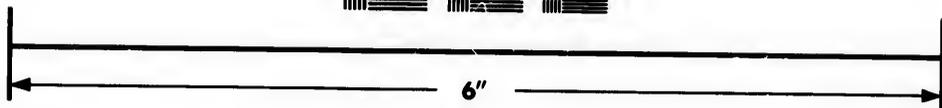
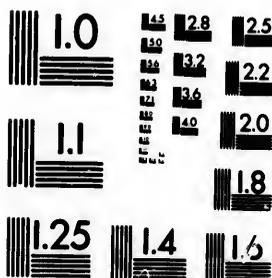


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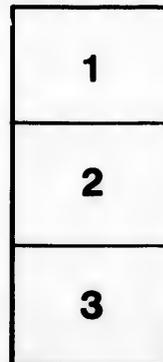
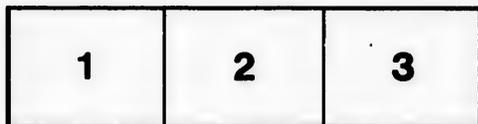
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THE  
ABBEY OF RATHMORE.

ERRATA.

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PAGE 11,—For gained *to* shore, read *the* shore.

PAGE 144,—For stopping her *uncle*, read stopping her *mule*.

PAGE 189,—For the girl *was*, read the girl *is*.

PAGE 201,—For *his* cradle, read *its* cradle.

PAGE 223,—For situation *as*, read situation *of*.

MRS. J. V. NOEL.



KINGSTON, C. W.  
PRINTED BY JAMES M. CREIGHTON.  
1859.

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THE  
ABBEY OF RATHMORE,

AND

OTHER TALES,

BY

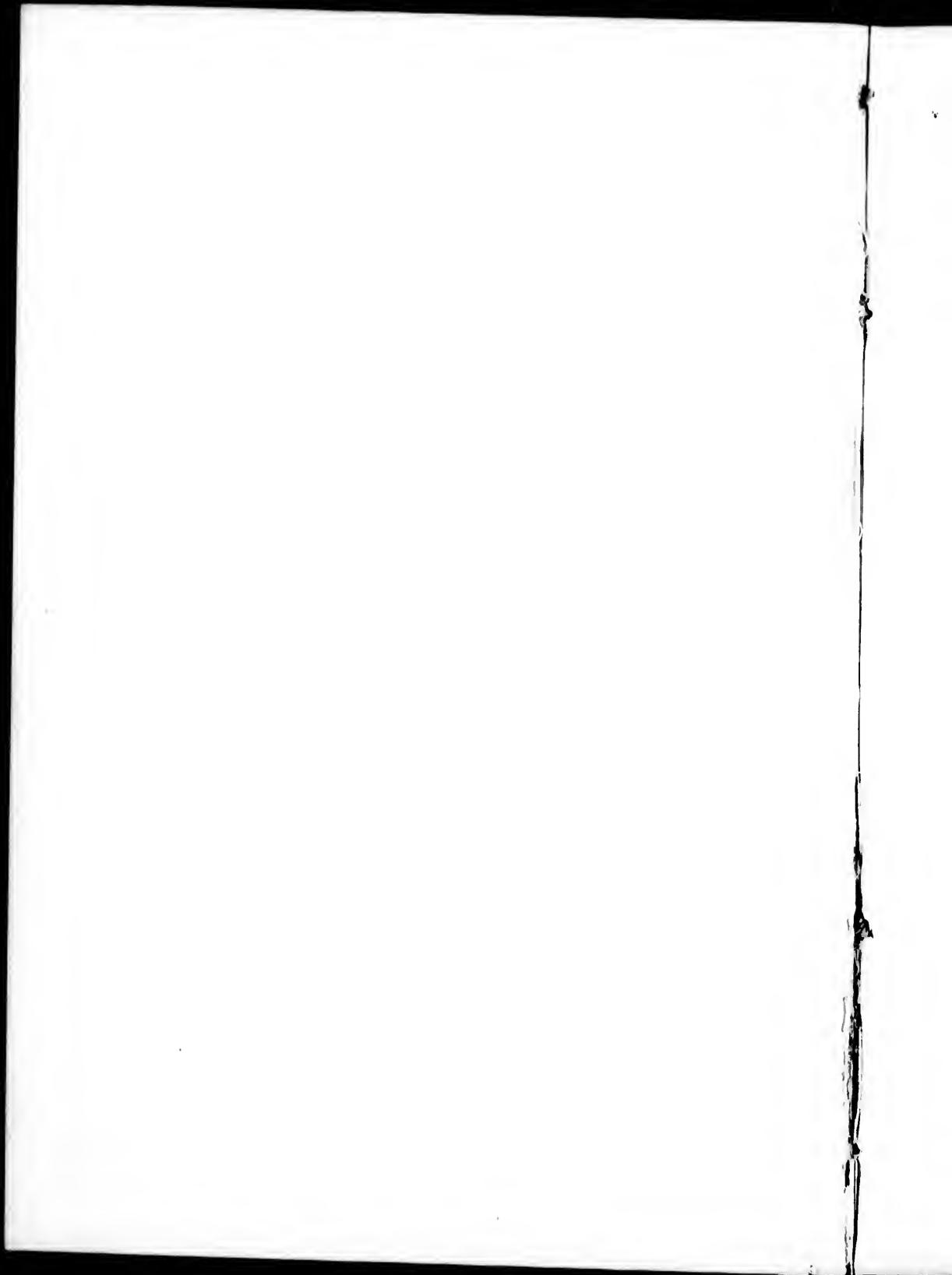
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THE  
ABBEY OF RATHMORE.

