantages. I loved to dress better, and appear as if I belonged to a higher grade than my village associates. This could not be done without involving considerable expense. I kept a handsome horse, and carried a handsome gun ; and I flattered myself that, when dressed in my green velvet shooting jacket, white cords, top boots, and with my hunting cap placed jauntily on my head, I was as handsome and gentlemanly-looking a young fellow as could be found in that part of the country.

I had just completed my twenty-third year when Miss Ella made her appearance once more at the hall. She was no longer a pretty child, but had grown into a lovely and accomplished woman. A feeling of despair, mingled with my admiration when she rode past me in the park, accompanied by a young gentleman and an elderly lady.

The gentleman was a younger brother, who afterwards died in India ; the lady was her mother. Miss Ella was mounted on a spirited horse, on which she sat to perfection—her nobly-proportioned

figure displayed to the best advantage by her elegant and closely-fitting dark-blue riding habit.

After they passed me, the elderly lady bent forward from her horse and said to her daughter, loud enough for me to hear, "Ella, who is that handsome young man—he looks like a gentleman."

"Far from that, mamma," returned the young lady, saucily, "it is my uncle's gamekeeper, Noah Cotton—the lad I once told you about. He is grown very handsome. But what a name! Noah!" and she laughed—such a merry, mocking laugh; "it is enough to drown any pretensions to good looks."

"How came you to know the man, Ella?" said her brother, gravely.

"Oh, George, you know Uncle is not over-particular. An aristocrat with regard to his game, and any infringement on his rights on that score; but a perfect democrat in his familiarity with his domestics and tenants. He used to send for this Noah to play with us during the holidays. He was a beautiful, curly-headed lad; and we treated him with too much condescension, but it was Uncle's fault; he should have known that the boy was no companion for young people in our rank. This saucy, spoilt boy, had not only the impudence to fall in love with me, but to tell me so to my face."

"The scoundrel!" muttered the young man.

"Of course I never spoke to him again. I complained to Uncle, and he only treated it as a joke. It is a pity," she added, in a less boastful and haughty tone, "that he is not a gentleman; he is a handsome, noble-looking peasant."

They rode out of hearing, leaving me rooted to the spot. The sudden turn in the path had hidden me from their observation, and brought them and the theme of their conversation too terribly near.

Miss Ella's description of me cut into my soul, and stung me like an adder. I pressed my hand upon my burning brain—upon my aching heart. I tried to tear her image from both. Vain effort! Passion had done its work effectually. The limning of years could not be effaced by the desecrating power of mortified vanity.

I saw her many times during that visit to the Hall; but, beyond raising my cap respectfully when she passed me, no word of recognition ever escaped from my lips. Once or twice, I thought, from

her manner, and the earnest way in which she regarded me, that she almost wished me to speak to her.

Her horse ran away with her one morning in the park, and she lost her seat, but received no serious injury. I caught the animal, and helped her to remount. Our eyes met, and she blushed very deeply, and her hand trembled as it lay for a moment in mine. Trifling as these circumstances were, they gave birth, at the time, to the most extravagant hopes, which filled me with a sort of ecstasy. I almost fancied that she loved me—she, the proud, high-born, beautiful lady. Alas! I knew little of the coquetry of woman's nature, or that a girl of her rank and fortune would descend to notice a poor lad like me, to gratify her own vanity and love of admiration.

I went home intoxicated with delight; and that night I dreamt I found a vast sum of gold beneath a pine-tree in one of the plantations, and that Ella Carlos had consented to become my wife. My vision of happiness was, however, doomed to fade. The next day Mrs. Carlos and her son and daughter left the Hall, and I did not see her again before she went.

For weeks after their departure I moped about in a listless, dispirited manner, loathing my menial occupation, and despising the low origin which formed an insurmountable barrier between me and the beautiful mistress of my heart.

I was soon roused from these unprofitable speculations, and called to take an active part in the common duties of my every-day life. Some desperadoes had broken into the preserves, and carried off a large quantity of game. Mr. Carlos vowed vengeance on the depredators, and reprimanded me severely for my neglect.

This galled my pride, and made me return with double diligence to my business. After watching for a few nights, I had every reason to believe that the poacher was no other than my old enemy Bill Martin, who, absent for several years in America, had suddenly reappeared in the village, and was constantly seen at the public house, in the company of a set of worthless, desperate characters. He had sunk into the low blackguard, and manifested his hatred to me by insulting me on all occasions. My dislike to this ruffian was too deep to find vent in words. I was always brooding over his injurious conduct, and planning schemes of vengeance.

One day, in going through the plantations, I picked up a large, American bowie-knife, with Bill Martin's name engraved upon the

handle. This I carefully laid by, hoping that it might prove useful on some future occasion.

Meanwhile, the game was nightly thinned ; and the caution and dexterity with which the poachers acted, baffled me and my colleagues in all our endeavors to surprise them in the act.

CHAPTER XLIII.

TEMPTATION.

"THAT Bill Martin is a desperate ruffian," said Mr. Carlos to me one morning, after we were returning to the Hall through the park. I had been watching in the preserves all night, but nothing had transpired, beyond the discovery of the bowie-knife, that could lead to the detection of the marauders. "I have no doubt that he and his gang are the party concerned in these nightly depredations ; but we want sufficient proof for their apprehension."

"Give Martin rope enough, and he'll hang himself," I replied. "He is fierce and courageous, but boastful and foolhardy. In order to astonish his companions, he'll commit some daring outrage, and betray himself. I will relax a little from our vigilance, to give him more confidence, and put him off his guard. It won't be long, depend upon it, before we have him safely lodged in — jail."

"Noah, my boy, you are a trump!" cried the Squire, throwing his arm familiarly across my shoulders. "It's a pity such talents as you possess should be wasted in watching hares and partridge."

I felt my heart beat, and my cheeks glow, and I thought of Miss Ella. "Was he going," I asked myself, "to place me in a more respectable situation?"

But no ; the generous fit passed away, and he broke into a harty laugh.

"D——e, Noah, I had half a mind to buy a commission for you, and make a soldier of you. But you had better remain as you are. That confounded name of Noah Cotton would spoil all. Who ever heard of a gentleman bearing such a cognomen? It is worse than Lord Byron's."

"Amas Cottle! Phœbus, what a name! What could tempt your mother to call you after the old patriarchal navigator? Ha! ha! it was a queer dodge."

"It was my father's name," said I, reddening ; for, besides being bitterly mortified and disappointed, I by no means relished the joke ; "and my father, though poor, was an honest man!"

"Both cases *rather* doubtful," said the Squire, laughing to himself. Then, slapping me pretty sharply on the shoulder, he said— "And what, my lad, do you know of your father?"

"Nothing, personally, to the best of my knowledge. I never saw him ; but my mother has told me a good deal about him."

"Humph!" said Mr. Carlos. "Did she tell you how much she was attached to Mister Noah Cotton, and how grieved she was to part with such a tender, loving husband?"

"Sir, Mr. Carlos—do you mean to insult me by speaking in this jeering way of my parents?"

"Not in the least, Noah ; so don't look at me with that fierce black eye as if you took me for a hare or a pheasant, or, worse than either, for Bill Martia. *You* ought to know that I am your friend —have been your friend from a child ; and if you continue to conduct yourself as you have done, will befriend you for life."

I looked, I am sure, very foolish, for I felt his words rankling in my heart ; and though I affected to laugh, I strode on by his side in silence—the chain of obligations he had wound around me, and my dependence upon him tightening about me, and galling me at every step. He certainly saw that I was offended ; for, stopping at the gate that led from the park to the Hall-gardens, and where our roads separated, he said, rather abruptly—

"You are angry with me, Noah?"

"With you, sir?—that would be folly."

"It would, indeed. I see you can't bear a joke."

"Not very well."

"You don't take after your father, then ; for he loves a joke dearly."

"Is my father alive?" I cried, eagerly.

"Of course he is."

"My mother don't know this."

"As well as I know it. Women have all their secrets. They don't tell us all they know. One of these days you'll hear more about this mysterious father, depend upon it."

I longed to ask him all he knew upon the subject, but we were not on terms of familiarity to warrant such a liberty. He was my

master, and it was his part to speak—mine to listen. Presently he turned the subject into another channel altogether.

"By-the-bye, Noah," he said, "I am going to-day to —. I have a large sum of money to receive from my lawyer—the payment for Crawford's farm, which I sold a few months ago. The land was bad, and I was offered a good price for it—more, indeed, than I thought it was worth. Horner advised me to sell, and I sold it accordingly. It may be late when I return to-morrow night, which I shall do by the F— coach. It will put me down on the other side of the park, and I shall have to walk home by the plantations and through the great avenue; and though the distance is but a mile, to tell you the truth, I should not like to meet Bill Martin and his gang after nightfall in such a lonely place, especially with a large sum of money on my person—at least from £500 to £1000. I wish you would bring your gun, and wait for the coming up of the coach, at the second gate which leads into that lonely plantation. It will be in by ten o'clock."

"That I will, with the greatest pleasure," I cried, and all my petty resentment vanished. "I am not afraid of twenty Bill Martins. I only wish I may have the luck to meet with him."

"I shall feel perfectly safe with you, Noah. But—hallo! I forgot; is not to-morrow the great cricket-match at S—? and you must be there."

"It is," said I. "But there is no positive necessity for my being there. It is a good thing to be missed sometimes. They'll know the value of a good player another time."

"You are their best hand?"

"Yes; I know *that*, and they know it too. However, for this time, they must try and win the match without me. Good morning, Mr. Carlos; I will not fail to meet you as you desire."

He entered the magnificent lawn that spread in front of his noble residence; and I, whistling the tune of a hunting-song, turned my steps through the plantations towards home.

God knows! at that moment, I had not the most distant idea of raising my hand against his life.

I walked on, or rather, sauntered—for the weather was excessively warm for September—in a sort of dreamy state. The thought uppermost in my mind was a vague wish to know how much money Mr. Carlos expected to receive for the sale of Crawford's farm.

The land was not very good ; but the house and barns were commodious, and in excellent repair. It was honestly worth £4,000. Will he receive this large sum in one payment—or will it be by instalments of eight hundred or a thousand pounds? The latter sum was the most probable. "He is foolish," I continued, pursuing my train of thought, "to travel with a sum like that in his pocket, and by a common conveyance too. It is tempting Providence. But he is a rash man who never listens to any advice. He will be murdered one of these days if he does not take care."

A thousand pounds is an immense sum in the estimation of a poor man. The busy fiend whispered in my ear, "How much could be done with that sum if you could only command it! It would buy a commission in the army, and make a gentleman of you at once." But then "people would suspect how I came by it."

"It would enable you to emigrate to America or Australia, and become the purchaser of a tract of land, that might make your fortune."

"Yes ! and then I would drop the odious name of Noah Cotton, return with a fine coat, and a noble *alias*, and seek out and marry my adored Ella Carlos."

After indulging for some time in this species of castle-building, I began seriously to consider whether it would be such a difficult matter to obtain the money, and realize the latter of these dreams.

I did not wish to inflict any personal injury on Mr. Carlos, who had always been very kind to me and my mother ; yet he was a person for whom I felt little respect, and I often reproached myself for my want of gratitude to our mutual benefactor.

He had a fine person, and a frank, generous bearing, but his manners were coarse and familiar, and his language immoral, and beneath the dignity of a gentleman. I had frequently seen him intoxicated ; and while in that state, I had often assisted him from his carriage, and guided his tottering steps up the broad stone steps that led to his mansion.

I had often remarked to my mother, when such an event had filled me with deep disgust, "Had Mr. Carlos been a poor man, he would have been a great blackguard."

And she would grow very red and angry—more so than I thought the occasion required, and say—"My son, it is not for the like of us to censure the conduct of our betters. It is very unbecoming, especially in you, on whom the Squire has conferred so many favors

You ought to shut your eyes and ears, and let on to no one what you see and hear."

I did neither the one nor the other. I was keenly alive to the low pursuits of my superior, whom I only considered as such as far as his rank and wealth were concerned, for hitherto I had led a more moral life than he had. I neither gambled, nor drank, nor swore; had never seduced a poor girl to her ruin, and then boasted of my guilt. If the truth must be spoken, I regarded the Squire with feelings of indifference, which amounted almost to contempt, which all sense of past obligations could not overcome.

Oh, if these spoilt children of fortune did but know the light in which such deeds are regarded by the poor, and the evils which arise from their bad example, they would either strive to deserve their respect, or at least strive to keep their immoralities out of sight!

It is, perhaps, no excuse for my crime to say, that had Mr. Carlos been a good man, I should never have been a bad one, or have been tempted under any circumstances to have taken his life; yet I do feel certain, that if that had been the case, he would have been safe, and I had never fallen. I should have tried to show my gratitude to him, by deserving his esteem: as it was, I felt that his good opinion of me was of little worth—that he could not prize good qualities in me to which himself was a stranger. The only tie which bound me to him was one of self-interest. He paid me well, and for the sake of that pay I had, up to this period, been a faithful servant.

But what has all this to do with my temptation and fall? Much—oh, how much—the conviction of the worthlessness of my master's character, and the little loss his death would be to the community at large, drowned all remorseful feelings on his behalf, and hastened me far on the road to crime.

After having once indulged the idea that I could easily rob him, and make myself master of the property he had on his person, I could not again banish it from my mind. I quickened my pace, and recommenced whistling a gay tune; but the stave suddenly ceased, and in fancy I was confronting Mr. Carlos by that lonely avenue-gate. I rubbed my eyes to shut out the horrid vision, and began slashing the thistles that grew by the roadside with my cane. Then I thought I saw him pale and weltering in his blood at my

feet, and I heard Bill Martin's fiendish laugh, and his prophecy respecting the gallows.

I stopped in the middle of the road, and looked hard at the dust. What a terrible idea had that one thought of Bill Martin's conjured up—the opportunity to gratify my long-treasured hatred—to avenge myself on my enemy was within my grasp!

That knife—I walked quickly on—I nearly ran, driven forward by the excitement under which I labored. Yes—that knife, with his name upon the handle. If the deed were done adroitly, and with that knife, and I could but contrive to send him to the spot a few minutes after the murder had been committed, he would be the convicted felon—I the possessor of wealth that might ultimately pave the way to fortune.

I was now near the village, and I saw a bosom friend of Martin's, with a suspicious-looking dog lounging at his heels. I knew that anything said to Adam Haws would be sure to be retailed to his comrades, for with Bill Martin I never held the least communication.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE PLOT.

"A FINE day, Mister Game-keeper," quoth Adam! "Prime weather for shooting! Have you much company at the Hall?"

"No one at present. The Squire expects a large party the beginning of the week."

"Is there much game this season?" asked the poacher, very innocently:

"There *was*," I replied, rather fiercely. "But these rascally poachers are making it scarce. I only wish I had the ringleader of the gang within the range of this gun."

"How savage you are, Cotton! A soft, easy name that for a hard, cruel fellow. Why not live and let live? What is it to you if a poor fellow dines now and then off the leg of a hare, or the wing of a pheasant? It don't take one penny out of your pocket. What right have these rich men to lay an embargo upon the beasts of the field, and the fowls of the air? Aye, upon the very fish that swims in the stream, which God gave for the use of all. Tyrants! —they have not enough of the good things of this world, but they

must rob the poor of their natural rights. I only wish I had them under the range of that, which a poor man dare not carry without a licence, in a free land. But there will come a day,"—and he ground his teeth,—“pray God that it may come soon, when these cursed game laws and their proud makers, shall be crushed under our feet.”

“That will not be in your day—nor yet in mine, Adam Hows. No, not if we both lived to the age of your venerable namesake of apple-celebrity. Like him—you seem to have a hankering for forbidden fruit; and taste it too, I apprehend, if I may judge by that lurcher at your heels. You are wrong to keep that dog. It has a suspicious look.”

“I am not acquainted with his private tastes,” said Adam, patting the snaky-headed brute. “Like his betters, he may relish a hare, now and then, but I never saw him eat one. Fox, my boy! Are you fond of game?—the keeper thinks you are. Fie, fox, fie. It is as bad to look like a thief, as to be one.”

“You had better put that dog away, Adam. If the Squire sees him, he will order him to be shot.”

“Damn the ‘Squire! Who cares for the ‘Squire. He poaches on other preserves besides his own. Hay, Mister Cotton?”

The color flushed my face—I scarce knew why. “I don’t understand your joke.”

“Oh, no, of course not. You are such an innocent fellow. But there are others who do. Are you going to the cricket match to-morrow? The fellows of S—— have challenged our fellows to a grand set-to on the common—’tis famous ground. The men of S—— play well—but our bullies can beat them. I am told that you are the flash man of the F—— club?”