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CHAPTER I.

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On a high rocky promontory which jutted boldly into the Atlantic Ocean, in a remote part of Ireland, frowned in isolated grandeur the ruined Abbey of Rathmore. It was an ancient massive structure, and in the days of monastic seclusion had been the residence of a Dominican Order of Monks. In later years it was the abode of a noble but impoverished family—a descendant of which had, at the time this story commences, lately become a resident there. The greatest part of the building was in a dilapidated condition; one wing alone was habitable, and here Dr. Percival, its present occupant, with two domestics, resided in gloomy retirement. He was a man in the prime of life; of noble bearing and pleasing countenance. He had been for some years surgeon of a British ship of war, but the loss of an arm having incapacitated him for duty, he retired on half pay. Owing to some secret sorrow, life had lost its charms for him, and shunning society, he withdrew to the isolated home of his boyhood, the Abbey of Rathmore,—which, since the death of his parents, had been shut up.

Two attached domestics were its only inmates, and these now gladly welcomed their young master, as they still called him, to his ancestral home.

It was a night of stormy gloom—round the antique walls of the Abbey the wind swept in sudden gusts, while it howled in mournful cadences through its deserted corridors and ancient halls.

Holy Biddy! what a strange noise the wind makes! exclaimed Norah, Dr. Percival's old domestic, as she drew nearer to the comfortable turf-fire, which blazed cheerfully in the ample chimney of the large kitchen. I wondher if it is the wind at all, she resumed thoughtfully; who knows, Dermot, but it is the sperrits of them monks that they say lived here in ould times?

Whist woman! shure them holy craythures would'nt be thrampoosing about in this wourld, so long after their death, their sowls is at rest long ago. It is nothin' but the wind whistlin' through them long passages.

The masther must feel it mighty lonely up there by himself, wid ne'er a one to spake a word to, observed Norah, after a short pause.

But he likes best to be alone—you know he never cares to visit any of the families round us, although to be shure their not being the rale gentry might be his raison for keeping so much to himself. I wondher what makes him so gloomy intirely, if it isn't the loss of his arm; that must be a great grief to a handsome man like him.

I'm thinkin' it's not that alone, it's the ould story Dermot—the heart-grief that's throublin' him. Did you never see the picture he wears round his neck, fastened wid a gold

chain? It's the face of a purty lady I'll be bound, for he often kisses it and sighs, and looks so sorrowful. Och my grief! it's the love that wounds the heart the deepest afther all! But whist! what noise is that? Shure it isn't the big bell at the Abbey-gate?

Then begorra! it's nothin' less! exclaimed Dermot, starting from his seat in sudden surprise. It's some misfortunate thraveller overtaken by the night, and seizing a light he hurried towards the entrance-hall.

Descending the stairs from an upper apartment, Dr. Percival was seen. He, too, had heard the ringing at the gate, and was hastening to the portal. Bring a lantern Dermot, the wind will soon extinguish that light.

Och! to be shure, your honor! it was forgetful in me not to think of that afore. Run Norah, you're younger on the fut nor me, and fetch the lanthorn; you'll find it in the kitchen.

Shure the lanthorn is broke intirely, replied Norah. That baste of a pig walked straight into the kitchen yisther-day, and finding it on the flure, dashed it in smithereens, for Dermot agra! you forgot to hang it up.

Dermot looked deprecatingly at his master.

Shure if I shade the candle wid my ould hat, it'll do, your honor, not a blast of wind will get to it.

Well, let us make the experiment, observed his placid master, who could not help smiling at his servant's expedient.

The ringing at the portal had ceased for some minutes, and when the gate was unbarred, to the surprise of Dr. Percival and his attendants, no person was to be seen.

The blessed saints defend us! it's "the good people"

themselves—or maybe the ghosts from the ould berrying ground beyant, exclaimed Norah, crossing herself devoutly and trembling with superstitious awe.

The darkness of the night prevented their seeing surrounding objects; the rocky approach to the Abbey was buried in profound gloom.

It was no supernatural visitant, observed Dr. Percival, thoughtfully, but who could it be? If a traveller seeking shelter for the night, why so suddenly disappear?

Down, Bruno! down! what ails the baste? exclaimed Dermot, as a large Newfoundland dog was endeavoring to reach some object placed in a recess of the partly-ruined gate-way.

On throwing the light on it, a basket was observed, in which was what seemed a bundle of clothes. Dermot seized it eagerly. At this moment the faint cry of a babe fell startlingly on their ear.

It's a babby by all the saints! and nothing else! exclaimed Norah, and lifting the bundle in her arms she hastily re-crossed the court-yard.

Who could have left it here! was the observation of her astonished master.

If we had but the lantern we could find out, but in the dark we can't see a yard afore us. Bad cess to that pig, he's always puttin' his nose into mischief. How would it do to set Bruno on the scent, your honor? continued Dermot eagerly, he could coorse along the road and soon tell if any one was lurking there.

Better not! the dog is fierce and might injure some person. Whoever has deserted this child has some reason

for doing so—we can afford to take charge of it—and I love children.

Ordering Dermot to bar the gate again, Dr. Percival re-entered the Abbey.

What does your new charge look like Norah? he asked, as he stepped into the kitchen, where she was busily engaged removing the various muffings that enveloped the infant.

That's just what I'm thrying to find out, your honor. These clothes is beautiful. Sorra a poor girl ever owned them. Just look at this grand cloak, lined wid fur to keep the darlint warm. And a purty babby it is too—a little boy—so very young the craythure! not a week old! Holy Biddy! if it isn't the downright image of yourself! she continued after a scrutinizing examination of its features.

Of me! exclaimed Dr. Percival in amazement. It does indeed resemble, not me, so much as my brother Desmond! You remember him Norah! Poor fellow, he met his death in the deep waters, he added, sighing profoundly.

Then maybe it's Mather Desmond's own son; shure there must be some raison for sending him here!

Let us examine the contents of the basket, said Dr. Percival, perhaps something there may throw light on this strange affair.

But nothing that the basket contained elucidated the mystery. A strip of paper was found, pinned to the infant's dress, and on it were written, in a delicate hand, these words—"Name the child Desmond."

My brother's name!—the boy is his! but he never mentioned his marriage—why conceal it from me? I

cannot understand the matter, and Dr. Percival paced the room in deep thought.

Maybe he was never married at all, suggested Norah—yet, she added in an under tone, the mother of this babby was a born lady. It's mighty quare shure enough! Aftther all it's no use bothering one's head about it. If Masther Desmond was to the fore he might incense us into it, but he's in the deep sac, the Lord rest his sowl! and the child's mother will keep her own sacret no doubt.

You are right Norah; thinking will not make it plain—time may clear the mystery. However, the infant shall not want a father's care while I live. The impress of my dead brother's features which his bear, will ever plead for him in my heart; and Dr. Percival, stooping over the little foundling, tenderly kissed his velvet cheek.

It's your honor that has the tendher heart! shure as you're so fond of children, it'll be a great comfort for you to have this one to keep you company in the ould place.

The babe will require a nurse—could you procure one in the neighborhood Norah?

Asy enough, your honor; and as luck would have it, there's Aileen Curry berried her first born child yestherday—her heart is sore for the loss of it, and she'll take kindly to this motherless, daushie craythure.

Let Aileen then be sent for early in the morning—afterwards we must see about getting the infant baptised.

In course it ought to be christened at onct, it'll thrive the betther aftther it gets the sign of the Cross on its forehead.

Dr. Percival now withdrew to his solitary apartment, leaving Norah to attend to her little charge.

## CHAPTER II.

Five years rolled on unmarked by any event at the Abbey of Rathmore. Little Desmond had grown up a beautiful child, the idol of Dr. Percival's household. He was taught to consider his benefactor as his uncle, and the servants were forbidden to reveal to him the mystery that hung over his birth.

It was the middle of December; through the long hours of a winter's night the spirits of the storm had kept a fitful revel, and now as the cold grey of morning broke slowly over the tempestuous sky, the scene which the vexed ocean disclosed, was awfully grand and melancholy. Who that has seen the giant waves of the Atlantic chasing each other in billowy succession—rushing onward in their fearful might, carrying in their reckless course death and desolation—but has sensibly felt the glorious omnipotence of that Invisible Power whose Word created the fathomless deep, and who alone can restrain the fury of its tameless waters.

At his turret-chamber, looking out upon the ocean, stood Dr. Percival. The fierceness of the storm had kept

him wakeful during the night, for as it howled round the Abbey it seemed to threaten its very foundations. With the first gleam of morning he had risen to gaze anxiously out on the broad expanse of foaming water, which his elevated situation commanded. Along the rock-bound coast, his eye ranged in search of what he dreaded to see—some wrecked vessel; for two hours before the dawn he had heard that sure signal of distress—the melancholy booming of the minute gun. His eye soon caught the object of his search. Half a mile from the shore, thrown upon a ledge of rocks, was seen a dismayed hull. Viewing it through a telescope, Dr. Percival perceived some figures still on deck, and others vainly struggling with the giant billows. Along the beach, near the Abbey, were some fishermen conversing eagerly, as they mournfully regarded the wreck. The violence of the storm had now subsided, and the possibility of aiding the sufferers occurred to the humane mind of Dr. Percival. Hastily leaving the Abbey, he joined the party on the beach. A strong boat was soon launched by a few fearless fellows who willingly agreed to assist the doctor in his efforts to reach the wreck. The enterprise was one of imminent peril, but incited by compassion, the brave men persevered, and were at length enabled to approach the vessel. Half a dozen haggard creatures, shivering and hopeless, were all that remained of the crew and passengers of that ill-fated brig. These with infinite difficulty lowered themselves into the boat. They were about to put off, when one of the rescued men abruptly exclaimed, "The child! for Heaven's sake let us not leave her to perish!"

Where is she? asked Dr. Percival.

In the cabin was the reply.