“I love the sport—it is a fine, mainly, old English game; I should like to go very well, and they expect me; but I have an engagement elsewhere.”

“You’ll have to put it off.”

“Impossible.”

“But the honor of the club.”

“Must yield to duty. I promised to meet Mr. Carlos at the second avenue gate to-morrow night, at eleven o’clock.”

“Damme has he turned thief-taker? Does he mean to catch the poachers himself? Well, if that is not a queer dodge for a gentleman.”

"He would not be a bad hand," said I, laughing. "No, no. The coach puts him down there on his return from I——, and I promised to see him safe home."

"Safe home! Why, man, 'tis only a mile from the Hall. Is he afraid of ghosts?"

"Not at all," I said, dropping my voice. "No one who knows Squire Carlos, could ever take him for a coward. But there are a great many suspicious characters in the neighborhood, and the Squire returns with a large sum of money on his person. He was afraid that he might be robbed in that lonely place, and he asked me, as a particular favor, to meet him there with my gun."

"A large sum of money did you say?" and the poacher drew nearer and gazed upon me with an eager and excited stare. "Does he often travel abroad with such sums about him?"

"Not often. This is a particular case—it is the price of the land he sold lately, Crawford's farm, and he wants the money to make another purchase. Perhaps he will have with him a couple of thousand pounds."

"You don't say—and you are to meet him at the second avenue gate at eleven o'clock?"

"So I promised. But don't, there's a good fellow, mention it to any one. I would not for the world be thought to blab my master's secrets. He would never forgive me, if it came to his ears. To tell you the truth, I don't much like the job. I would rather have a jolly day with the club at S——. I am sure we should win the match."

"I thought the coach came in at ten?" said Adam, still dreaming over the vision of gold.

"Not on market nights; it is always late. Eleven was the hour he appointed."

"Oh, of course, he knows best. And such a large sum of money! I would not venture on the road with twenty shiners in my pocket. But two thousand! the man's a fool. Good day, Noah—don't raise a bad report against my poor dog. You know the old proverb—'Give a dog a bad name.' Two thousand pounds—my eye, what a sum!"

Away trudged the poacher, with the game-destroyer at his heels. I sat down upon a stile, and looked after him. I was sure of my man.

"Go your ways to Bill Martin," I said. "Tell him the tale I

have told to you, and between us, Mr. Carlos has small chance of sleeping on a feather bed to-morrow night."

I felt certain that an attempt would be made to rob Mr. Carlos by these ruffians. I read it in that fellow's eye. "I would bet my life that neither of us go to the cricket match to-morrow at S—. Bill will have a different job on hand. It will be the ball and not the bat, that is to win the game they hope to play."

I had only to be at the place at the right hour, and with a dexterous blow stun, without killing my victim, and secure, the prize ; and then return and detect the ruffians in the very act ; and for this purpose, I determined to secure the co-operation of another game-keeper, who might accompany me to the avenue, and help me to secure the villains. I was so elated with this plan, that I forgot my own share of the guilt. The leaven of iniquity that I had introduced into the breast of another, was already at work, and two human beings were subjected to the same temptation to which I had yielded.

It is astonishing how a fellowship in guilt hardens the guilty. Men, like wolves, are often great cowards alone ; but give them a few companions in crime, and pusillanimity is instantly converted into ferocity. The coward is always cruel ; the mean-spirited merciless. The consciousness that two of my fellow-men premeditated committing the same crime, wonderfully strengthened me in my resolution of plunging my soul into the abyss of guilt. I had another passion to gratify, which had rankled for years in my breast, that of revenge. A wish to over-reach and disappoint Bill Martin was a stronger incentive to this deed than the mere lucre of gain. The burning hatred I had cherished from boyhood was on the eve of being gratified. I should, in case of failure on my part, at least secure his destruction.

When I reached home, I found two of the principal members of the cricket club, both respectable merchants in the village, waiting to see me. I was their best hand, and they left no argument unurged, in order to induce me to go. I took them separately aside, and confidentially informed them of my reasons for staying at home. This I justly thought would avert all suspicion from me as the real culprit. Of course they were convinced that my going was out of the question, and took their leave with regret.

My mother was not very well. She had a bad head-ache, and complained of being very nervous (a fine word she had picked up

from the parson's wife), and we passed a very dull evening together.

I had never before shunned my mother's eye; but this night I could not look steadily at her. She at length noticed my agitation, and asked if anything had gone wrong with the game.

I said, "Nothing more than usual. That I was sorry that I could not go to the match—that I was afraid our men would be beaten without me—that I had a great mind to send the second keeper, George Norton, who was a brave, honest fellow, to meet my master, and start for S—— the next day."

"You must do no such thing," she said, sharply. "You must meet Mr. Carlos, as you promised him, yourself. If any harm should happen to the Squire through your neglect, we shall lose the best friend we have in the world. You must not think of leaving him to the care of another. He will be justly displeased, and it may mar your fortune for life."

"In what way, mother?" I said, gloomily. "I think you place too much importance on the Squire's good-will. I could earn my own living, if I were out of employ to-morrow."

My mother replied, "that I was proud and ungrateful—that Mr. Carlos had raised me out of the dirt, and I ought to be ready to lay down my life to serve him."

I retorted. She grew angry, and for the first time in my life, she went to bed without kissing and bidding me good-night, or wishing that God might bless me.

I felt the omission keenly. It seemed as if my good angel had forsaken and left me to my fate. For a long time I sat brooding over the fire. My thoughts were full of sin. I went to the cupboard where my mother kept a few simple medicines and a small bottle of brandy, in case of accidents or sudden illness. I hated ardent-spirits, and seldom took anything stronger than a cup of tea or milk, or, when very tired, a little home-brewed ale. But this night I took a large glass of brandy—the first raw liquor I ever drunk in my life. Stupified and overpowered, I soon found relief from torturing thoughts in a heavy, stupid sleep.

Breakfast was on the table when I unclosed my eyes. The remains of the brandy were replaced in the cupboard, and my poor mother was regarding me with a sad countenance and tearful eyes.

"You were ill, Noah, last night?"

"I had a confounded head-ache."

"And you did not tell me."

"You parted with me in anger, mother. I felt so miserable! We never had a quarrel before, and I took the brandy to raise my spirits. It had a contrary effect. It made me drunk, for the first time in my life."

"I hope it will be the last."

"Yes; if the repetition does not prove more agreeable. My temples throb—my limbs tremble—everything is distasteful. Who could feel pleasure in a vice so bestial?"

"Habit, Noah, reconciles us to many things which at first awaken only aversion and disgust. All pleasure which has its foundation in sin must end in pain and self-condemnation. Drunkenness is one of those vices which when first indulged creates the deepest shame and humiliation; but custom renders it a terrible necessity."

My mother could preach well against any vice to which she was not particularly inclined herself. I never saw her take a glass of wine or spirits in my life. This was from sheer want of inclination; all strong drinks were disagreeable to her taste.

I took a cup of tea, and after immersing my head in cold water, the nausea from which I was suffering gradually abated, and I soon felt well again. While I was standing at the open window I saw Adam Hows and Bill Martin pass the lodge. They were in earnest conversation. I called to Adam, and asked him, "If he were going to see the cricket-match?"

He answered, "That it depended upon the loan of a horse. Harry Barber had promised them his; but it had broken pasture, and they were going in search of it."

I did not believe this statement. I was certain that it was intended for a blind. I told Adam that, in case he did not find Barber's horse, I would lend him mine. He was profuse of thanks, but did not accept my offer. He was certain of finding the lost animal in time: he was going to drive over his friend to S—, and my mare did not go in harness. I took no notice of his companion. For many months we had never spoken to each other—not even to exchange insults. At four o'clock in the afternoon I heard that they were drinking in a low tavern just out of the village. If I did not keep my appointment with Squire Carlos, I felt convinced that they would.

CHAPTER XLV.

THE MURDER.

ALL day I was restless, and unable to settle to the least thing. My mother attributed my irritation and ill-humor to the brandy I had drunk on the preceding evening. As the night drew on, I was in a perfect fever of excitement; yet not for one moment did I abandon the dreadful project. I had argued myself into the belief that it was my fate—that I was compelled by an inexorable destiny to murder Mr. Carlos. I was to meet him at ten o'clock—just one hour earlier than the time I had named to Adam Hows. At eight my mother went to bed, complaining of indisposition. I was glad of this, for it left me at perfect liberty to arrange my plans.

I dressed myself in a wagoner's frock and hat, in order to conceal my person from my victim, and with Bill Martin's bowie knife in the breast of my waistcoat, and a large knotted bludgeon in my hand, almost a fac-simile of one often carried by that ruffian, I sallied into the road. My disguise was so complete, that few without a very near inspection would have detected the counterfeit. Fortunately, I met no one on the road whom I knew, and reached the second gate in the dark avenue which led to the one that opened into the high-road, just ten minutes before the coach drove up. I heard the bluff voice of the coachman speaking to the horses. I heard Mr. Carlos, in his frank, cheerful tones bid the coachman good-night. The stage rattled on, and the Squire's measured step, for he had been a soldier in his youth, sounded upon the hard gravel path that led from the avenue to the plantation-gate, by the side of which I was concealed, behind the trunk of a vast oak that cast its dense shadows across the road. Above, the moon was shining in a cloudless sky.

After the first gate which opened upon the road had swung to after him, Mr. Carlos commenced singing a favorite hunting song, perhaps to give me warning of his approach, or to ascertain if I had been true to my word.

Nervous as I had been all day, I was now calm and collected. I had come there determined to rob him, and nothing but the certainty of detection could have induced me to abandon my purpose.

When he reached the gate, he called out, in his clear voice, "Noah—Noah Cotton! are you there?"

Receiving no answer, he opened the gate, and passed through. As he turned to shut it, I sprang from my hiding-place, and with one blow successfully, but not mortally aimed, I felled him to the ground. Contrary to my calculations, he stood erect for a moment, and instead of falling forward against the gate, he reeled back, and fell face upwards, to the earth. Our eyes met—he recognized me in a moment. To save his life now was to forfeit my own, and the next moment I plunged the bowie-knife to the hilt in his breast. He gasped out, "This from you, Noah! Poor Elinor, you are terribly avenged!"

He never spoke more. I hastily searched his pockets, and drew from his bleeding breast a large pocket-book, which contained the coveted treasure. I then flung the bloody knife with which I had done the deed, to some distance, and fled from the spot, taking a near cut to the lodge across the fields.

I entered at a back gate, and going up to my own room, I carefully washed my hands and face, and dressed myself in the clothes I had worn during the day, thrusting the wagoner's frock and hat and the fatal pocket-book into an old sack, I hastily concealed them in a heap of old manure, which had served for a hot-bed in the garden, until a better opportunity occurred of effectually destroying them. All this was accomplished in an almost incredibly short time; and when my arrangements were completed, I once more had recourse to the brandy-bottle, but took good care this time not to take too potent a dose. I then shouldered my gun, and walked to the cottage of the second game-keeper, which lay in my path, and briefly stating my reasons for calling him up, I asked him to accompany me to the second avenue gate to meet my master.

George Norton instantly complied, and we walked together to the appointed spot, discussing in the most animated manner, as we went along, the probable result of the cricket match at S—.

As we entered the first plantation, we were accosted by Bill Martin and Adam Haws. Both were greatly excited, and exclaimed in a breath—

"Mr. Carlos has been robbed and murdered! The body is lying just within the second gate, in the middle of the path. Come with us and see!"

"And what brings you here, you scoundrel! at this hour of night?" I cried, suddenly, throwing myself upon Bill Martin. "What business have you trespassing in these preserves? If Mr.

Carlos is murdered, it is you and your accomplice that have done the deed. It is not pheasants and hares that you came here to shoot, as the muzzle of that pistol, sticking out of your pocket, can prove."

On hearing these words Adam Haws discharged a pistol at my head, and missing his aim, threw down the weapon and fled. Bill Martin struggled desperately in my grasp, but I held him fast. I was a strong, powerful man, and he was enfeebled by constant drunkenness and debauchery. I held him like fate.

Norton now came to my assistance, and we secured Martin's hands with my silk pocket handkerchief. I remained with my grasp upon his collar, while Norton ran back to the village to fetch the constables.

It was one of the most awful moments in my life, while I stood alone in that gloomy grove confronting my victim. He neither spoke nor trembled. The unhappy man seemed astonished and bewildered at what had befallen him. All was so still around us that I heard his heart beat distinctly.

We remained in this painful and constrained silence for some time. At last he said, in a subdued voice, "Noah Cotton, I am not guilty. I never murdered him."

"Perhaps not. Your comrade in crime may have saved you the trouble."

"Nor him either. The deed was done before we reached the spot."

"What brought you there?" I said, abruptly.

"The hints you threw out for our destruction;" and his eye once more flashed with its accustomed boldness. "You acted as decoy-duck, and your superior cunning has triumphed. In order to gratify your old hatred to me, you have killed your benefactor."

The moon was at full, but the trees cast too deep a shade upon the spot we occupied to enable him to see my face. I was, however, taken by surprise, and gave a slight start. He felt it, and laughed bitterly.

"We are a pair of damned scoundrels!" he cried; "but you are the worst, and you know it. I, of course, must hang for this; for you have laid your plans too well to allow me a loop-hole to escape. Now, Noah Cotton, for once be generous. I know I have treated you confoundedly ill—that I am a very bad fellow, and richly deserve the gallows; but I am very young to die—to die for a

crime I did not actually commit. I have a widowed mother, an orphan sister to support, who love me, and will be broken-hearted at my death—for their sakes, give me a chance of making my escape. I will leave the country directly, and never return to it again to trouble you more. Have mercy upon me! For Christ's sake, have mercy upon me!"

My heart was moved. I was almost tempted to grant his prayer. But I dared not trust him. I knew that my own safety entirely depended on his destruction.

"William Martin," I said, very calmly, "your attempt to charge me with this crime is a miserable subterfuge. What interest had I to kill Mr. Carlos? Did not my living depend upon him? The folly of the man who killed the goose that laid the golden eggs would be wisdom compared with such a deed. Mr. Carlos was of more value to me living than dead."

"That is true," he said, thoughtfully. "I may have wronged you. It is a strange, inexplicable piece of business." Then he muttered to himself, "'The wages of sin is death.' It is useless to ask mercy from him. He would not save my life if he could. Oh, my mother!—my poor, poor mother!"

Hardened as I thought this ruffian had been for years, the big, bright drops coursed each other down his sunburnt cheeks; his large chest heaved convulsively, and loud sobs awoke the lone echoes of the wood.

I could endure his agony no longer. "Martin," I said, in a low voice—for the agitation that shook my whole frame nearly deprived me of the power of utterance—"behave more like a man; were you innocent man, you could not be affected in this strange way."

"By —, I am not innocent! Who said I was? But I again repeat, I did not kill him."

"Then Adam did?"

"No, no—it was his first attempt at murder." He stopped short. He had committed himself.

"Why, Bill, your own words condemn you."

"Don't use them against us. I am mad. I don't know what I say."

"Hush! I hear steps approaching. Be quiet for one moment, while I untie your hands, and I will give you a last chance for your life."

"Your frozen heart has thawed too late," he cried, with a hol-

low groan. "The constables are already here, and I am a dead man."

He was right; Norton, with the constables and a large body of men, now burst through the trees. I gladly consigned the prisoner to their charge, while I proceeded with the rest of the party to the spot where the murder had been committed. I knew that it would awaken suspicion for me to remain behind; I therefore placed myself at the head of them; but I would have given worlds to have remained behind. A few minutes brought us to the fatal gate.

We gathered round the body in silence. Horror was depicted on every countenance. Some, who had known the Squire for years, shed tears—I could not; but I gladly buried my face in my handkerchief, to shut out the dreadful spectacle. The moon, peering down between the branches of the trees, looked full in the dead man's face. Those glassy, upturned eyes chilled my heart to stone with their fixed, icy stare.

Oh! it is terrible to see a man so full of life and health but yesterday, look thus!

"Is he quite dead?" said George Norton. "My poor, dear master!—my good, generous master! Noah, lend a hand to raise him up."

With a deep groan I seconded his efforts, and the head of the murdered man rested upon my knees, as I crouched beside him on the ground. A viper was gnawing at my heart. I would have given my chance of an eternity of bliss, which I possessed not many hours ago as man's only true inheritance, to have recalled the transactions of that dreadful night.

"See, here is a wound in his breast," I cried. "He has not been shot, but stabbed with a long sharp dirk or knife. He must have been taken unawares, for he seems to have made no effort to defend himself."

"Here is his hat," cried another. "The back of it is all battered and crushed in. He has been knocked down and then stabbed. Oh, that Martin—that infernal villain!"