The wreck threatened to go to pieces every instant, but the noble-minded man hesitated not. Seizing a rope he dexterously contrived to reach the deck. To descend to the cabin and look eagerly around for the child was the work of a minute. Peering over the side of a hammock, suspended from the roof, a pallid little face met his view. Take me away! oh take me away! said a childish voice, in the musical accents of the Spanish tongue. Dr. Percival started—he spoke the language perfectly. Lifting the child—who held out her arms eagerly towards him—he rushed on deck, for a shout from the boat proclaimed to him that the wreck was parting. He had only time to lower the child into the sturdy arms outstretched to receive her, when that part of the deck on which he stood was suddenly submerged, and he found himself floating on the angry ocean. But the angel of mercy who had watched over the child, for whom he had perilled his life, would not suffer him to sink to a watery grave; hovering near, she sustained his struggling form until he was rescued by the men in the boat. The danger was not yet over. To regain the shore in that heavily-laden boat and over those surging waters, seemed a thing impossible—yet the dauntless men quailed not; humbly trusting in that Divine Being whose mandate they were fulfilling in aiding the helpless, they rode fearlessly on, although the pitiless waves threatened to submerge them every instant. He who treadeth the great deep was their protector—and with thankful hearts they gained to shore in safety.

The inmates of the Abbey were not aware of Dr.

Percival's absence. Storms were of too frequent occurrence on that iron-coast to disturb their slumber, and they had risen, and were preparing the morning meal, without knowing that their beloved master was perilling his life on the ocean.

Here Norah! have you any dry clothes for this little girl? she is quite wet—asked Dr. Percival anxiously, as he entered the kitchen where his servants were assembled.

Holy Biddy! where did you get the craythure this blessed morning? was she out in such a storm?

I have just taken her from the wreck; a vessel was dashed on the rocks during the night; only a few persons have been saved.

The saints forgive me! and I sleeping quietly in my bed instead of being on my knees praying for their souls. Well, to think of it—it's mighty quare!

What seems strange Norah?

Just your honor that so many men's lives should be lost and this daushie child saved! Shure it's a meracle. The good Lord be praised! He does as He plases on sae and on land. Come here ye little darlint, come near the fire and let me put these dhry clothes on your back—you look like a dhrowned rat, acushla!

But the little girl did not move. She stood staring at Norah—her black eyes gleaming through the masses of wet hair which shrouded her pale face. The spray of the ocean had wet her thoroughly. Dr. Percival now addressed the child in Spanish, and intimated Norah's wish. She slowly approached her.

The little girl is a Spaniard, and does not understand you, Norah.

See that now! and isn't it well that your honor can spake her mother tongue; but if she's a furriner what'll I do? sorra a word will I be able to spake to her at all at all!

She must be taught to speak English, said Dr. Percival, smiling, she will soon learn. Here, Desmond, is a little play-fellow for you! you must teach her how to talk to you.

The boy who had been furtively regarding the stranger since her entrance, now shyly advanced and whispered—  
What is her name?

Her name! oh I forgot to ask! then addressing the little Spaniard Dr. Percival asked her the question.

In low sweet tones she answered Inez.

An iligant name no doubt, but a quare one! said Norah thoughtfully. I'm afeared I'll never get my tongue round it.

The two children seem about the same age, do they not, Norah?

Yes, but Masther Desmond is a dale sthronger and taller. How sthrange it is, continued Norah, that your honor should have two children left, as I may say, at your door. Faix you're provided wid a son and a daughter! she added laughing.

Her master laughed good-humoredly.

It is singular, he said, but strange things do often happen in this world of ours. However, I am not quite sure of retaining the young Spaniard. She may be claimed by her friends. I must inquire among the persons saved from the wreck; they may know some particulars about her.

Dr. Percival did inquire, but elicited very little information concerning the child.

The principal officers of the ship had perished—the sailors who were saved knew nothing more than that they had taken on board at Oporto an elderly woman and the little girl; the woman was apparently her mother—she was a taciturn, strange sort of person, and had been washed overboard in the beginning of the storm.

This information was very vague, and Dr. Percival had every reason to think that the little Spaniard would be left to his care for the future. The thought gave him much pleasure. From the moment he first saw Inez, he felt his heart draw irresistibly towards her; the tones of her voice, when she spoke in her native tongue, were music in his ear; fond memories came o'er him, scenes of the past rose vividly before him, and his heart thrilled with sad, yet sweet, emotion. Although the child was taught to speak English, yet Dr. Percival took care to instruct her in her own language. Desmond, too, was acquiring it with facility. Norah said it was wondrous how he took to such outlandish talk.

Time passed on, and the two children, thus strangely thrown together, grew up from childhood to youth. Dr. Percival devoted himself to their education. His mind was highly cultivated, and he was not unskilled in some of the elegant arts. Inez shared most of the studies of him she was taught to consider her cousin. French and Spanish she spoke fluently; in drawing too she was something of a proficient, but the guitar was the only musical instrument she was taught to play. This she learned to accompany

with her voice, which was one of much power and sweetness. The only respect in which her education was deficient, was the absence of all knowledge of needle-work. Of this the doctor was, as might be expected, entirely ignorant, and in this necessary accomplishment Norah was equally incapable of giving her instruction. Still, the orphan of the wreck grew up well-informed, and rather accomplished. Beautiful she was too—strangely beautiful. Her figure was tall, and had a stately, graceful bearing; her abundant hair was of an ebon hue, her eyes large, black and lustrous, with a sweet, thoughtful expression; her complexion was a very pale, clear olive, with a faint tinge of color; which, when she was animated or excited, heightened into a deep rose hue. Desmond was a fine specimen of the Milesian style of manly beauty. A tall, noble form, bright blue eyes, and dark auburn hair, clustering in soft curls about a high, white forehead. As he grew up his likeness to him whose name he bore, became more and more striking. Dr. Percival doubted not that he was his brother's child, but the mystery of his birth still remained. Owing to the remote situation of the Abbey of Rathmore, the doctor and his adopted children lived in comparative seclusion.