Whenever I heard Martin reproached as the murderer, I fancied that those dead eyes of my master looked into my soul with a mournful scorn. Yet I lacked the moral courage to say, "I am the man."

We formed a litter of boughs, and carried the body up to the

Hall. We had not proceeded many steps on our sad journey before Norton stumbled over somethings in the path. It was the bloody knife.

"Here is something that will give a clue to the mystery. By Jove! Bill Martin's American knife. He was showing this wicked-looking blade, and bragging about it the other night at the White Horse. Murder will out. If evidence were wanted of his guilt, this knife woold hang him. Faugh! the blood is still wet upon the blade."

The knife passed from hand to hand, and to mine among the rest. I did not see the blood. It appeared to me red-hot—to glow and flicker with the flames of hell.

It was the dawn of day when we reached the Hall with our melancholy burthen. The fatal news had travelled there before us. Half the inhabitants of the village were collected on the lawn. The old servants were standing on the steps to receive the body of their master. As we drew near, cries and groans arose on every side.

"This is a bad job for you, Noah," said the old butler—"for us all; but especially for you. He was your best friend."

"It is a loss to the whole country," I cried, mournfully, shaking my head.

"And Adam Hows is off with the money?" said the steward, with a sharp eager face.

"So we suppose. Martin has been searched, but there is none in his possession. I hope the other rascal will be taken."

"Come with us, Noah, into the kitchen," cried several of the servants in a breath, "and tell us all about it. They say it was you who discovered the murder, and took the villain at the risk of your life. Come in, and take a glass of hot stuff, and give us all the particulars."

And I had to endure a fresh species of torture in recapitulating all the circumstances that I dared reveal of that revolting act—to listen to, and join in all their comments, doubts and surmises, and answered all the agonizing questions suggested by curiosity or compassion. I was beginning to feel hardened to the painful task, and answered their eager inquiries without changing countenance, or betraying more than a decent emotion on the melancholy occasion.

CHAPTER XLVI.

MY MOTHER.

I WAS relieved from my embarrassing situation by a message from my mother. She was ill, and wished to see me, begging me to return home without a moment's delay.

"Ah, poor woman! This is a sad judgment, a heavy blow to her. She must feel this bad enough," said one of the old servants. "Yes, yes, Noah, lose no time in going home to comfort your mother."

I gazed from one to another in blank astonishment. They shook their heads significantly. I hurried away without asking or comprehending what they meant.

As I walked rapidly home, I pondered over their strange conduct. Beyond my losing my situation of game-keeper and porter to the lodge, I could not see in what way the death of Mr. Carlos should so terribly affect my mother, without she suspected that I was his murderer. Guilt is naturally timid; but my plans had been laid with such caution and secrecy, and carried out so well, that it was almost next to an impossibility for her to suspect a thing in itself so monstrously improbable.

The murder had been an impulsive, not a premeditated act. Four-and-twenty hours ago, I would have shot the man who could have thought me capable of perpetrating such a deed. How little we know of the spirit of which we are made! Christ knew it well when he composed that clause of his matchless prayer, "Lead us not into temptation."

The clocks in the village were striking eight when I entered the lodge. My mother was sitting in her easy chair, supported by pillows. Her face was death pale, and she had been crying violently. Two women, our nearest neighbors, were standing beside her, bathing her wrists and temples with hartshorn.

"Oh, Noe," exclaimed Mrs. Jones, "I'm glad thee be come to thy mother. She hath been in fits ever since she heard the dreadful news."

"We could not persuade her that you were safe," said Mrs. Smith. "She will be content when she sees you herself."

"Mother"—and I went up to her and kissed her rigid brow—"are you better now?"

She took my hand and clasped it tightly between her own, but made no reply. Her face became convulsed, the tears flowed over her cheeks like rain, and she fainted in my arms.

"She is dying!" screamed both women.

"She will be better presently," I said. "Open the window—give me a glass of water! There—there, she is coming to! Speak to me, dear mother!"

"Is it true, Noah?" she gasped out, but broke down several times before she could make her meaning plain. "Is he—is the Squire dead?—murdered?"

"Too true, mother! I have just helped to carry the body up to the Hall."

"Oh, oh!" she groaned, rocking herself to and fro in a strange agony; "I hoped it had been false."

"It is a shocking piece of business—but why should it affect you in this terrible way?"

"That's what I say," cried Mrs. Jones. "It do seem so strange to us that she should take on in this here way for a mere stranger."

"Don't ask me any questions, Noah," said my mother, in a low, firm voice. "I am better now. The sight of you has revived me; and these kind neighbors may return home."

"At ten o'clock the magistrates meet at the Market Hall to examine the prisoners," I said; "and I must be there to make a deposition of what I know. I can stay with you till then."

"Oh, Noe! thee must tell as all about it!" said Mrs. Smith, who was dying with curiosity. "How did it come about?"

I was not prepared for this fresh agony; but I saw that there was no getting rid of our troublesome visitors without satisfying their insatiable greed for news; and I went through the dreadful task with more nerve than I expected. My mother listened to the recital with breathless interest, and the women clung to me with open eyes and mouth, as if their very life depended upon my words, often interrupting me with uncouth exclamations of surprise and horror. At length all was told that I could tell. My mother again broke into passionate tears. *

"Poor Mrs. Martin!" she sobbed, "how dreadful—it must be to her. I pity her from my very soul!"

I had never given Martin's unfortunate mother a single thought.

I was not naturally cruel, and this planted a fresh arrow in my heart.

"It is about eight years ago that she lost her husband," said neighbor Smith. "He died from the bite of a mad dog. He was the Squire's game-keeper then. Little Sally was not born until five months after her father's death. I don't know how the widow has contrived to scratch along, and keep out of the workhouse. But she was always a hard-working woman. She had no friend like the Squire, to take *her* by the hand and give her son a genteel education. She did get along, however, and sent that Bill to Mr. Bullen's school; but she half starved herself to do it—and what good? He has been a world of trouble to her, and almost broke her heart before he run off to 'Meriky. This fresh misfortune will go nigh to kill her outright."

"And was it to add to this poor devoted creature's sorrows," I asked myself, "that I was prepared to give false evidence against her son?" For well I knew, that his life depended upon that evidence.

For Martin I felt no pity. His death never filled me with remorse like the murder of the Squire. He was born for the gallows, I had only forestalled him in the deed that would send him to the grave. He had sought the spot with the intention to rob and kill. I had no doubts on that head; and I persuaded myself that he had richly merited the fate that awaited him. But the grief of his unhappy mother awakened a pang in my breast that was not so easily assuaged.

The women at length took their leave, and I was alone with my mother. For some minutes she remained silent, her hands pressed tightly over her breast, and her tear-swollen eyes fixed mournfully on the ground.

"Noah," she said at length, slowly raising her head, and looking me earnestly in the face, "do you think that the family would allow me to look at the corpse?"

I actually started with horror. I felt the blood recede from my cheeks, and a cold chill creep from my hair downwards.

"Good God, mother! what should make you wish to see him? He is a frightful spectacle!—so frightful that I would not look at him again for worlds!"

"Oh," groaned my mother, "it is hard to part from him for ever, without one last look!"

"Mother, mother!" I cried, while a horrid suspicion darted through my brain, "what is the meaning of this strange conduct, and still stranger words? In the name of Heaven! what was Squire Carlos to you?"

"Noah, he was your father!" returned my mother, slowly and solemnly. "I need not tell you what he was to me."

Had she stabbed me with a red-hot knife, the effect would have been less painful.

"My father!" I cried, with a yell of agony, as I sunk down, stunned with horror, at her feet. "Mother!—mother! for my sake—for your own sake, recall those dreadful words!"

Some minutes elapsed before I again awoke to the consciousness of my terrible guilt. My crime appeared to me in a new aspect—an aspect that froze my soul, and iced the warm stream of my young blood with despair. I had been excited—agitated—almost maddened with the certainty of being a murderer; but there was something of human passion in those tumultuous feelings. But the certainty that I was not only a murderer, but a parricide—had killed my own father for the sake of a few hundred pounds, which I now knew that I could never enjoy—chilled me into a stupid, hardened apathy. There could be no forgiveness for a crime like mine, neither in this world—neither in the world to come.

I could have cursed my wretched mother for having so long concealed from me an important fact, which, if known, had saved the life of her worthless paramour. Her silence might have been the effect of shame. But no—when I recalled the frequency of Mr. Carlos' visits, his uniform kindness to me, the very last conversation I held with him, and the dark hints that from time to time Bill Martin had so insultingly thrown out, it convinced me that she had all along been living with him on terms of the most abandoned intimacy, and that her crime had been the parent of my own. Yet, in spite of these bitter recriminations, when I raised my eyes to her, and met her sad, pleading, tearful glance, all my love for her returned; and clasping her knees, as I still sat upon the ground at her feet, I said, "Mother, why did you keep this guilty secret from me for so many years? I should have felt and acted very differently towards that unhappy man, if I had known that he was my father."

"Noah, it is hard to acknowledge one's sin to one's own child.

It is a sin, however, that I have been bitterly punished for committing."

"But you still continued to live on these terms with him?"

"Alas, Noah, I loved him!"

She threw her apron over her head, and sobbed as if her heart would burst.

"I will show you, mother, how one crime produces another," I was about to say, when a loud rap at the door recalled my self-possession, and I was summoned to attend the sitting of the magistrates, and tell all I knew about the murder.

CHAPTER XLVII.

A LAST LOOK AT OLD FRIENDS.

I MADE my deposition minutely and circumstantially, from the time of my conversation with Adam Hows until the time when, accompanied by George Norton, we encountered him and Bill Martin in the plantations, and took the latter prisoner. My statement was so clear, so plausible, so perfectly matter-of-fact, that this hideous lie was received by wise and well-educated men as God's truth. I heard myself spoken of as a sober, excellent young man, well worthy of the confidence and affection of the Squire, and extremely grateful for the many favors he had bestowed upon me; while the character that Martin bore, and his previous pursuits, were enough to condemn him, independent of the startling evidence that I, and others from among his own wild companions, had given against him. A conversation that one of these men had accidentally heard between him and Adam Hows, proclaiming their intention to rob and murder Mr. Carlos, was, indeed, more conclusive of their guilt than my own account, though that was sufficient to have hung him twice over.

Bill kept his eye fixed on me during the examination. I met it with a degree of outward calmness; but it thrilled me to the soul, and has haunted me ever since. He made no attempt at vindication. He said that the evidence brought against him was circumstantially correct, yet, for all that, neither he nor his accomplice had actually murdered the Squire, and that God, who looked deeper than man, knew that what he said was true.

Of course no one listened to such an absurd statement. But, to cut this painful part of my story short—for it is agony to dwell upon it—he was tried, sentenced, and condemned, and finally executed at ——. I saw him hung.

Yes, Reader, you may well start back from the page in horror. To be sure that my victim was dead, I actually witnessed his last struggles, and returned home satisfied that the tongue I most feared upon earth—the only living creature who suspected my guilt—was silenced and cold for ever.

Shallow fool that I was. Conscience never sleeps! The voice of remorse sounds up from the lowest deeps, with the clang of the archangel's trump blasting in the guilty ear with its judgment-peal. With him, my peace of mind, self-respect, and hopes of heaven, vanished for ever!

I have since often thought, that God gave me this last chance in order to try me—to see if any good remained in me—if I could for once resist temptation, and act towards Martin as an honest man. I have felt, amid the burning agonies of my sleepless, phantom-haunted nights, that, had I confessed my guilt and saved him from destruction, the same pity that Christ extended to the thief on the cross, might have been shown to me.

These dreadful events were the beginning of sorrows. When Mr. Walter came to the Hall to attend his uncle's funeral, and the will of the deceased was opened by the man of business, and read to him after the melancholy ceremony was over, it was found that Mr. Carlos had named me in this document as *his natural son by Anne Cotton*, and had left me the house in which I now live, together with the fifty acres adjoining, and two thousand pounds in the funds—the interest of the latter to be devoted to my mother during her life, but both principal and interest to devolve to me at her death.

This handsome legacy seemed to console my mother a great deal for the loss of her wealthy lover; but it only served to debase me lower in my own eyes, and deepen the pangs of remorse. How gladly would I have quitted this part of the country! but I was so haunted by the fear of detection, that I was afraid lest it might awaken suspicions in the minds of poor neighbors. On every hand I heard that the Squire had made a gentleman of Noah Cotton, while I cursed the money in my heart, and would thankfully have exchanged my lot with the poorest emigrant that ever crossed the seas in search of a new home.

The property bequeathed me by the Squire was a mile from the village, in an opposite direction to the porter's lodge. My mother quitted our old home with reluctance; but I was glad to leave a place which was associated in my mind with such terrible recollections.

The night before we removed to the Porched House—for so my new home was called—I waited until after my mother had retired to her bed, and then carefully removed from its hiding-place the sack and its fatal contents. The wagoner's frock and hat, together with the sack, I burned in a field at the back of the Lodge, and then slunk back, like a guilty wretch, under cover of night and darkness, to my own chamber. It was some time before I could muster sufficient courage to open the pocket-book. It felt damp and clammy in my grasp. It had been saturated with his blood; and the roll of bank notes were dyed with the same dull red hue. I did not unroll them. A ghastly sickness stole over me whenever my eye fell upon them. I seemed distinctly to trace his dying face in those horrible stains—that last look of blank surprise and unutterable woe with which he regarded me when he reaognised in me his murderer!

It was necessary to put out of sight these memorials of my guilt. I would have burnt them, but I could not bring my heart to destroy such a large sum of money; neither could I dare to make use of it. An old bureau had been purchased by my mother at a sale: she had given it to me, for a receptacle of books and papers. I possessed so few of these, that I generally kept my shooting apparatus in its many odd nooks and drawers. While stowing away these, I had discovered a secret spring, which covered a place of concealment, in which some hoarder of by-gone days had treasured a few guineas of the reign of the third George. These I had appropriated to my own use, and had considered them a godsend at the time. Into this drawer I now thrust the blood-stained pocket-book and the useless wealth it contained. Never since that hour have I drawn it from its hiding-place. My earnest wish is, that when I am gone to my last account, this money may be restored to the family to whom it rightfully belongs.

When I settled upon the farm, it afforded me a good pretext to give up my situation as gamekeeper. Mr. Walter, now Sir Walter Carlos, had just come to reside at the Hall, and, being a great sportsman, he was very unwilling to dispense with my services.

"Wait at least, Noah," he said, "until after the shooting season is over. I expect my sister Ella and her husband, and a large party down next week. No one can point out the best haunts of the game like you. This will give me time to procure some one in your place."

I named George Norton as a fitting person to fill the vacant situation. He promised to appoint him in my place, but insisted on my staying with him until the end of October.

Reluctantly I complied. The words he had carelessly spoken respecting his sister, had sent a fresh arrow through my heart. She, for whose sake I had committed that fearful deed, in the hope of acquiring wealth, was now the bride of another. How had I dared to form a hope that one so far removed from me by birth and education would ever condescend to cast one thought on me? Blind fool that I had been! I was conscious of my madness now, when I had forfeited my own soul to obtain the smiles of one who could never be mine.

The gay party arrived in due time at the Hall, and Sir Walter forgot its old possessor, the friend of his boyhood, the gay, roistering, reckless man who slept so quietly in the old churchyard, while pursuing his favorite sport.

Captain Manners, the husband of my beautiful Ella, was a fine, dashing-looking officer, and I felt bitterly jealous of him whenever I saw him and his young bride together. In spite of her sables, she was all smiles and sunshine—the life and soul of the party at the Hall.

One fine afternoon—I shall never forget it!—I was following the gentlemen with the dogs, when we came to the fatal spot where Mr. Carlos had been murdered.

I had never trod that path since the night of his death, though, in my dreams, I constantly revisited the spot, and enacted the revolting scene in all its terrible details. But there was no avoiding it now. I felt as if every eye was upon me, and I stooped to caress the dogs, in order to conceal the agitation that trembled through my frame.

Just as we drew near the gate, Sir Walter fired at a partridge, which fell among the long fern just at my side.

"Hulle, Noah! pick up that bird. 'Tis a splendid cock," cried Sir Walter.

I parted the fern with trembling hands to do his bidding. The

bird lay dead on the very stone over which my unhappy father's life-blood had gushed. I saw the fresh, warm drops that had flowed from the breast of the bird, but beneath was a darker stain. I tried in vain to lift the creature from the ground. Before me lay the bleeding, prostrate form of Mr. Carlos, with the tender reproach gleaming in his eyes through the deepening mists of death. My senses reeled—I saw no more—I sank down in a fit,—the first of those dreadful epileptic fits which have since been of such constant recurrence.

When I recovered, Sir Walter was supporting me, and Mrs. Manners, who had followed her husband to the field, was fanning me with a small branch of sycamore leaves.

"He's coming to," she said, in a gentle voice. "Why Noah,"—addressing herself to me—"what ails you? Were you ever this way before?"

I answered very faintly, "No; but I had not been well for some time past. And when I stooped to lift the bird, every object seemed to turn round with me, and looked first red and then black—and I remembered nothing more."

"You must be bled, Noah," said Sir Walter, kindly; "this is a clear case of blood to the head. Go home, and I will send Dr. Pinnoch to see you as I return to the Hall."

"I am better now," I replied, glancing towards Mrs. Manners, who was regarding me with looks of interest and compassion. "To tell you the truth, Sir Walter, I have not felt like myself since Mr. Carlos was killed. It gave me a dreadful shock. It was on this very spot where he was murdered. That stone is stained with his blood. When I saw it just now, it brought the whole scene so vividly before me, that it made me ill."

"No wonder," said Ella, thoughtfully. "My poor dear uncle! He was the best-hearted man in the world—and was so fond of you, Noah."

"He had a good right to be," returned Sir Walter. "You are not perhaps aware, Flora," he added, in a low voice, "that our friend Noah is his son."

"Indeed!" cried she; "that accounts for the affection we both felt for him when a boy—the interest we feel for him still."

"I wish I was more deserving of your good opinion," I said. "But believe me, Mrs. Manners, I shall retain, during my life, a grateful remembrance of your kindness."

I lifted my hat with profound respect, and looked long and sadly upon her—it was for the last time—(she followed her husband to India, and I never saw her again) : and, whistling to my dogs, I pursued my solitary way.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

MY MOTHER AND THE SQUIRE.

FROM that hour I became a prey to constant remorse. My health declined, and my mother at last remarked the change in my appearance ; but at that time I am certain she had no idea of the cause.

"Noah," she said, one night, as we were crouching over the fire, for it was winter, and very cold—"you are much changed of late. You look ill, and out of spirits ; you eat little, and speak less. My dear son, what in the world ails you ?"

"I am tired of this place, mother. I should like to sell off, and go to America."

"And leave me for ever?"

"You, of course, would go with me."

"Never!" said my mother, emphatically. "Of all places in the world, I cannot go there."

I looked up inquiringly.

"I will give you my reasons," she continued. "Listen to me, Noah. I have never told you anything about myself ; but, before I die, it is only right that you should know all. My husband, whose name you bear, is not, to my knowledge, dead ; if living, he is in America."

"Oh, that I had been his son!" I groaned. "But, mother, proceed—proceed."

"To make matters intelligible to you, it is necessary that I should go back to my early days. I was the only child of a poor shoemaker in St. Alban's. My father was reckoned a good hand at his trade; but he was sadly addicted to drink; for ten years before he died, I never remember his going one night to his bed sober. My poor mother was a neat, quiet little woman, who did all in her power to keep things straight. But first one piece of household furniture went, and then another, until we were left with bare walls and an empty cupboard.

"Annie," said my mother, "this won't do. You must go out and work for your living; you cannot stay at home and starve."

"And you, mother?"

"God will take care of me, my child. I cannot leave your father; I must work for him—he is my husband; and, in spite of this dreadful vice, I love him still."

Her constancy and patient endurance, under a thousand privations, was wonderful.

I was reckoned a very pretty girl; all the neighbors said so, and I thought so myself. They were sorry for our altered circumstances. They respected my mother; and, though they blamed my father, they pitied him as well as blamed—he had been a general favorite before he became lost to himself and us)—and did all in their power to assist my mother in her distress. One of these sympathising friends was the dressmaker employed by the great lady of the parish. This woman got me into service as waiting-maid to the young ladies of the Grange.

Miss Elinor Landsmeer was on the eve of marriage with Mr. Carlos; and she used to talk to me a great deal about her lover, while I was dressing her hair of a night. "He was so handsome," she said, "so good-natured and merry. He danced and sang so well, rode so gallantly, and was such a capital shot. He was admired and courted by all the ladies; and she considered herself the most fortunate girl in the world to have secured the affections of such a charming young man. And then, Annie, besides all these advantages of person and manners, he is so *rich*—so *immensely rich*, he can indulge me in my taste for pictures, and books, and dress, without ruining himself. Oh, I shall be so happy—so happy!—and then she would clap her little white hands, and laugh in childish glee. And very young she was, and very pretty too;—not a showy sort of beauty, but soft and gentle,—not gay and dashing, like some of her elder sisters. They were all engaged to men of rank and fashion; and they laughed at Miss Elinor for marrying an untitled man. But she was so much in love with Mr. Carlos, that she was as happy as a lark.

"When I saw Mr. Carlos, I thought she was, indeed, a fortunate young lady; and I could not help envying her the handsome rich lover who was so soon to make her his bride.

"I always liked waiting on my pretty young lady; but I felt a double pleasure in doing so when Mr. Carlos was by. He often

joked Miss Elinor on my good looks, and would ask her 'if she was not jealous of her pretty waiting-maid ?'

" 'Oh, no,' she would laughingly reply. ' I am like you, Walter,—I don't like ugly people about me. Annie is as good as she looks. Cannot you find a good husband for her among your tenants ?'

" 'I'll do my best,' he said, in the same bantering tone. 'Bye-the-bye, Annie—if that is your name—what do you think of my valet, Mr. Noah Cotton ?'

" 'What an antiquated name !'—and my mistress laughed out. ' Was he brought up in the Ark ?'

" 'Names go by contraries, my dear,' said Mr. Carlos. ' Noah is a deuced handsome fellow; not soft, as his name would imply, but shrewd and clever—as sharp as a needle. I think he would suit Annie exactly; and you and I will stand godfather and godmother for all the little Shems, Hams, and Japhets they may happen to place in their ark.'

" 'Fie, Walter, fie ! You make Annie blush like a rose. Look at him, Annie, the next time he comes in, and tell me what you think of the fine husband Mr. Carlos has provided for you.'

" 'Oh, Miss Elinor,' I cried, dropping a low courtsey, ' it is very kind of Mr. Carlos; but I never look at the servants. I am too young to marry.'

" But I did look at Mr. Cotton. He was very attentive to me, and I soon thought him all that his master had said he was. I did not love him, but I foolishly imagined that it was a fine thing to have a sweetheart, and to be married, like my young mistress. And Noah Cotton was a farmer's son, and better educated than most people in our class. He had a good place, and was a great favorite with his master, and could afford to keep me very comfortably. So, when he told me that he preferred me to all the girls he had ever seen, and asked me to marry him, I said that I would consult my mistress, and, if she approved of it, I had not the least objection. Miss Elinor was enchanted with it. She said it would be capital; that we should be married on the same day with her and Mr. Carlos; that she would buy my wedding-suit, and the Squire would pay the parson the fees; and that we should go with them abroad, in the same capacity we then held.

" And it all took place as she promised. I was dressed in white muslin, trimmed with white ribbons, and just one moss rose-bud in

my bosom, and another in my hair. Miss Elinor put them in herself; and then, when I was dressed, she took my hands in hers, and turned me all round, to see that all was neat and nice, and she kissed my forehead, and said that I looked charming—that any man might be proud of such a little wife; and she called her own bridegroom into her dressing-room, to come and look at me before I went to church.

"Mr. Carlos seemed quite struck with my appearance, and declared 'that I looked as handsome as my mistress—that Noah was a very fortunate fellow; and if he had not been going to marry his own dear Elinor, he would have married me himself.'

"This was all a joke then. My mistress did not like it, however. She did not laugh, and looked very grave for some minutes, and was very hard to please for some days after the wedding.

"It did not strike me then, for I was too happy and too vain to think of anything but myself; but it has often struck me since that Mrs. Carlos was jealous of me from that hour.

"Mr. Carlos took his bride to Italy, and we went with them to a great many different countries and large cities. It was rather dull for me, for I could not speak the strange outlandish lingo of those foreign lands; and by the time one began to know a few words, we were off to another place, where we were as ignorant as we were before.

"After the first three months of our marriage, my husband grew very cross, and was jealous of every man who spoke civilly to me, though, God knows, at that time I was very fond of him; and never gave him the least cause for his suspicions." He was an obstinate, stern-tempered man, a strict Presbyterian, and very averse to any innocent amusements, in which I greatly delighted. Thus matters went on from day to day, until I not only ceased to love him, but wished, from my very heart, that I had never married him. I no longer tried to please him, but did all in my power to vex and aggravate him, in the hope that he would put a favorite threat of his in practice, and run away and leave me.

"My master always reprimanded my husband when he spoke sharply to me, and told him, that he was not worthy of such a treasure; but his interference only made matters worse.

"I often complained to Mrs. Carlos of Noah's cruel treatment, but she always excused him, and said that it was I that was to blame; that I made crimes out of every little freak of temper, and

that instead of conciliating my husband, I made the breach wider by insults and reproaches, and took no pains to please him; that if she were to behave in the same way to Mr. Carlos, she should not wonder at his disliking her.

"These observations wounded my pride. I thought them cruel and unjust, and I left her room in tears. Mr. Carlos met me on the stairs. I was crying bitterly, partly out of anger, and partly in the hope of making my mistress sorry for what she had said.

He asked me what grieved me so, and I told him how I had been treated by Noah, and described in exaggerated terms the reproof I had got from his wife. Mr. Carlos pinched my cheek and told me to dry my eyes, for crying spoilt my beauty; and not to care for what Noah or my mistress said to me; that he was my friend, and loved and respected me too much to suffer me to be ill-used.

"I felt proud of my master's sympathy, and lost no opportunity to increase it, and attract his attention. You may guess, my son, how all this ended. My master conceived a violent passion for me, which I was not slow in returning, and we carried on our intimacy with such circumspection, that for two years it escaped the vigilant eyes of my husband, and the fretful jealousy of my mistress. The fear of detection made me very cautious in the presence of the injured parties. I appeared more anxious to please my mistress, and more distant and respectful to Mr. Carlos, while I bore with apparent patience and resignation the ill-humor of my now detested husband. For the above-named period, both were deceived, and it was during this season of crime and hypocrisy that you, my son, were born. The startling resemblance you bore to your real father did not escape my husband's observation, and called forth some of his bitterest remarks.

"I, for my part, swore that the child was the image of him; and in order to lull his suspicions, conferred upon it the odious and hated name of Noah.

"My mistress often visited my chamber during my confinement. Once, she brought Mr. Carlos with her to see the baby. 'It is a beautiful little cherub!' he cried, kissing it with all his heart in his eyes, 'the picture of Annie.'

"You will laugh at me, Walter," said my mistress gravely, "but I think the child is so like you."

"She looked him steadily in the face as she said this. I thought he would have let the babe drop, he did so stammer and color as he

tried to laugh her words off as a good joke: As to me, my face burnt like fire, and I drew up the bed-clothes in order to conceal it. She looked first at me, and then at Mr. Carlos. There needed no further witness of our guilt. We were both convicted by conscience, yet boldly endeavored to affect indifference."

"I see how it is," she said, bursting into tears, "you have both cruelly wronged me. Yet, for this poor babe's sake, I pray God to forgive you."

"She kissed the infant with great tenderness, (she never had one of her own,) laid it in the bed beside me, and withdrew in tears. My heart smote me, and I wept too. The Squire bent over me, and kissing the tears from my eyes, said in a whisper, 'Annie, the cat is out of the bag. My darling, you cannot stay here. I will get a carriage and take you to London. You will be well taken care of, and I can see you whenever I like, without the painful restraint we are forced to put upon our actions here.'

"I did not answer. I was sorry for my mistress, and ashamed of my own base conduct. At that moment I almost felt as if I hated him."

"It was some days before I was able to be moved from my bed; but I saw my mistress no more. The girl who waited upon me, and who was well paid by Mr. Carlos for her attendance, told me that she was very ill, that the doctor visited her twice a day, and said that she must be kept very quiet, and nothing said or done to agitate her feelings; that she believed her sickness was occasioned by a quarrel she had had with Mr. Carlos, but she did not know what it was all about; the Squire had left her room in a great rage, and was gone from home for a week.

"I felt certain that I was the cause of this illness, and that the quarrel was about me, which made me very anxious to leave the house.

"That evening my husband came in to see me. He had been drinking freely. He sat down by the bed-side and looked cross and moodily at me. The baby began to cry, and I asked him to hold it for me a minute."

"The hateful brat!" he said, "I would rather wring its neck!"

"What an affectionate father!" I cried.

"Father!" he burst out, in a voice of thunder. "Will you dare to call *me* the father of this child?"

"Of course it is your child."

"Annie, 'tis a base lie!" he said, bending down to my pillow and hissing the words into my ear; "Mr. Carlos is the father of this child, and you cannot look me in the face and deny it. Has not God brought against you a witness of your guilt in the face of this bastard, whom you have called by my name, to add insult to injury. I could kill both you and it, did I not know that that would be but a poor revenge. No; live to deserve his scorn as you have done to deserve mine, and may this child be your punishment and curse!"

"I cowered before his just and furious anger. I saw it was useless longer to deny the truth, still more useless to entreat his forgiveness for the injury I had done him; and I drew a freer breath when he tauntingly informed me, 'that this meeting was our last; that he no longer looked upon me as his wife; that he had loved me faithfully, and I had dishonored him; and he had taken his passage for America, and would leave England for ever the next morning.'

"He was true to his word. He left me with hatred in his heart and scorn upon his lips, and I have never heard from him or seen him since.

"Mr. Carlos and I rejoiced at his departure, for he was the only person from whose anger we had anything to dread. My poor mistress suffered in silence. She never made her wrongs known to her own family or to the world.

"Mr. Carlos hired lodgings for me in London, where I lived until his wife died, which event took place a few weeks after I quitted the house. Her death, for awhile, greatly affected the Squire, and for several months he appeared restless and unhappy. Once he said to me very sorrowfully—it was a few days after her funeral—"Annie, my wife was an angel. My love for you broke her heart. With her last breath she forgave me, and begged me to be kind to you and the child. I was not worthy of her. I wish from my very soul that I had never seen you."

"These words made me very unhappy, for I adored Mr. Carlos, and dreaded the least diminution of his regard; and I could not help feeling deep remorse for the share I had had in the untimely death of my beautiful young mistress. I grew sad and melancholy, and Mr. Carlos, who really loved me and my child better than anything in the world, and would have married me had my husband's death rendered that event possible, brought me down to F——, and established me at the porter's lodge, where he could see and converse

with me every day. It was well-known in the neighborhood on what footing I stood with the Squire, though you, my poor boy, never suspected the fact. You may now perceive, Noah, how great has been our loss in Mr. Carlos. I have lost a kind friend and protector, a husband in everything but the name, and you an affectionate friend and father. Do not urge me to leave this place. When I die I wish my bones to lie in the same churchyard with his, although his rank hinders me from sharing his grave.

My mother ceased speaking, and sat with her hands folded complacently in her lap, and I glared upon her for some time in gloomy silence. She appeared tranquil, scarcely conscious of the crimes she had committed. Was she not as much a murderer as I was a murderer, with only this difference, that I had struck my victim suddenly and quickly, she had tortured hers for two whole years, until she sank broken-hearted into an early grave; and had not her sin been the parent of my own? Then I thought of her husband's terrible curse, "May that child live to be your punishment!" Was not the fearful prediction already fulfilled, although she was ignorant of it? I cannot say that I felt glad that she was no better than her son, but it seemed a palliation of my own guilt.

My mother was annoyed by my long silence.

"What are you thinking about, Noah?"

"The shocking story you have just told me. I did not think it possible, mother, that you could be so bad."

"What do you mean?" she cried out, angrily.

"I mean what I say. If this story does not lower you in your own eyes, it does in mine. Mother, I have always respected and venerated you till this moment; I can do so no longer. For, mark me, mother, as the tree is, so is the fruit. How can you expect me, the offspring of such guilt, ever to be a good man?"

"Noah, this is strange language from you. Thank God! you have done nothing at present to cause me shame or reproach."

"You don't know what I have done—what this confession of yours may tempt me to do. God knows, I would rather have been the son of the despised and injured man whose name I bear, than the bastard of the silken reprobate it was your shame to love."

"Oh, Noah! do not speak thus of your own father."

"Curse him! He has already met with his reward. And your sin, mother, will yet find you out."

I sprang from my chair to leave the room—my mother laid her hand upon my arm—her eyes were brimful of tears.

"Noah, I have not deserved this treatment from you. Whatever my faults may have been, I have been a kind mother to you."