One of the principal amusements of Desmond during his boyhood, was wandering along the bold coast, where, seated on the peak of some tall cliff, beetling on the ocean, he would watch the distant vessels skimming over the waste of waters; wishing, how vainly! that he too might sail to distant lands and see something of that world of which he knew so little. He also loved to wander among

the deserted apartments and corridors of the Abbey, seeking for hidden springs and secret passages, which would lead to some subterranean abode; for, owing to his isolated manner of living, he was somewhat visionary. The profession of arms was the mode of life he would have chosen, for he was brave and fond of enterprise, but being too poor to purchase a commission, the hope of entering the army seemed vain, and he feared his boyhood's dream of the glorious life of a soldier, was never destined to be realized.

## CHAPTER IV.

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It was the summer of the year —98. A gloom hung over Ireland. The people were generally disaffected. The English government had refused to make some reforms which they demanded as their right. Emissaries of the French republic were secretly at work among the peasantry, inciting them to rebellion; and a total separation from Great Britain was contemplated. At the romantic age of nineteen, ardent and enthusiastic, Desmond became imbued with the spirit of the times. Compassion for the wrongs of Ireland, and bitter dislike to the powerful nation under whose illiberal government it then groaned, were the predominant feelings of his mind. Dr. Percival saw, with deep regret, the view he took of national affairs, and tried by judicious argument to combat his opinions. He told him although they had grievances to complain of, yet, it was better to submit tamely to them than involve the country in open rebellion—representing how fruitless would be their efforts to throw off the yoke of their conquerors. Owing to various causes—especially the want of unity among themselves, from their difference in religious opinions—he

thought Ireland was incapable of maintaining a political independence; that were she free from England she would soon fall under the sway of some European power—France for instance—and that in his opinion English misrule was preferable to French tyranny. But Desmond's mind was not convinced, and he eagerly watched the coming events, his thoughts filled with rainbow visions of the future glory of his native country, when it would, as in days of yore, take its place among the nations. The favorite retreat of himself and Inez, was an apartment situated in that part of the Abbey not inhabited by the family. It was in pretty good preservation, opening on a corridor which ran round the principal hall of the building. The walls were wainscoted with oak, now blackened by time; the ceiling was also of oak, elaborately carved. One large Gothic window—the rich stained glass almost entire—looked out upon the wide Atlantic, commanding also an extensive but dreary and wild prospect of the iron-coast. To this lonely room, which they designated “the Abbot's chamber,” (for according to tradition it was the private sitting-room of the Superior of the Dominican Monks,) Desmond and Inez had conveyed their books, musical instruments, etc., and here much of their monotonous life was spent.

Everything is ready for an insurrection, and the French are daily expected! exclaimed Desmond in an excited manner, as late one evening he entered the Abbot's chamber, where Inez was alone, reading.

She looked up startled, and turned suddenly pale.

Heaven forbid! what will become of us? she exclaimed.

I wish we could discover some place of concealment in

this ruined building, continued Desmond. I do not mean for myself, he added, proudly, but on your account, dear Inez. How desirable it would be, to find some subterranean apartments, where you and the rest of the family might remain till anarchy had subsided, and the struggle for our independence was over.

Papa says the French will not dare to land, because so few of the gentry are in favor of rebellion, observed Inez—and I am sure, I do not see what right they have to do so; most of the people do not want the interference of a foreign power.

So uncle says, but neither you nor he knows anything about it. I have been among the peasantry, and have learned something of their secret proceedings. I am sure there must be some hidden communication with the vaults beneath the Abbey, Desmond continued after a short silence. Norah told me they were at one time the resort of smugglers, who deposited rich cargoes there. She also says, even one of our own ancestors was engaged in cheating the revenue, and that he owned more than one large schooner trading with France for silks and wines. If this be true, there is some outlet among those rocks at the base of the promontory. I only wish I could find it—for it might lead me to some subterranean stairs, communicating with the lower apartments of this ruined edifice. As he spoke he approached the window, and looked down on the bare rocks beneath. Inez also placed herself within its deep embrasure, and both remained for some time silent and thoughtful, gazing out upon the ocean, watching the moonbeams quivering on its heaving waters.

Suddenly Inez laid her hand on Desmond's arm, and pointed to the beach below. A figure, who seemed to issue from the cliffs, stood leaning against a projecting ledge, thoughtfully regarding the moon-lit scene. Although plainly dressed, there was in his appearance and attitude an air of elegance, which indicated him to be of a rank superior to the inhabitants in the vicinity of the Abbey. Who can he be? he is certainly a stranger, observed Inez in much surprise.