She looked so piteous through her tears, that, savage as I felt, my heart reproached me for my harsh, cruel speech. I kissed her pale cheek and sighed, "I forgive you, my poor mother. I would that God could as easily pardon us both; but He is just as well as merciful, and we are great sinners."

She looked inquiringly at me, as I lighted the candle and strode up to bed:

CHAPTER XLIX.

EVIL THOUGHTS—THE PANGS OF REMORSE.

All day I toiled hard on my farm to drown evil thoughts. If I relaxed the least from my labor, the tempter was ever at hand, urging me to commit fresh crimes; and night brought with it horrors that I dared not think of in the broad light of day. I no longer cared for wealth. The hope of distinguishing myself in the world had died out of my heart. But industry always brings a reward for toil; and in spite of my indifference, money accumulated, and I grew rich.

My household expenses were so moderate (for I shunned all society), that every year I put by a large sum, little caring by whom it might hereafter be spent. My mother sometimes urged me to marry, but I slighted her advice on that head. The history of her wedded life was enough to make me eschew the yoke of matrimony.

My old craze for leaving the country was still as strong as ever; but I had given a solemn promise to my mother to remain in England as long as she lived. Often as I sat opposite to her in the winter evenings, I wished it would please God to take her. It was very wicked; but I never could meet her eyes without fearing lest she should read my dreadful secret in the guilty gloom of mine. I had loved her so devotedly when a boy, that these sinful thoughts were little less than murder.

There was one other person whom I always dreaded to meet, and that was Mrs. Martin, the mother of my unfortunate victim. This

woman never passed me on the road without looking me resolutely in the face. There was a something which I could scarcely define in her earnest regard ; it was a mixture of contempt and defiance —of malignity and a burning thirst for revenge. At any rate, I feared and hated her, and wished her either dead or out of my path.

Fortunately for me, she heard of a situation likely to suit her in a distant parish, but lacked the means to transport herself and her little daughter thither. I was so eager to get rid of her, that I sent her anonymously ten pounds to further that object. My mother and her gossips imagined the donation came from the Hall, and were loud in their praises of Sir Walter, and his generous present to the poor widow. But Sir Walter Carlos had no such motives as mine to stimulate his bounty.

It was just about this period that I fell sick of a dangerous and highly infectious fever. The house was of course deserted. The doctor and my mother were the only persons who approached my sick-bed, the latter had all the fatigue and anxiety of nursing me herself, and she did not shrink from the task.

The good, the happy, the fortunate, the lovely, and the beloved, those to whom life is very dear, and the world a paradise, die, and are consigned by their weeping friends and kindred to the dust. But a despairing, heaven-abandoned, miserable wretch like me, struggled through the horrors of that waking night-mare of agony, the typhus fever; and once more recovered to the consciousness of unutterable woe.

Delirium, like wine, lays bare the heart, and shows all its weakness and its guilt, revealing secrets which the possessor has for half a life carefully hid. This, I doubt not, was my case, although no human lip ever revealed to me the fact.

When I left my bed, I found my mother gliding about the house, the very spectre of her former self. Her beautiful auburn hair, of which she was so proud, and which, when a boy, I used to admire so much in its glossy bands, was as white as snow. Her bright, blue living eye had lost all its fire, and looked dim and hopeless, like the eyes of the dead. Alarmed at her appearance, I demanded if she was ill.

She shook her head, and said, "that her anxiety during my illness had sadly pulled her down. But I need not ask any questions. God had humbled her greatly. Her sin had found her out." And

then she hurried from me, and I heard her weeping hysterically in her own room.

"Could I have betrayed myself during the ravings of fever?" I trembled at the thought; but I dared not ask.

After this, no confidence existed between me and my mother. During the day I labored in the field, and we saw little of each other. At night, we sat for hours in silence—I with a book, and she with her work—without uttering a word. Both seemed unwilling to part company and go to bed, but we lacked the moral courage to disclose the sorrow that was secretly consuming us.

Years passed on in this cheerless manner—this living death. My mother at length roused herself from the stupor of despair. She read the Bible earnestly, constantly; she wept and prayed, she went regularly to chapel, and got what the Methodists call religion. Her repentance was deep and sincere; she gradually grew more cheerful, and would talk to me of the change she had experienced, urging me, in the most pathetic manner, to confess my sins to God, and sue for pardon and peace through the blood of the Saviour. My heart was closed to conviction—I could neither read nor pray. The only thing from which I derived the least comfort was in sending from time to time, large sums of money anonymously to Sir Walter Carlos, to relieve him from difficulties to which he was often exposed by his reckless extravagance.

The beautiful Ella, the idol of my boyhood and youth, died in India. I heard the news with indifference; but when I saw the lovely orphan girl she had left to the guardianship of her brother, I wept bitter tears, for she reminded me of her mother at the same sinless age; and the sight of her filled my mind with unutterable anguish, recalling those days of innocent glee that the corrosive poison of guilt had blotted from my memory.

My Paradise was in the past, but the avenging angel guarded the closed gates with his flaming sword. My present was the gulf of black despair; my future was a blank, or worse. Oh, agony of agonies!—how have I contrived to endure so much, and yet live?

Death! the good alone can contemplate death with composure. Guilt is a dreadful coward. The bad dare not die. My worst sufferings are comprised in this terrible dread of death. I have prayed for annihilation—but this ever-haunting fear of after punishment forbids me to hope for that. The black darkness—the soul-scorching fire—the worm that never dies—the yells of the d——d: these

I might learn to endure ; but this hell of conscience—this being cast out for ever from God and good—what obstinacy of will could ever teach me to bear this overwhelming, increasing sense of ill ?

* * * * *

Ten long years have passed away ; the name of Squire Carlos is almost forgotten. People used to talk over his death at alehouses, and by the roadside, but they seldom speak of him now. A splendid monument covers his mouldering dust. The farmers lounge around it on the Sabbath, and discuss their crops and the news of the village. They never glance at the marble slab, or read the tale it tells. The old Hall has passed into other hands. Sir Walter dissipated his inheritance, and died childless in a distant land. The lovely little girl is gone, no one knows whither. The homage of the rising generation is paid to the present Lord of the Manor, and the glory of the once proud family of Carlos is buried in the dust with the things that were.

Why cannot I too forget ? This night, the anniversary of the accursed night on which I first shed blood, and that the blood of a father, is as vividly impressed upon my mind as though ten long years had not intervened. How terribly long have they been to me ! Is there no forgiveness for my crime ? Will God take vengeance for ever ?

My mother still lives, but her form droops earthward. Sad, silent and pale, her patient endurance is my perpetual reproach. I feel that my crime is known to her, that her punishment is as terrible as my own. I took up her Bible the other day from the little table on which she had left it, and unclosing the volume, my eyes were arrested by these awful words—"The seed of the adulterous bed shall perish." I felt that I was doomed—that the sins of my parents had been visited on me : and the horrible thought brought consolation. I am but a passive instrument in the hands of an inexorable destiny. Why continue this struggle with fate ? Conscience will not be cheated. Night came, and the delusion vanished ; the horrors of remorse are upon me. I feel that I am responsible for the acts done in the flesh, "that as a man sows, so must he reap." The burden of my soul is intolerable ; when shall I find rest ?

* * * * *

Another year has vanished into the grave of time. My mother, my poor mother, is at last gone. She died calmly and full of hope. She told me that she knew all—had known it since my illness. The

sad conviction of my guilt at first plunged her in despair, then brought repentance, and repentance hope, forgiveness, peace. She had wept and prayed for me for years. She trusted that I should yet find mercy through my Saviour's blood.

It was not until she lay dead before me, that I knew how dear she was, what a dreadful blank her absence made in my home. I no longer had her eye to dread; but, like the little children who huddle together in the dark, was afraid of being alone—afraid even in noon-day, of something, I knew not what.

Benjamin, the old servant who has lived with me ever since I came to the Porched House, grieves with me over the loss of a kind mistress. I used to be sullen and reserved to honest Ben; I am glad to talk to him for companionship. My dog, too, has become inexpressibly dear; he sleeps at the foot of my bed at night. Oh, that he could scare away the demons that haunt my pillow! Ben advises me to take a wife. He says that I should be happier with a young woman to look after the house. He may be right. But, alas! what can I do? Will any woman whom I could love condescend to unite her destiny with an old, care-worn man like me?

The iron hand of remorse has bent my once active figure, and turned my dark locks grey before my time. How can I ask a young girl to love and obey me?

Tush!—I have wealth,—who knows my guilt? Have I not kept the secret for years? Can I not keep it still? A good woman might lead me to repent, and teach me how to pray. I will marry.

* * * * *

Providence, if Providence still watches over a wretch like me, has thrown a lovely, simple girl in my way. The evil spirit was upon me, the wrath of God spoke in tones of thunder, and the murdered stood visibly before me face to face. Nature and reason yielded to the shock, and the fatal secret trembled on my lips. In that hour of mental agony, she did not disdain to take me to her humble home, to soothe and comfort the fear-stricken stranger. My heart is melted with love and gratitude. I feel a boy once more, and the sins of my manhood are lost in the dim shadows of by-gone years.

* * * * *

She is mine! She regards me as her benefactor. My Sophy—my darling wife! She is the good angel sent by a relenting God

to snatch me from perdition! My heart cleaves to my new-found treasure, and, wonder of wonders! she loves me. Loves me—the murderer! While her arms encircle me, the hot breath of the fiend ceases to scorch my brain.

* * * * *

My felicity has been of short duration. The mother of Martin has returned, and is living in our immediate neighborhood. This bodes me no good. The raven of remorse is again flapping her black wings around my head. My sleep is haunted by frightful dreams. "There is no peace for the wicked." The sight of this woman fills me with dismay.

* * * * *

My wife is unhappy. She does not complain, but her cheeks are deadly pale, and she is wasted to a shadow. I dare not inquire the cause of her grief. I remember the sad patient face of my mother, and I tremble lest Sophy has discovered my guilt.

* * * * *

Oh God! she knows it all. She asked me a question yesterday that has sealed my doom. Instead of falling at her feet and pouring out the sorrows of my heart, I spoke harshly to her—even threatened to strike her, if she alluded to the subject again. Will she be able to keep the dreadful secret? I tremble before a young girl—I dare not meet her eyes. If she breathes a word to the mother of Martin, I am lost.

* * * * *

Here the felon's manuscript abruptly terminated. Sophy still held it tightly in her hand, although her eyes, now blinded with tears, were unable to trace a single letter of the concluding page.

"My poor husband!" at last she sobbed, "the punishment of Cain was light when compared with yours. Oh! let me hope that He who willeth not the death of a sinner, has accepted your repentance and pardoned your sin."

A gentle grasp was laid upon the shoulder of the mourner, and she looked up into the dark, expressive face of the hunchback.

She, too, had her tale of sorrow. Their mother was dead, but her end was peaceful and full of humble hope, and Mary, the pious Mary, could not wish her back. She had no home now—she had come to share the home of her more fortunate sister. At first, she could not comprehend the cause of Sophy's tears, of her deep distress; for the news of Noah Cotton's arrest and death had not

reached her, while in close attendance upon the obscure death-bed of her mother.

What a mournful history Sophy had to tell, and how deeply Mary sympathised in all her afflictions! Left in comfortable and even affluent circumstances (for the lawyer employed to wind up Noah Cotton's affairs found that he had large sums invested in several banks, and all his property was willed to his wife), Sophy was no longer haunted by the dread of poverty, but she often was heard to say, with a sigh, that poverty, though a great evil, was not the greatest she had had to contend with; that much as she had in former days murmured over her humble lot while working for daily bread, she was far happier than in the possession of wealth that had been acquired by dishonest means, and which might emphatically be called *the wages of sin!* "A little that the righteous hath is better than great riches of the ungodly."

CHAPTER L

T R U S T I N G O D .

A FEW words more, and my tale is ended.

The death of Noah Cotton, fraught as it was with agony to his wife, was the means of rescuing the child of his first love, Ella Carlos, from ruin—the little girl, whose striking likeness to her mother had made such an impression on the mind of her unfortunate and guilty lover. After the death of Sir Walter Carlos, who was the last of his name, and saving the young Ella Manners, his sister's orphan child, the last of his race, the estate at F—— was sold to pay his debts, and the noble property, that had been several ages in the family, passed into the hands of strangers. The young Ella, left dependent upon the charity of an aunt of her father's, married the curate of a small parish not many miles from H——, in the county of S——. The match was one of pure affection; the beautiful young girl brought no fortune to her husband. Mr. Grant's income was less than £150 per annum; but in the eyes of love, it seemed sufficient for all their wants. Several years passed away, and the young couple, though obliged to dispense with most of the luxuries of life, did not repent the imprudent step they had taken.

Ella was the happy mother of three fine children, and she nearly doubled her husband's slender income by teaching a small but select school. At length the day of trial came. Mr. Grant was taken ill, and was obliged to relinquish his parochial duties. Ella's time was devoted entirely to her sick husband. The school was broken up, and after a long and severe affliction, which consumed all their little savings, the curate died deeply regretted by his flock, by whom he was justly beloved; and such was the poverty of his circumstances, that his funeral and decent mourning for his wife and children, were furnished by subscription. After the melancholy rite was over, the widow found herself and her young children utterly destitute.

"I have hands to work—I must not despair," she said, as she divided the last morsel of bread she had among the children, reserving none for herself; "I have trusted in God all my life, and though it has come to this, I will trust in his mercy yet."

She sat down by the window, and looked sadly towards the churchyard. She could scarcely, as yet, realize the truth, that her husband was sleeping there, and that she, the cherished idol of his heart, had prayed for daily bread from the Great Father, and was fasting from sheer want. It was a bleak, cold day—the autumnal wind was stripping the sallow leaves from the trees, and roaring like a hungry demon among the shivering branches; a little sparrow hopped upon the window-sill and relieved his hunger by picking up some grass-seeds that the children had gathered in the ear, and left by accident there—and while the poor mourner watched the bird through her tears, the text which so touchingly illustrates the providential care of the Creator, recurred to her memory "Fear not, ye are of more value than many sparrows;" and she dried the tears from her eyes, and felt comforted.

The postman's sharp rap at the door roused her from her vision of hope and trust, and she was presented with a letter. Alas! the postage was unpaid. To her, who had not a single penny, this was a severe disappointment.

"John Hays, I cannot take in the letter."

"Why not, ma'am; I'm sure 'tis directed to you."

"Yes—but I have no money—I cannot pay the post."

"'Tis only a shilling."

"It might as well be a pound, John. You must take it back."

"No, ma'am, that's just what John Hays won't do. I ain't

over rich myself, but I will trust you with the shilling, and take my chance. That letter may bring you news of a fortē."

Mrs. Grant read the letter ; honest John, leaning against the open door, eyed her all the while. At length she clasped her hands together and burst into tears.

"Oh lauk ! oh lauk !" he cried, shaking his head ; "there's no luck arter all."

Mrs. Grant shook him heartily by the hand. "Your money is safe, John ; the letter does contain good news—news most unexpected and surprising. Thanks be to God ! no one ever trusted Him in vain."

The letter which gave such relief to her mind, was from the lawyer employed by Mrs. Cotton in arranging her husband's affairs. It apprised Mrs. Grant of the sum of money found after his death in Noah Cotton's bureau, to which she was the lawful heir, and requesting her for the necessary documents that would enable him to transfer it to her.

This unhoped-for piece of good fortune enabled Mrs. Grant to emigrate with her children to Lower Canada, where a brother of Mr. Grant's had been settled some years. She opened a school in one of the principal towns, and became a rich and prosperous woman.

Her eldest son is now a surgeon in good practise ; her youngest a pious minister ; her daughter the wife of a respectable merchant. In the hour of adversity, let us cling close to the Great Father, and he will not leave us without daily bread.

CHAPTER LI.

FISHING ON THE BANKS.

FLORA finished her story, but she wanted courage to read it to her husband, who was very fastidious about his wife's literary performances. And many long years passed away, and they had known great sorrows and trials in the Canadian wilderness, before she again brought the time-worn manuscript to light, and submitted it to his critical eye.

And because it pleased him, she, with the vanity natural to her sex, to say nothing of the vanity so common to the author, thought that it might find favor with the public.

They had just reached the banks of Newfoundland, when she commenced writing Noah Cotton, and the ship still lay there in rain and fog, when she brought it to a close.

The condition of the *Anne* and her passengers was little to be envied. In the steerage, the provisions of the emigrants were nearly exhausted, and the allowance of execrable, stinking water was diminished to a pint a day per head. Famine already began to stare them in the face. They had been six weeks at sea, and the poorer emigrants had only provided necessities for that period. The Captain was obliged to examine the stores that still remained, and to charge the people to make the most sparing use of them until they made land.

The improvident, by this time, were utterly destitute, and were fed by the Captain, who made them pay what little they could towards their support. This, Mr. Lootie told them, was an act of tyranny, for the Captain was bound to feed them as long as he had a biscuit in the ship. Indeed, he lost no opportunity of fostering dissensions between Boreas and his people, and the difficult position in which the old sailor was placed was rendered doubly so by the mischievous and false representations of this base-minded man.

The poor emigrants grew discontented, as their wants daily increased, and had no longer spirits to dance and enjoy themselves; yet some sort of excitement seemed absolutely necessary to keep their minds from preying upon themselves and each other.

Now would have been the time for Mr. S—— to have proved his Christian ministry, and tried by his advice, and the gentle application of that unerring balsam for all diseases of mind and body, the Word of God, to reconcile these poor people to their situation, and teach them to bear with fortitude the further trials to which they might be exposed.

But at this critical period of the voyage, he kept aloof, and seldom made his appearance upon the deck, or if he did steal out for a constitutional promenade, he rarely exchanged a salutation with the passengers.

Not so Mr. Lootie. The little brown man had roused himself from his lair, and was all alive. He might constantly be seen near the forecastle, surrounded by a set of half-famished young fellows, enjoying a low species of gambling, well known to school-boys as "Pitch and Toss," "Chuck Farthing," and other equally elegant terms, quite worthy of the amusement.

There are some minds so base, that they only require a combination of circumstances, to show to what depths of meanness they can stoop.

Mr. Lootie's was a mind of this class. He felt no remorse in replenishing his pockets from the scanty resources of these poor emigrants, joining in the lowest species of gambling, in order to win their money, part of which, as a sort of excuse to himself, he expended in liquor, in order to reconcile his victims to their loss. For with very few exceptions, he was always the winner.

Even the solitary sixpence, the sole fortune of the brother Muckleroys, found its way into the pocket of the rapacious defaulter.

Flora watched these proceeding until she could control her indignation no longer, and accosting Mr. Lootie on deck, she remonstrated with him on his immoral and most ungentlemanly conduct. He replied, with a sneer, "They were fools. He had as much right to take advantage of their folly as another. Some one would win their money if he did not. The people were hungry and disappointed ; they wanted amusement, and so did he, and he was not responsible to Mrs. Lyndsay, or any one else, for his conduct."

Flora appealed to his conscience.

The man had no conscience. It had been hardened and rendered callous long years ago, in the furnace of the world ; and she turned from his coarse, unfeeling face with sentiments of aversion and disgust.

She next tried to warn his simple victims against venturing their little all in an unequal contest with an artful, designing man. In both cases her good intentions were frustrated. The want of employment, and the tedium of a long, dull voyage, protracted under very unfavorable circumstances, an insufficiency of food and water, the want of the latter in particular rendering them feverish and restless, made the emigrants eager for any diversion sufficiently exciting to rouse them from the listless apathy into which many of them were fast sinking. They preferred gambling, and losing their money, to the dullness of remaining inactive ; and the avarice of their opponent was too great to yield to a woman's arguments. Mr. Lootie was a person who held dogs and women in contempt, and in return, he was hated and despised by the one, and shunned and disliked by the other ; the unerring instinct of the dog, and the refined sensibility of the woman, keenly discriminating the brutal character of the man.

In the cabin, the Lyndsays fared very little better than the emigrants in the steerage. Tea, sugar, and coffee were luxuries no longer to be thought of; they just lasted the six weeks, and one morning, Sam Fraser, with a rueful face, displayed the empty tea-pot, and conveyed the melancholy intelligence "that they were out of everything fit for Christians to eat or drink."

"Can't be helped, Sam," said the Captain, shrugging his shoulders. "We may be thankful that things aren't worse. There is still water in the hold."

"Not much of that either, sir. It's just the color of tea, sir, if it had but the flavor."

"*If*"—ah! that terrible if. What a difference it made to all concerned in its introduction into that sentence—"if it had but the flavor!" The smell of the water, when it entered the cabin, was bad enough to sicken the keenest appetite; it was sufficiently disgusting to make the strongest individual there wish that he had no nose, no taste, no recollection of a better and purer element, while drinking it. The water was dead, corrupt, stinking, and had been so for the last fortnight; but it was all they had wherewith to slake their thirst.

The breakfast this morning was reduced to a small plateful each of oatmeal porridge, made with the said *rich* water, with porter or Edinburgh ale for sauce.

A very little of this strong food satisfied Flora. The Captain and Lyndsay pronounced it "not bad;" while poor James Hawke, ate it with the tears running down his cheeks into his plate, to the great amusement of Bereas, who told him, "that he had discovered a sauce for stirabout, he never saw eaten before."

They had scarcely concluded their scanty meal, when Sam presented the Captain with a dirty, three-cornered note, which he said, Mr. Lootie had ordered him to deliver *instantly*!

"What's in the wind now?" said the old sailor. "I'm not a very good scribe, and the fellow writes such a cramped fist, that I can't make it out. Do, Mrs. Lyndsay, oblige me by reading it."

The note was very brief, very insolent, and certainly to the point. The S which commenced the Sir that headed the missive had a most forbidding appearance. The loop was formed like the lash of a horsewhip, and reached half down the epistle; thus—

"Sir—I demand the use of the tea-pot! as part of our agree-

ment. If this is longer denied, I shall look upon you as an infernal swindling old scoundrel !!!"

JAMES LOOTIE.

"AUGUST 16, 1832, brig *Anne*."

"He be d—d!" cried Boreas, in an ecstasy of rage. "But that's too good for him. Many an honest fellow meets with that fate, who would scorn to speak to such a low, mean, pitiful thief!"

"Don't put yourself into such a passion, Captain," said Lyndsay. "The man does not deserve it; it would gratify him to know that he could annoy you by his impertinence. Just send Sam up with the empty tea-pot, and your compliments, and tell him that the tea is all out, and he is quite welcome to the use of the pot for the rest of the voyage.

"Ha, ha!" said the Captain, rubbing his hands; "that's the way to exasperate him. Thank you, Mr. Lyndsay, for the suggestion. Go, Sam, and make the experiment."

In a few minutes Sam returned with a very rueful face, holding his hand to his head, minus the tea-pot.

"Well, what did the rascal say?"

"He broke my head with the tea-pot; and worse than that, sir, it will be of no further use to any one, for he pitched it into the sea, and wished us both in h—."

"Very civil, truly. And what did you say?"

"Thanked him for his good wishes, and hoped that we might have a pleasant voyage. You know, sir, I am deaf of one ear, and I pretended to misunderstand him, on purpose to anger him the more. But he let out, and swore loud enough to make the dead hear."

"Were you born deaf, Sam? or did you owe it to sickness or accident?" said Flora.

"Why, ma'am, that's rather a hard point to determine. It was a queer way in which I lost my hearing," said honest Sam, with a grin; "I'm sure it will make you laugh when I tell you how it happened, but it is true for all that. My old grandmother, who brought me up (for my father and mother died when I was very young), was a pious woman, and very anxious that I should turn out a good boy. She made me attend the Sunday-school regularly, and beat me soundly if I dared to stay away unknown to her. We used to learn texts from the Scriptures, which were printed on small, thin pieces of pasteboard. One day, instead of learning my text, which

was very hard, and the weather was hot, and I felt particularly lazy, I put it into my ear, and pretended that I had lost it, when the teacher called me up to say my task. I don't know how I contrived it, but I had thrust it in so far that I could not get it out; and I was afraid to tell Granny what had happened. This brought on an inflammation in my ear, which nearly cost me my life. The doctor extracted the text, but I have been deaf o' that ear ever siace."

"And the text?" demanded James Hawke. "Was it—'Those who have ears to hear, let them hear?'"

"I should rather think," said Flora, "it must have been—'Like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ears, and refuseth to hear the voice of the charmer, let him charm never so wisely.'"

"I don't remember what it was," replied Sam; "but I have been severely punished for my idleness and folly."

"I think that you are all suffering for my folly just now," said Boreas, "when I consented to take that insolent reptile, Lootie, on board. I have no doubt that all our misfortunes are owing to him."

"Don't dignify him into a second Jonah, Captain."

"Ah, how I should like to pitch the little wretch overboard! But hang me if there's a shark or a whale in the great deep that would condescend to swallow such a tough, ill-favored, cross-grained, pitiful rascal!"

Shortly after this colloquy in the cabin, the parties went on deck

Mr. Lootie was, as usual, diverting himself with the steerage passengers. As the Captain passed the group of gamblers, the men left off their amusement, and scowled upon him, as if they considered him in the light of a common enemy; while Lootie, quitting the game, strutted up to him with an air of insolent defiance.

"What's the meaning of your conduct to me, Captain Williams, this morning? Are you going to starve me, as you are starving the rest of the people? Why was not my tea sent to me as usual?"

"Simply, because there is none; and you must go without, like your neighbors," said Boreas, making a strong effort to control his passion before the people.

"You are a liar and a cheat!" yelled the little brown man. "I have paid for these things, and I will have them!"

"Shut up directly," said Boreas, walking straight up to him,

"or I will have you put in irons as a runaway thief, and deliver you over to the proper authorities the moment we reach Quebec. You may thank your stars that you are here, and not in gaol."

The little man snarled, and drew back, without daring a reply. The emigrants exchanged glances. Some laughed, others shrugged their shoulders, while Stephen Corrie said, aloud—

"I told you, boys, while he was making mischief between you and the Captain, that he was nobody. Now I hope you'll believe me."

"He's a mean chap," muttered another; "he has cheated me out of all my money."

"And me,"—"and me," chimed in several voices. "If the Captain gave him his deserts, he would pitch him overboard."

That's what we'll do, my hearties, and send him to look after my tea-pot, if he gives us any more of his jaw," cried Boreas, as Lootie slunk away to take refuge in his boat. "When you listen to such a fellow as that, you should be sure that he is your friend. He tries to make bad blood between us, to serve his own ends, and rob you of your little property. Now, mark me, lads, I'll have no more of this gambling carried on in the ship, and I'll make a public example of the first man that dares to disobey my orders."

"Hurra, Captain!" cried Stephen; "it's a pity you did not come to that determination a fortnight ago; it would have saved several here from ruin."

"Hold your tongue, Stephen Corrie; it's not for you to brag," cried the Glasgow lad. "You may well be more virtuous than the rest of us, when you have nothing to lose."

"True for you, my boy," returned Stephen, laughing, "I only follow the way of the world; and preach morality when I'm beyond the reach of temptation."

The next day happened to be Sunday. The calm continued; but the fog was not quite so dense, and the sun made several efforts to show his face, and dispel the haze. Flora was leaning over the side of the vessel, looking intently at some sea-weed floating upon the glassy surface of the sea, when a large grampus flung himself quite out of the water, cut an absurd caper in the air, and having accomplished a somerset, evidently to his own satisfaction, plunged once more head foremost into the deep.

"Aye—Mistress Lyndsay! what an awful length o' a beast," said a shrill voice at Flora's elbow, and she looked down into the shrivelled-up face of old Granny Williamson.

"Did ye ever see the like o' that?"

"It was very amusing," said Flora.

"Hout, woman, it makes a' my flesh creep—sure the deevil has the fashioning o' they fearsome things."

Before the old woman could communicate any more original remarks, the Captain came up, and told Mrs. Lyndsay that it was a capital day for fishing; and though it was the Sabbath, he thought that as they were situated they should not lose an opportunity of trying to increase their scanty stock of provisions.

Flora perfectly agreed with old Boreas, and he went among the people to see if any of them were provided with tackle. Only two fishing-hooks and lines could be discovered among the whole ship's crew. One of these was the property of Mr. Wright, the second mate, and the two Mackleroys held a joint partnership in the other.

The Captain baited the hooks with a piece of pork, and set Sober-sides to fish on one side of the vessel, while he tried his luck on the other, Flora standing by him, feeling the greatest interest in the success of the parties, who had made an agreement to divide equally among the passengers the fish it might be their good fortune to capture.

It has often been said "that a watched pot takes long to boil;" and for a long time, the many eyes that looked down with eager expectancy on the water, looked and watched in vain.

"Confound the fish!" cried old Boreas, losing patience—"why don't they bite?"

"They might give you two reasons, Captain," said Corrie, who was standing by—"Either, they are not hungry, or have no appetite for salt pork."

"In the latter case, I should consider them fish of taste," said Lyndsay.

"I could give you a better reason," said a hoarse voice near. All started, and turned their eyes upon the speaker. It was the preacher. "It is because you are desecrating the Sabbath, and breaking the commandments of God. How can you expect a blessing to follow such impious conduct, Captain Williams? I am astonished at a man of your age setting such a terrible example to your passengers and crew."

"Hold your gab!" cried Boreas, "and stand out of the way. He who feeds the ravens when they call upon Him, has sent the

hungry a blessing in the shape of a large fish. My eyes! what a whopper! Hurrah, my lads!—here's something to eat!"

The great cod leaped and floundered upon the deck, flapping the women's feet with its slimy tail, and coming rather unceremoniously in contact with the religious professor's black pants.

"A fish! a fish! The Captain has caught a big fish!" cried all the children in chorus. The women clapped their hands—the hungry men laughed and shouted, and measured the length of their welcome stranger, calculating how much he weighed, and how many he would feed.

"He weighs just forty pounds, over or under," said Boreas. "I have been in the trade, and can judge within a few ounces."

"There's another at the hook, Captain," cried Flora, who was holding the line. "Pull it in—I am not able."

"By Jove! so there is. And hullo! the shoe-makers will beat us, if we don't take care—see, they are getting one in bigger than ours—a perfect buster! If it is sinful to take these creature comforts, we are very thankful to God for his mercy in sending them," glancing with his one eye hard at the preacher.

"It is sin, great and heinous sin," said that individual, in his sepulchral voice; "and I think it my duty to denounce such iniquity."

"You are welcome to do so, if it affords you any amusement," returned Boreas, hauling up another great fish upon the deck, and coolly rebaiting his hook; "but I would thank you to stand back and mind your own business."

"It's my duty, man of sin, to warn you of your danger, and tell these ill-advised people not to follow your evil example."

"Tol-de-rol!" said Boreas, snapping his fingers, and casting his line overboard. "Our blessed Lord, when He was hungry, gathered ears of corn and ate them, on the Sabbath day. I and my people are starving, and we fish to obtain food to preserve us and these little ones," pointing to the children, "alive. And now, sir, you have had your answer."

The preacher regarded him with a sullen scowl, and turned away; but not without sundry threatenings of Divine vengeance, "which he was certain," he affirmed, "would follow his wicked proceedings. And you, madam," he continued, addressing himself to Flora, "I am surprised to see *you*, who ought to know better, not only

abetting this man in his iniquitous proceedings by your presence, but actually participating in his guilt!"

"If I thought he was acting wrong, Mr. S——," said Flora, "I should not be here. But I consider that he is engaged in a good work, which God has sanctioned, by giving us the food we sought."

"A false and worldly conclusion, which will be followed by the same punishment that befel the rebellious Israelites in the wilderness, when they lusted for strange food."

"The case is somewhat different. Their daily food, though distasteful to them, was constantly supplied; but some of these people have no food at all."

"They deserve to starve, for their disobedience and want of faith!"

"When our stores are exhausted," said Boreas, "those who are well supplied must contribute their stock for the general benefit. We shall not starve alone."

"How, sir! Do you expect the prudent to give up their substance to the idle and the improvident?"

This was said with much asperity of look and tone.

"Hunger knows no law—respects no property. In cases of general distress, men claim all things in common, and become Communists in downright earnest. While your locker contains a single biscuit, you will be called upon to share it with the rest."

Mr. S—— made no answer to this speech, and walked sullenly away.

Before noon, the Captain and the Mückleroys had forty noble fish lying upon the deck. Thirty of these, the Captain had caught with his own hand.

"This is a fine sight," he said. "We have reason to thank God for this great mercy, in spite of all yon sour-faced, sulky fellow may say to the contrary. He may satisfy his stomach with beef and biscuit—not a morsel off this fresh fish shall rejoice the cockles of his heart."

"Not so, Captain," said Flora. "Let us test the sincerity of his profession by sending him one of these fish as his share of the spoil, and see whether his practice is equal to his professions of superior sanctity."

"Faith, you are right! But he will never be such a d——d hypocrite as to accept it!"

"Try him."

"What shall I bet that he will send it back, with a long sermon tacked to its tail?"

"Don't bet; you would be sure to lose—that is, if I judge that man's physiognomy rightly. There is nothing good or benevolent in his face; and the face, after all, is the map of the mind."

"Well, I'll send it, just to please you. Here, Sam Fraser!—take this fish to Mr. S——, with my compliments."