I shall soon find out, muttered Desmond, as, rushing from the room, he dashed down the dilapidated stair-case, which threatened every instant to fall to pieces beneath his hasty tread. Crossing the hall at the same rapid rate, he passed through an arched door way, and in a few moments stood upon the cliffs. A zig-zag path led to the sea below. Happening to dislodge a small rock in his hasty descent, it dashed into the water with a startling noise, instantly apprising the stranger of some one's approach. The next moment—turning an angle of the cliff he suddenly disappeared. Desmond hastened down the steep path, in eager pursuit, but vainly sought among the rocks for the mysterious figure; he was nowhere to be seen. Desmond now felt assured there was some hidden entrance to the Abbey vaults, and that this entrance was among the rocks at the base of the promontory. He determined to pursue the search the next day, and confidently hoped he would be successful, for he had marked the place where the stranger had vanished. Who he could be, was a subject of much surprise and inquiry, both to himself and Inez. This strange occurrence was the subject of their conversation

during the rest of the evening, and the elegant-looking stranger haunted the dreams of Inez through the night. The next morning Desmond was reluctantly obliged to ride over to B—, to transact some business for Dr. Percival. His search after the hidden entrance was therefore necessarily postponed, as he would be absent until night.

During the day Inez's thoughts were full of the stranger, and she sat for hours in the embrasure of the window, in the Abbot's chamber, watching the beach. To while away the time she played reqlently on the guitar accompanying it with her voice, which filled the apartment, and rolled away through the silent corridor, in cadences of rich melody. Once while she was thus engaged, she fancied she heard the sound of approaching footsteps, and looked up eagerly, expecting to see Desmond enter. But no Desmond appeared. The sound seemed to come from a particular part of the chamber next the corridor. Supposing there was some one there, Inez opened the chamber door and looked out. But the corridor and hall below looked as deserted as ever. She then approached that part of the wall whence the noise proceeded, and leaned her head in a listening attitude against the wainscot. The sound of a person breathing caught her ear—some one was evidently behind the wainscot. Just at this moment a panel suddenly opened, and she found herself face to face with a person also engaged in the act of listening. With a cry of surprise and alarm, she sprang back; when she again looked at the narrow aperture no one was seen, and the sound of retreating footsteps was heard.

Closing the panel—the secret spring of which she now

observed for the first time—Inez marked the spot, then hastily left the Abbot's chamber and joined Norah, who was occupied in the kitchen.

Is it come to help me ye are? Shure then it's a pity to see yere purty hands doing any coorse work; but if ye like to be busy asthore, shell them banes. It's gettin' late I'm afeard, and the masther niver likes to wait for his dinner; it's the only time he ever gets angry.

Well, while I help you Norah, you must tell me all about the smugglers and the vaults beneath the Abbey. Did you ever see them?

I did not meself, for it was long afore my time, but my ould granny used to tell wondherful stories about them. She was down in the vaults herself, and said there is all kinds of sayeret turnings and stone-stairs down below. Stairs! repeated Inez—and where do the stairs lead to Norah?

Och to all parts of the ould place, if one only knew where to find them.

Inez remembered the discovery she had made, but kept the secret until Desmond's return. The thought of that dark-complexioned, but handsome face, which had been in such close proximity to her own, flashed across her mind and she felt an eager curiosity to find out who was the occupant of the secret passages of the Abbey.

They say we're goin' to have a 'ruction, Miss Inez; did ye hear tell of it? asked Norah, suddenly stopping in her occupation of cooking a fowl, and looking inquiringly at her young mistress.

So it is rumored, but I hope not. I trust the people will keep quiet.

Then they wont, the foolish craythures! they're just mad agin the English, and shure there's no raison in that at all, for what good ever come of their sthruugglin' for freedom as they call it? they cant cope wid the reglars by no manes. Bad cess to them furriners from beyant the sae, that's going among the boys and eggin' them on!

Are there many French in the country? are there any about here? asked Inez with sudden eagerness.

I heerd Dermot say there was a genteel-looking young man wandhering among the rocks a few days ago—no doubt he's one of the Frinch, bad luck to them. I wish Bony would keep his soldiers to fight his own battles and let ould Ireland take care of herself.

This information threw considerable light on the appearance of the figure on the cliff, but how he obtained access to the secret passages was yet unaccounted for.

All the peasantry do not regard the French invasion in the light you do Norah. I mean, Inez added, as she saw the puzzled expression on the old woman's face, that they look upon the French as friends.

Some does, and some doesn't; the ould people, like meself, knows what they're afther, but the young people is for them, bekase it'll be a change any how, but betther no change nor a bad one!

So I think Norah!

And yere right agral but there's 'Masther' Desmond crazed entirely about the grandeur he thinks is comin' upon us, when the Frinch gets us free from the English. But the

glory of ould Ireland is no more ! and it's no use sayin' it will ever be what it onct was, when it wasn't one king it had, but five. And then look at its ancient Abbeys and sthrong castles, aren't they all gone to the bad? sorra a roof coverin' the most of them. Then to make bad worse, they talk of takin' the Parliament from us, the murdherin' villyans, as if Dublin could ever do widout it ! Shure it's everything worse nor another the government is doin', but what's the use of spakin' or contindin' wid it at ail? for all the power is in their own hands, and it's best to take it asy when there's no help for it. Och my grief ! ould Ireland will niver be the same again !

The appearance of Dr. Percival crossing the court-yard now gave a new turn to Norah's thoughts.

Bedad ! there's the mather himself come back from his walk, and looking tired and hungry. Faix it's his dinner he'll be wantin', and it not ready yet. Run Nance avourneen, she added—addressing a young girl who assisted her in household duties—run and lay the cloth—let him see, any how, that if the dinner itself isn't to the fore, it's the next thing to it. Shure, as I said onct, he never looks crass but when he has to wait for his males; and small blame to him for that ! there isn't a better mather living than himself.

CHAPTER V.  

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In the evening Inez walked out on the beach, commissioned by Norah to bring her "some iligant dilisk and shell-fish, from the rocks foreninst the pint." These high rocks were a continuation of the promontory, or pint as Norah called it, separated however by a deep chasm, about one hundred feet wide. They were easy of access at low water, for several masses of rock had been placed so as to form stepping-stones between them and the shore. It was the hour of sunset. The glorious orb of day was nearing the horizon—his dazzling rays glittering in broad lines of crimson light, athwart the tranquil bosom of the Atlantic, and tinging the light fleecy clouds with amber and roseate hues. On gaining the rocks, Inez sat for some time watching the gorgeous sunset, and listening to the booming sound of the waters, as the long swell of the ocean broke upon the rocky shore. The shadows of twilight were stealing over the Atlantic, and giving an air of greater solitude to its wild and lonely coast, before Inez remembered Norah's commission. She then began hastily to fill

a basket with the small shell-fish and eatable sea-weed, which she found in abundance around her; wholly unconscious that she was herself an object of earnest observation to a pair of dark, splendid eyes, gazing at her from the beach. A pleasing voice, with a foreign accent, at length fell upon her ear. Raising herself from her stooping attitude, she stared around with a startled look. In the shadow of a high cliff, at the end of the promontory, stood a figure of striking appearance—the same elegant-looking stranger she had seen the evening before.

The tide is coming in and the rapid rise of the water has cut off your return to the mainland, unless by boat.

Inez cast an alarmed glance around. Already the stepping-stones were entirely hid by the rising tide. Danger there was none, for the tall rocks on which she stood were never covered, unless at spring-tide; yet the thought of remaining in her present situation for some hours, until the waters should subside, was not pleasant.

If you will tell me where to find a boat I can assist you, resumed the stranger.

Inez pointed to a small boat, drawn up on the beach, at some distance.

The gentleman hastened towards it. In less than a quarter of an hour he was seen, returning, rowing the skiff in the direction of the rocks. Inez thought she had never seen one so attractive. His broad straw hat had fallen off, and his countenance was seen to advantage. His face, though a little bronzed by exposure to the weather, was exceedingly handsome, and there was an expression in his dark eagle eye which indicated an uncommon and daring

character. His age might be thirty, and his graceful, self-possessed manner, showed that he was accustomed to the best society. To a young girl like Inez, inexperienced in the usages of the world, his chivalrous politeness was peculiarly charming. With much embarrassment, when the boat reached the shore, she timidly expressed her thanks for the service he had rendered her, then turned quickly away to escape his ardent gaze. The admiration his fine eyes so eloquently expressed, was something to which Inez Percival had been hitherto unaccustomed.

It was dark when she reached the Abbey. Desmond had returned, and was inquiring for her. As soon as the evening meal was finished, Inez proposed their retiring to the Abbot's chamber—informing him, in a low voice, that she had something to communicate. Both her adventures of the day were soon recited. When she mentioned the secret spring, Desmond started up, and requested her to show it to him. She complied. It was hidden in a curiously-carved corner of a panel of the wainscot. On pressing it, the panel slid back as before. Desmond, with eager delight, passed through the aperture and found himself in an intermural passage, running parallel with the corridor. He hastily traversed this, but was disappointed to find no egress from it, except through the Abbot's chamber. Still, he felt assured there must be some other, and continued his examination of the walls on both sides. Something in the floor, appearing like a small rusty ring attracting the eyes of Inez, she drew his attention towards it.

It is a trap-door! he joyfully exclaimed, and seizing

the ring he drew up a small, square compartment of the floor, disclosing a narrow spiral stair-case.

Eureka! he said gaily, as he quickly descended the stairs.

At the bottom their further progress seemed stopped; they were shut in by four walls. Desmond, now stooping carefully, examined the floor, but no second trap-door presented itself. The walls were then sounded, and after some delay, a hidden door was again discovered. They passed through and entered the large, lonely hall of the Abbey. Desmond looked much disappointed.

After all, not to discover the descent into the vaults! it is too provoking! he said.

Still something is gained, remarked Inez—the knowledge of this private passage, so long hidden from us, and perhaps to-morrow, by daylight, your search may be more successful.

I wonder if there is a trap-door concealed in these flag-stones? said Desmond thoughtfully, as, stooping low, he threw the light he carried on the pavement of the hall. But I fear there is not, for how often, in boyhood, have I spent hours searching for something of the kind.

At one end of the hall was a Gothic arch, now almost covered with dark masses of ivy, and leading into another hall of smaller dimension. A thought flashed across the mind of Desmond, and suddenly tearing away the clustering leaves from this arched entrance, he examined its dismantled sides. But no hidden spring or ring met his eager view, and he was giving up the search in despair, when he noticed a small fissure between two large carved stones, that based

the arch on one side. Kneeling down he tried to push these stones apart, and to his surprise, easily succeeded; one stone slid into an aperture formed in the wall to receive it, disclosing a gap sufficiently large to allow a person to pass through. Holding the light over the aperture, Desmond perceived a deep flight of stone-steps. The hour was now late, and Inez proposed rejoining Dr. Percival, and postponing the descent into the vaults until the following morning. Desmond seemed to acquiesce, but he secretly determined that when the family had retired for the night, he would descend alone into the subterranean passages of the Abbey. Consequently, the hour of midnight found him again standing within the Gothic archway. Removing the stone as before, he cautiously descended the damp, slimy stairs. At the bottom he found himself in a large vault. As he advanced slowly, frightening the bats and rats from their gloomy haunts, he fancied he saw a light gleam like a star in the distance. It brightened as he approached, and now the murmuring sound of voices floated towards him—borne on the damp noisome air of this subterranean apartment. On reaching the end, a low door opened from it into a long wide passage. Guided by the flickering light, Desmond fearlessly pursued it, when winding round a projecting angle, it abruptly brought him into the presence of about thirty reckless, wild-looking fellows, whom he instantly suspected were United Irishmen.