Sam went, and returned with a comic smile on his face.

"Well, Sam, did he condescend to take the wages of our iniquity?"

"Aye, sir, and returns you his best thanks. He has given George Muckleroy a shilling to clean the fish for him, though it is Sunday. I think if you watch the stove, he will be cooking it himself before long."

"The devil he will! Mrs. Lyndsay, you are a witch. I could have taken my oath that he would not have touched it with a pair of tongs."

"Captain, you know little of human nature."

"But the fellow is so religious."

"So fanatical, you should say. That man never felt the sweet influences of Christianity. He deals in words—not deeds. See, here he comes, with a piece of the fresh fish to broil for his dinner. Let us go down into the cabin; the sight of us might chance to spoil his appetite."*

CHAPTER LIII.

THE STORM.

For several days after the fishing adventure, Flora was confined to her berth with severe indisposition, and was, indeed, so alarmingly ill, that at one time she thought that she would be consigned to the deep, as food for fishes, on the great banks of Newfoundland. She loathed the bad water and food, and became so much reduced by sickness, that poor little Josey had to be weaned.

It was a great blessing that the young, tender creature, suffered

* A fact.

little from the privation. She ate her meals of biscuit softened in the putrid water, with an appetite that health and hunger alone can give, and looked as rosy and as happy upon the coarse diet prepared by the kind and attentive Sam Fraser, as if it had been compounded of the finest white bread and new milk.

"Oh, what a blessing it is, my darling, that you continue so well!" said Flora, on the fourth morning after her baby's natural sustenance had been withdrawn. "I thought this illness would have been the death of you."

"Dinna distress yersel about the wean," said Mrs. Muckleroy; "the gude God takcs care o' His ain. The wee cherub is as blithe as a lark. The pure, fresh air, is baith meat an' drink to her."

Fortunately for Flora, the Captain had a consignment of old port on board, a couple of tablespoonfulls of which, mixed with a little oatmeal, twice a day, was all the nourishment she was able to take; but, in all probability, it was the means of saving her life, and preventing her from sinking from utter exhaustion.

When once more able to leave her bed and crawl upon the deck, she looked the mere shadow of her former self.

The women—with whom she was a great favorite—crowded round her to shake her by the hand, and offer their congratulations on her recovery. Their simple and affectionate expressions of regard and sympathy moved her very much.

"What depths of kindness there is in the human heart!" she thought. "How little do we understand and appreciate the minds of these uneducated people, whom we are too apt to look down upon as our inferiors. How far they surpass the hacknied children of the world in their generous devotion to those they love. Unfettered by conventional selfishness, they dare to obey the natural instincts of their humanity—to act and think with simplicity and truth. We mistrust them, because we are unacquainted with their mode of life, and the motives which influence their general conduct. They look up to us, and have boundless faith in the superiority of our position and intelligence. When will a higher Christianity than that which at present rules the world break down the wall that pride and bigotry have raised between children descended from one parent stock, and bridge the gulf of poverty and ignorance that now separates them from each other?"

"The time is coming," cries the philanthropic speculator; but

adds, with a sigh, "it will not be in our day; yet it will surely come."

Three weeks the ship had been becalmed upon the banks, the dull monotony of the dreary fog, only relieved by the ringing of a large bell and the blowing of horns, which was kept up at regular intervals during the day and night, in order to prevent the ship being run down by some larger vessel.

At length the morning came which brought a fair wind to fill the sails of the *Anne*; and her passengers looked up to the blue heavens and blessed the light of the sun. Joy and hope again beamed from every face. The little brown man's morose aspect alone remained unchanged.

The tall, lithe figure of Mr. Collins seemed to have grown two inches higher, as he paced the deck with elastic steps and head erect. The little tailor was at his post among the clouds at the mast head, seeing visions of green fields, and singing like a lark; Stephen Corrie was in an ecstasy of mirth; and Tam Grant could not cross the deck without cutting sundry mad capers which set all the rest laughing.

The women crept from their hiding-place in the dark depths of the steerage, and sat smoking their black, short pipes, and chatting in lively tones to each other. Even Granny Williamson forgot to quarrel with her daughter, and mounted a clean mutch on the occasion; the soldier Mackenzie, to scold his diminutive wife; or Mistress Macdonald, to annoy the Captain with threats of maternity, and bully her husband. The Sultan of the deck—the dour Boreas himself—resigned for once his dignity, and condescended to laugh and chat, and draw agreeable presages of the future, from the fair wind and the smiling day.

Flora felt tranquilly happy, as she sat on a camp-stool upon the deck, with Josey nestled in her arms, and old Oscar basking in the warm-sun at her feet, rejoicing in the change that a few hours had made in their prospects. The very waves that followed in their wake, and curled around their prow, flashing in the sunlight, seemed to lift up their voices and utter a strain of joyful merriment, in having escaped the thrall of the dull, lethargic mist, that had so long held them in silence and inactivity. Yesterday, and not a breath of air stirred the leaden surface of the sea. No glance from the sun's bright eye looked down upon them through the blinding, bewildering white veil, suspended between them and heaven. The mist

penetrated everywhere—it hid the sails, floated above the cold, damp, slippery deck, and entered the very cabin, chilling their hearts with apathy and gloom.

Nature had suddenly started from her mesmeric trance, and was wide awake once more ; and all the human hearts imprisoned in the *Anne* responded to her electric touch. The very ship seemed endued with living power, and bounded over the long, rolling surges as if she felt the impetus of the fresh wind that filled her canvas in all her creaking timbers.

" This is glorious, Captain ! shall we soon clear the banks ? "

" We left them behind two hours ago."

" Shall we see land before night ? "

He shook his head. It's not in the breeks of the *Anne*. She is old, and slow in her paces. With the same wind we shall be fortunate if we do so to-morrow."

Flora went to bed, hoping and praying for the fair wind to continue, and fill their sails on the morrow.

The morrow came, and filled its appointed place in the long annals of time ; and still the ship held on her course, with the same blue skies above, and the same blue desert of ocean, limitless and vast, around.

The nearer they approached the desired haven, the more contradictory and morose Mr. Lootie became. The hope which inspired all with a flutter of joyful anticipation, seemed to awaken no feelings of gratitude and thankfulness in him. He grumbled and snarled at every one and every thing.

At noon, a vessel hove in sight. It was the first that had crossed their long and lonely path ; and as she drew near, every one rushed to the deck to look at the stranger. She passed so near, that there was but a narrow path of waves between them ; and her crew, in red flannel shirts and worsted caps, seemed as much swayed by the excitement of the moment, as the half-starved passengers on board the *Anne*.

The Captain bellowed through his trumpet to inquire her name, port, and destination, as she glided by, and was answered, in the same trumpet tones—

" The barque *Mary*, of London, Captain Jones—freight, timber—ten days from Quebec—all well."

In a few minutes she was gone, soon to become a mere speck on the horizon.

Flora turned with a sigh from following her track along the deep. She was going home, and the very thought of that distant, never-to-be-forgotten home, flooded her heart with sad memories.

"Don't look so grave, Mrs. Lyndsay," said old Boreas. "In ten days we may reach Quebec. I hear Sam ringing the bell for dinner. I thought I would give you a little treat, and have ordered the cook to prepare for us a dog's body."

"A dog's body!—Captain, you could not be so cruel!" She glanced round the deck. Oscar was lying near her, his red eyes gleaming affectionately upon her through his tangled locks. "You have not, surely, ordered the poor Northumbrian's brindled slut to be killed, to give us a taste of fresh meat?"

"Why not?" said Boreas, with a grin. "To be sure she is not in prime condition; but those three fine pups of hers are as fat as butter. The Chinese eat dog, and why should not we?"

"You are not in earnest?"

"Ask Sam."

Flora was perplexed. She saw a smile on Lyndsay's face, and went to Oscar's kennel to ascertain the fact.

Now Oscar, who had three times saved the Captain's life, rejoiced in a fine greenhouse, that stood near the companion-ladder, and was taken as much care of as any of the crew. The brindled slut had thought fit to appropriate this handsome berth to herself, in which she had, a fortnight before, brought forth three fine bull-dog pups, that Flora had christened Triton, Boatswain, and Neptune.

Oscar had manifested the utmost indignation at this appropriation of his property. He had tried to expel the female invader of his rights with the most awful threats of vengeance, in the shape of snarls, barks, and ferocious growls. But Madame Brindle had claimed the law of the strongest, and, without having consulted Blackstone on the subject, had found out that possession is nine parts of the law.

For a whole day Oscar had endeavored to effect an ejection; but the brindled slut had very calmly looked out at the door and laughed at his impotent rage, to the no small amusement of Flora. Oscar at length abandoned the contest in disgust, and not only left Madame Brindle in possession, but disdained to go near his old domicile, in which his foe made herself quite at home, with her bottle-nosed family.

Flora peeped into the kennel, but Brindle had curled herself up for a comfortable nap, and did not choose to be disturbed.

"I am glad he has not killed you, poor beast," said Flora; "but I don't see the pups;" and, full of anxiety, she followed the Captain down to dinner.

The laugh was now against her; for the dog's body turned out to be a pease pudding, of which she ate very heartily, while Boreas rubbed his hands, and chuckled at the joke.

To while away the tedium of the voyage, she and Lyndsay would take it by turns to play draughts with the Captain. They always were the victors; he did not mind being beat by Lyndsay, but his pride was deeply mortified, whenever Flora won the game.

"A man may beat a man," he would grumble out, "but, d——it, I don't like being thrashed by a woman. Mrs. Lyndsay, you have no right to beat a sailor on his own deck, at checkers."

The Captain was by no means a bad-hearted man, but he had many odd peculiarities. One of these was his insisting on keeping his pipe in the large, flat-bottomed, greasy candlestick. This afternoon he missed it from its usual place.

"Sam!" he thundered, in his stentorian voice—"Sam Fraser! What the devil have you done with my pipe?"

"It's in the cupboard, sir," said Sam, obsequiously.

"How dared you put it in the cupboard, when I had found out such a *clean* place for it?"

"Why, sir,—I thought, sir, the cupboard was the best place for it."

"You thought! Sir, you have no business to think, unless I give you leave. If I had put it in the pitch-pot, you had no right to take it out, unordered by me!"

Sam bowed with the gravity of a judge, handing him the black, greasy pipe with the deference due from a subject to his sovereign prince.

The Captain had lost his eye in a storm, in which his ship (not the *Anne*) had suffered wreck. He had effected his escape through the cabin-window, and a splinter of the glass had pierced his eye and destroyed his sight. This was one of the occasions in which he had been saved by the faithful Oscar, who kept him above water until a boat picked him up. The splinter of glass was afterwards extracted by the surgeon of a man-of-war; and Boreas kept it in a

snuff-box, which he always carried about his person, and looked upon it in the light of a charm.

"While I can keep this and Oscar," he said, "I shall never suffer from shipwreck again."

It would have been a difficult matter for any one to have persuaded him to part with the one or the other of these precious relics.

A great many private letters had been entrusted to his care. This was against the law. Boreas was aware of the fact, and took advantage of it. Every dull day—Sundays especially—he brought these letters from the depths of his huge sea-chest, and amused himself by spelling them over, until he must have learned their contents by heart.

Lyndsay remonstrated with him on this dishonorable conduct.

"Hout, man!" he said, "the writers of these letters cheated the Government in sending them by me. It just serves them right. I shall read them as often as I please."

This fact should be a useful hint to persons who, for the sake of saving a trifling amount of postage, entrust letters of consequence to private hands. These letters never reached their destination. After having afforded entertainment to this rough seaman during the voyage, they were thrown overboard before the vessel arrived at Quebec.

The next day the wind continued fair, but the weather was hazy, and sultry hot. The Captain promised the first man who should descry land, a dollar and a double allowance of grog.

"I'll bet upon the little tailor," he cried, as he saw Sandy mounting with alacrity to his lofty perch. "That fellow has a great soul, though he wears a small pair of breeks. There's luck in his sharp face and keen eye."

James Hawke determined not to be outdone by the tailor, and took up an exalted position on the mast, while the rest of the passengers walked to and fro the deck, straining their eyes, and looking in all directions for the promised land. A bank of dull grey clouds obscured the distant horizon, and, for some time, they looked in vain.

A warm, resinous smell came at times upon the wind, and large masses of sea-weed floated continually past. Flora was watching these with great interest, when the little brown man, who had kept quiet for some days, sauntered to her side.

He was in a more contradictory mood than ever.

"A fine day, Mrs. Lyndsay."

"Rather hazy. It looks like rain."

"Quite the reverse. The sky is *quite* clear."

"Independent of that fog-bank."

"Fog! I see no fog. You are blind, my dear Madam. The atmosphere is *unusually* clear."

Flora stared at him. "Could the man be in his senses?" Presently she remarked, "that they must be near land, from the quantity of sea-weed floating upon the water."

"That's not sea-weed!"

"Mr. Lootie, I was born and brought up on the sea-coast—don't you think I know sea-weed?"

"Not if you call pieces of reed and grass *sea-weed*. And as to being *near* land, that's all fudge. The Captain only says so to please you."

Lyndsay, who was standing near, now took Flora's arm, and walked to the other side of the deck. "What a little, contradictory, snarling creature it is," he said. "Why do you bandy words with him? Look, here is a piece of twisted paper. I will go forward, and throw it overboard. It looks like nothing but what it is. You return to Lootie, and when it passes, say, 'there's a piece of white paper,' and just hear how he will contradict the fact."

Flora did as she was told.

Presently the paper floated just beneath the spot where they were standing.

"Ah!" cries Flora, with feigned surprise, "we must be near land. See—there is a piece of white paper."

"Pshaw! *Paper indeed!* where are your eyes? It is a *feather*—a white *feather*, belonging to some sea-fowl or other."

"A goose, perhaps, Mr. Lootie. But no, it is what I say, a piece of paper."

"A *feather*, Madam, a *feather*!"

"Why, there's writing upon it, I see the letters."

"Nonsense, it is a *feather*, speckled with black and grey. I'll swear it's a *feather*!" and his shrill voice rose almost to a scream.

Lyndsay joined the disputants, hardly able to keep from laughing in the face of the angry little elf.

"Flora, did you see the piece of paper I flung overboard just now? I thought it would set you wondering?"

"Now Mr. Lootie, what do you say to your feather?"

"That I hate senseless jokes, and the fools who make them," snarled the ex-distiller, as he retired with a face as black as a thunder-cloud.

About four in the afternoon, the clouds cleared away, the sun came out brilliantly, and the cry of "Land! land, to the left!" was sung out lustily from the mast-head.

The little tailor had won the promised reward, and it was not many minutes before he reached the deck to claim it.

Land was indeed in sight, not exactly that which they looked for. The ship was considerably out of the usual track; and was rather too near for safety to the stern mountain peak of Cape Breton. The Captain calculated it to be about fourteen miles distant before sunset, and the dark outline of rock and forest was visible to the naked eye.

It was a warm, delicious summer evening, and the smell of the pine forests, was as rich as the gales of Araby to the poor emigrants. The Captain had treated all hands to a stiff glass of grog; and the Duncans had tuned their fiddles, and young and old were assembled upon the deck for a dance.

Flora was too much entranced with the sight of land, to heed the dancers as they bounded past, shouting and laughing in their mad revel of mirth.

The moon had risen above the frowning Cape, and flooded the land and sea with light. The jollity of the passengers and crew profaned the calm grandeur of the night—the august and profound solitude of sea and sky. Gladly would she have shut out all such sights and sounds, to commune with her own heart, with nature, and with nature's God, while gazing upon such a scene, at such an hour. But "fast and furious grew the fun," and a cry from her babe whom she had left sleeping in her little cabin, faint as it was, reached her maternal ear; and she left the revellers, to attend to the wants of her child.

Josey was fretful and restless, and more than an hour elapsed before she could hush her again to sleep. She was still lying beside her on her berth, with the little creature's arms clasped tightly about her neck, when the ship seemed to reel and lurch, as if suddenly struck by a tremendous blow. Then came shouts and cries—

the trampling of feet, the creaking of ropes and chains—and still the ship plunged and tossed, with such a violent motion, that she had to hold to the berth to keep her feet. What could it all mean? was she in a dream? Everything was bright and beautiful above, when she quitted the deck. Whence then came the confusion of sounds—the hoarse roaring of winds—the dashing of waves—the fearful tossing to and fro of her ocean home? Flora gently unclasped the clinging arms of her sleeping babe, and groping her way through the dark cabin, with great difficulty succeeded in climbing the companion ladder, and bringing her head on a level with the deck.

She did not venture higher. She saw enough to convince her that woman had no place amid the horrors of such an awful scene. A sudden squall from the mountains had struck the ship. The moon had withdrawn her light; vast masses of clouds covered the sky, before so clear and brilliant. Vast sheets of foam enveloped the vessel, and huge billows thundered upon her deck. Not a stitch of canvas was to be seen; some of the sails had been rent from the mast by the gale; the rest were close furled. Lyndsay and four other men were at the rudder, to keep the ship in her course. The roaring of the winds and waves was deafening. Flora's heart beat violently for a moment, then grew calm before the grandeur of the scene.

"We are in the hands of God," she thought; "in life and death we are His. Submission to His will is the sublimity of faith."

In the cabin everything was loose. Trunks rolled from side to side. The mate had removed the light, and utter darkness prevailed. It was a long time before she could regain her little domicile—the ship pitched with such violence, that every step brought her to her knees; at length she found the door, and lifting the matrass from her berth, into which she found it impossible to climb, she took her baby in her arms, and lay down upon the heaving floor, commanding herself and her fellow-passengers to the care of God.

To sleep was impossible; but her mind seemed sustained by a lofty courage that made her feel calm in the midst of danger. This strength was not her own; it was derived from a higher source—a firm reliance on the unerring wisdom and providence of God. If death was His decree, she would try to meet it with becoming fortitude. Resistance and lamentations were alike useless; even prayers for self-preservation appeared impious. She was in His

keeping, and she felt confident that whatever might befall her and those so dear to her, was for the best.

The hurricane roared through the long, starless night. Floods of rain forced their way through the skylight, and drenched her bed. She buried her head in the wet blankets, and shivered with cold. Yet Josey slept as peacefully as ever on her mother's breast, happily unconscious of the terrors of the hour.

About four o'clock in the morning, Lyndsay opened the door of her little cabin. The water was streaming from his garments.

"Flora, are you awake?"

"Yes, darling," she cried, starting to a sitting posture; "who could sleep in such a storm?"

"It has been a dreadful night. The danger is over. The ship is no longer on the lee shore, but standing out to sea. At one time we expected that she would run upon the rocks and go down. The gale still continues, but we have plenty of sea-room. I have been hard at work all night. The men behaved like trumps,—especially old Macdonald and the Dragoon. I am going to change these wet clothes, and lie down for an hour. So content yourself, my Flora. Thank God for our deliverance, and go to sleep."

Flora had silently done that already. In a few minutes she was slumbering as peacefully as Josey—dreaming of green fields, and running brooks, and wandering with dear familiar faces, among nature's quiet haunts, in the memory-haunting eternity of the past.

CHAPTER LIII.

THE SHIP COMES TO ANCHOR, AND THE BOOK TO A CLOSE.

THE next morning, Flora hastened upon deck; but the wind was still so high, and the waves so rough, that, while there, she could not stand without holding to the ropes. The sea was covered with foam, the heavens with flying rack, which rolled in huge broken masses round and round the horizon. The land was no longer in sight, and old Ocean rolled and tossed in his unrest, as a strong man raves and tosses in the delirium of fever.

"The white mice are out this morning, Mrs. Lyndsay, said Bob Moton, who was at his old post at the helm. "Miss Josey's cradle, I'm thinking, was well rocked last night. We are now run-

ning right afore the gale. The skipper was out of his reckoning altogether. It's a mercy the ship did not founder on that cursed shore."

At noon the storm abated, with a fair wind.

"If this lasts, we shall have a glorious run," said Mr. Collins, laying down his knife and fork at dinner, "and shall most likely get clear of Anticosti before morning."

They passed this dangerous island during the night.

"I am sorry," said Flora, "that we did not see it."

"You should rather thank God, Mrs. Lyndsay. But don't be too sure—we may see too much of it yet."

The Captain's words were prophetic. Three days of stormy weather and contrary winds found the vessel tossing between Chaleur Bay and the dismal coast, whose dreary aspect sailors view with such fear. The setting sun shone upon the white, rocky cliffs of Cape Gaspé, and the fantastic rocks that surround that romantic bay; and his rising beams gleamed upon the sandy beach and desolate shores of Anticosti, with its grey forests of storm-stunted trees of horrid growth, that looked the fitting abode of the savage bear and wolf.

In Chaleur Bay they caught some fresh fish, which was indeed a seasonable mercy, as it had become painfully evident that their stock of provisions could not hold out many days longer.

On the 25th of August, they took in a pilot, off Cape Rosier, who brought some fresh provisions in his boat, and the fearful intelligence that the cholera was raging in Quebec, and spreading into the Upper Province.

This piece of information threw a damp upon the spirits of all. They had escaped the dangers of the sea, only to encounter the more terrible peril of the pestilence. "What must be, must—we all know that," said Boreas. "No man that knows me would call me a coward; but I'll confess the truth—I'm afraid of this infernal cholera; I'll be d——d if I aren't."

Every one had some prophetic fear or foreboding on the subject. Persons who had not trembled during the storm, turned pale and shuddered when the pestilence was named.

Geordie Muckleroy alone seemed perfectly indifferent about it. "That man's sic a muckle sumph, he's no afraid o' onything;" said Mrs. Mackenzie, the dragoon's little drunken wife. "The night o' the storm he must put his heid above the gangway to spier

about it ; and sic a glour as he gied at the sea, I'se never forget to my deein' day. 'Wha's a' this muckle din?' quo' he. 'Why, man, we are a' like to be drown'd in the salt brine. It's an awfu storm,' said my husband—' Come up, an' lend a'han' wi' the ropes.' 'The deil may tak' the ropes for what I care,' quo' he ; 'I'll no fash myself about ropes, or ony thin' else, the night. I'll jest gang awa' comfortably to my ain bed, an' tak' it easy.' An' to bed he went, sure enough, though his puir wife was tearing her hair, an' skirlin' for fear the hale night.'

The pilot, among the stores he brought on board, had nothing so tempting to Flora as a box of raisins, which Lyndsay purchased for her, and which was opened for the benefit of all in the cabin.

" You had better put those things out of sight ; they'll give you the cholera," said Boreas ; " they wouldn't be so bad in a pudding," he continued, musingly—" Suppose you give some of them to Hannibal, to make into a plum-pudding. There is some flour left ; it's a little musty—but hungry dogs—you know the rest."

Flora piqued herself on making a good plum-pudding ; she volunteered to prepare it for the cook, and Sam Frazer provided her with flour, water, and a board and pudding bag.

" I want eggs, Sam."

" Eggs, ma'am ?—no eggs to be had."

" Milk."

" The cow arn't calved that's to pervide that."

" Well, get me some suet."

" None in the ship. Only a little ransid butter."

" Take away the flour and the board. The idea of making a plum-pudding out of putrid water, musty flour, and raisins, is too ridiculous."

" Give me some of the raisins," said Sam, " and Hannibal will make a sea plum-pudding."

" I wonder what it will be like !" and Flora laughed, as she gave him as many raisins as he required.

It was amusing to watch the Captain at dinner, playing the petty tyrant over the poor French pilot, on whose plate he chuck'd the outside slice of the hard, tough beef, as if he had been throwing a bone to a dog. The pilot showed his white teeth, and his dark eyes blazed as he flashed them full in the Captain's face, and throwing the meat back into the dish, he strode from the table.

" Brother," said Collins—a name he seldom applied to the Cap-

tain, and only when he wished to impress him particularly on any important subject—"you had better try another tack wi' the pilot. That won't do. He's a proud, high-spirited fellow; he'll no stand ony nonsense."

"He may sit it, then. I'll treat him as I please."

"Then he'll leave you to navigate the St. Lawrence alone."

The Captain shrugged his shoulders, and said nothing.

"Let me ca' him back to the table, and apologize."

"Call him back if you like; but d— the apology!"

"I'll mak' it straight," cried Collins, and, leaving the cabin, he soon returned with the Frenchman, followed by Sam and the sea-pudding, who, placing it before the Captain with a most impressive sir, looked triumphantly across the table to Mrs. Lyndsay.

"A nice piece of duff that, Sam," said Boreas, striking his knife and fork into the fair sides of the jolly white pudding."

"Wery nice, sir," responded Sam.

"This your manufacturing, Mrs. L.?"

Flora shook her head.—"I was not going to disgrace the national dish by compounding it of such materials."

"You have been stingy of the plums, Sam. They are scarcely within hail of each other."

"He should have told the cook to whistle while he was picking them," said Flora, laughing. "I gave out plenty for a large, rich pudding."

"I'll help the youngsters first," said Boreas, handing a large slice to James Hawke; "boys love duff."

The first mouthful was enough for poor Jim. He made a horrid face, and pushed back his plate.

"Hey! what's the matter with the lad?"

"Oh, it's so nasty," said Jim, hurrying from the table. "I shall never be able to eat plum-pudding again."

The pudding looked so clean and nice, that Flora was tempted to taste it. She no longer wondered at the boy's disgust. It was made with rancid fat, bad water, and boiled in the sea-brine. To a stomach unaccustomed to such dainties, it was unpalatable in the highest degree. Yet the Captain, Mate, and Pilot ate of it, and pronounced it excellent.

"I knew how it would be," said Flora, "and yet I am baby enough to be disappointed at the result."

"The child has quarrelled with its pudding," said Boreas, "and left more for us. It's an ill wind that blows no one any good."

"Pray don't call it my pudding, Captain. I disown it altogether. There is nothing English about it."

Hannah, who had recovered her health and usefulness in a miraculous manner; since her master's quarrel with the Captain, at any rate showed an English appetite while discussing the execrable mess. Flora, who was really hungry, and longing for wholesome food, envied her the zest with which she demolished slice-after slice, and still kept sending up her plate for more.

That night they were given an awful specimen of a Canadian thunder-storm. The atmosphere was literally a-blaze with the lightning, while Heaven's dread artillery burst continuously overhead, the long mountain-chain, on the north side of the river, hurling it back from all its rocky caverns, in one deep, unbroken round.

It was a night of awful and terrific beauty. Flora had never beheld its parallel in the old country—had never seen such electric flashes of blinding light, nor heard such ear-splitting peals of thunder. For the first time their dangerous freight flashed upon her mind—she remembered the gun-powder, and clung closer to the arm of her husband.

"See how the lightning plays upon the iron rings and bolts that fasten the sails to the mast! What if it should strike the ship, dear John?"

"Don't anticipate evil, Flora. There may be danger; but as we can neither escape from it nor avert it, if it comes, it is better not to dwell upon it."

"It would be a bad job for us a'," said Mr. Collins; "but if it sud' happen, we should be blown to pieces with the ship an' ken nothing about it. I canna' imagine an easier death."

"The very suddenness of it makes it appear to me so dreadful," said Flora. "It is not pleasant to know that you are standing over a volcano—that one spark might ignite, and scatter you in fragments into the air and waters. Are these storms common in Canada?"

"I dinna ken," returned Collins; "this is my first voyage."

"They are of frequent occurrence, Mrs. Lyndsay," said Mr. Wright, who happened to be passing, "and are often accompanied with dreadful hurricanes, that sweep down everything that obstructs

their course. The awful fire at Miramichi, which took place a few years ago, and which burnt up half the forests in the country, was supposed to have been kindled by lightning. I happened to be there at the time; and though staying in a cleared part of the country with a relation of my wife's, the appearance that the fire made was so terrible, that it often haunts me in dreams."

The cabin was so close, and the lightning so vivid, that Flora, in spite of the rain, preferred walking the deck until the storm subsided, which it did before daybreak, when she retired to bed,

"And sleep protracted came with double power."

The next day brought both the beautiful shores of the St. Lawrence in sight, and Flora remained chained to her post on the deck from morning until night, her eyes never weary of dwelling upon the glorious river, its romantic islands, and magnificent banks.

What a noble panorama the St. Lawrence would make—to follow all the windings of this matchless stream from Grosse Ile, through its chain of inland seas. Perhaps no country in the world could present finer subjects for such a work, with water so pure—skies so blue—rock, mountain, and forest so vast—and cities, towns, and villages along its shores placed in such picturesque and imposing situations. A pictorial map of Canada could alone give a just idea of the beauty and importance of this great country to the good folks at home. Then consider the adjuncts of such a landscape—the falls of Montmorency, and God's masterpiece, Niagara. The panorama of the Upper and Lower Mississippi would lose half its beauty, when contrasted with the panorama of the St. Lawrence, with its tumultuous rapids and thousand isles.

An old friend of Mrs. Lyndsay, who had visited almost every country, had assured her that nothing he had ever seen during his travels through the world surpassed in grandeur and beauty the shores of the St. Lawrence—Rio Janeiro alone excepted—and so well had he described every remarkable scene on their passage up the river, that Flora instantly recognized the spot from the vivid pictures he had given her of them from memory.

How she longed to land upon the lovely islands that continually glided past them! Some of these were partly cultivated; and neat, white farm-houses peeped out from the midst of orchards glowing with ripe fruits, and the first gorgeous tints of the Canadian fall.

On the south shores of the river, the wheat was still standing in the sheaf upon the yellow uplands, and the forest and the harvest changing color, and blending their rich hues into a splendid harmony of the bright and beautiful. As if to atone for the long, cold winter, (and yet how charming that winter is)! Nature puts on royal robes to cover her decay; and autumn, which in other countries is so melancholy and sober, in her russet dress, is, in Canada, the most attractive and delightful season of the four. Who does not prefer it to the warm, humid, leafless spring?—the blazing sun, cloudless skies, and enervating heat of summer?—or to the cold, bright-blue and silver sheen of the spotless winter?

On the 29th of August they passed Crane Island, the beautiful domain of Mr. Macpherson, on the north side of the river, and early on the morning of the 30th, the *Anne* cast her anchor opposite Grosse Ile.

And here we shall leave our emigrants, in the bustle, confusion and excitement of preparing to go on-shore, having described the voyage from thence to Quebec, and up the St. Lawrence elsewhere. A repetition of the same class of incidents and adventures could not fail of becoming tedious to our readers.

If any of them should feel interested in the fate of the Lyndsay's, we will briefly add, by way of postscript, all we know concerning them:

The Lyndsay's settled upon wild land, and suffered, for some years, great hardships in the backwoods. Ultimately, Mr. Lyndsay obtained an official appointment which enabled him to remove his wife and family to one of the fast-rising and flourishing towns of the Upper Providence, where they have since resided in great happiness and comfort, and no longer regret their voyage to Canada, but bless the kind Providence that led them hither.

As an illustration of that protecting and merciful interposition, so often manifested by the Great Father to his dependent children, we must here add, that the two disastrous trips to sea related in the former part of these volumes, by preventing the Lyndsays from taking passage to Canada in the *Chieftain*, in all probability were the means of preserving them from falling victims to the cholera, as all the passengers in that unfortunate vessel perished with the fatal epidemic.

The *Flora*, the ship to which her namesake felt such an unconquer-

able objection, was wrecked upon the banks of Newfoundland, after having been twelve weeks at sea. The Captain was made a prisoner, and confined during a greater part of the voyage to his cabin, by his brutal sons, while many of her passengers died of small-pox and want of food.

How kind, then, was the Providence that watched over our poor emigrants ; although, like the rest of the world, they were tempted to murmur at the provoking delay, nor could discover the beam in the dark cloud, until the danger was past, and they had leisure to reflect upon the great peril they had escaped, and the mercies they had received from the Almighty Disposer of all human destinies. For those who doubt the agency of an overruling Providence in the ordinary affairs of life, these trifling reminiscences have been chiefly penned. From trifling circumstances, the greatest events often spring.

Musa, King of Grenada, owed his elevation to the throne to a delay of five minutes : when he requested the executioner, whom his jealous brother had sent to the prison to take his head, to allow him that brief space, until he had check-mated the gaoler, with whom he was playing a game at chess, the grim official reluctantly consented. Before the time expired, a tumult in the city dethroned his brother, and gave Musa his crown. How much he owed to that one move at chess ! Could that be merely accidental, on which the fate of a nation, and the lives of thousands were staked ?

So with the Lyndseys. The storm—the fog—the lost passage in the *Chieftain*—the presentiment against sailing in the *Flora* though apparently *very trifling* circumstances, formed most important links in their destiny. Reader, have faith in Providence. A good father is never indifferent to the welfare of his children—still less a merciful God.

THE END.

SPIRIT MANIFESTATIONS

EXAMINED AND EXPLAINED.

JUDGE EDMONDS REFUTED;

OR,

AN EXPOSITION OF THE
Involuntary Powers and Instincts
OF THE HUMAN MIND.

BY JOHN BOVEE DODS,

AUTHOR OF "PHILOSOPHY OF ELECTRICAL PSYCHOLOGY," "IMMORTALITY TRIUMPHANT,"
ETC., ETC.

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