The fact was now clear; the Abbey vaults were the midnight rendezvous of the disaffected peasantry in the neighborhood; a suspicion of the truth, had never occurred to him.

On rude benches, along a table formed of rough boards, supported on low masses of stone, the party were seated. Two or three iron-sconces, with pieces of bog-wood stuck into them, threw a flaring light around the table, but left the remote parts of the vault in dark shadow.

I have said that the party was composed of some of the lowest grades of society, but among them were a few respectable young men, and, at the head of the rude council table, sat a dark-complexioned, fine-looking French officer, in military undress. The sudden appearance of a stranger among them had a startling effect. Each man sprang to his feet, his eyes gleaming with fear, as well as anger.

A spy! a spy! shoot him down! the red coats are at his back! was shouted by more than one savage voice.

I am no spy! said Desmond indignantly, boldly advancing towards the excited group, and I am alone; you have nothing to fear from me!

What brings you here then? was sternly asked.

These vaults are my uncle's property! I should rather ask you the question, what brings you here? for what purpose do you hold this midnight meeting?

A look of peculiar meaning passed round the party.

You're an omadhawn to ask that question, was the rude reply.

Shure he knows well enough! remarked another of the men—he isn't such a born nathral as not to know the raison why 'the boys' is here.

And now that he has joined us widout being axed, he'll have to make one of our number, sneeringly observed an ill-looking fellow.

Not unless I wish to do so, was Desmond's bold reply.

Honnom an diaoul! then you'll never lave this place alive! fiercely exclaimed a savage looking man, brandishing a heavy shelelah, while his eyes glared on young Percival.

The foreign officer now interfered, and addressed Desmond in French. He answered eagerly, and a conversation was carried on between them for some minutes. The party attentively listened; though not understanding the language—they gathered something of the import of their words from the expression of their countenances.

This gentleman pledges his honor that he will never betray us, never reveal what he hears here, at length said the French officer, turning to the men.

Who'd thrust to the honor of a Protestant; he has too much Orange blood in his veins! we wont take his word, exclaimed more than one voice.

The word of a Percival was never broken! warmly remarked one of the respectable young men before alluded to.

Desmond looked gratefully towards the speaker, and recognised a shop-keeper from B——, named Reynolds.

Take his oath of sayerecy, Captain, he'll mind that! and nothing else will satisfy us. By this Crass, if ever he turns thraitor, he may ordher his coffin! he'll not live an hour afther!

And why wouldn't you join the cause yourself young gentleman? asked a decent-looking man named O'Hara, in wheedling accents. Shure aren't we all Irishmen born, and what matther about the differ in religion when our coun-

thy wants our aid. Oughtn't Protestant and Papist fight side by side for one common cause—our liberty ?

This observation elicited a grin of approbation from the grim visages around.

Shure I'm a black Prosbyterian myself, as were all my people afore me, continued O'Hara; but when the wrongs of Ireland calls upon her sons to arm in her definsse—when the oppression of the guverment, bad luck to it! is grinding us to the dust, every bittther feeling should be forgotten among ourselves, and all religious hathred banished from our minds. Och! if this would only be the case! if Irishmen only would be united they might soon dhrive the oppressors from their shore! and dhressed in the green and the goold, wid the Sunburst floating o'er them, her national army would defy even proud England herself.

I am entirely devoted to the cause, remarked Desmond with enthusiasm.

Then why not join us at once? asked several voices.

My uncle is altogether opposed to seeking redress for our grievances by force of arms, replied Desmond; and, he added, hesitatingly, I cannot—that is I have not yet decided on acting contrary to his wishes.

Sit down young man! sit down among us! said O'Hara, eagerly. Who knows but before we part we may so incense you into the merits of our undertaking that you will, to-night, make up your mind to join the Pathriot Army. Shure the Frinch is for us! and Bony himself, that'll make all Europe thrimble is on our side! And didn't the Frinch help Americkay to throw off the yoke; afther that we need not despair!

Captain Le Vavasseur, the French officer, now motioned Desmond to a seat next himself at the head of the rude table, and the proceedings of the meeting were resumed. Desmond now learned that an immediate insurrection of the disaffected was meditated. The French officer condemned this premature proceeding, and strongly advised the patriots to await the arrival of a French force, which he soon expected, but the misguided and impulsive people would not be controlled. It was long after midnight, and the meeting was about to break up, when the sudden appearance of a ragged, wild-looking stripling in their midst, created considerable surprise and alarm. He was out of breath and looked much excited.

What ails the gossoon? What's the matter Mick? was eagerly asked by several of the party.

The reglars is comin'! I seed them wid my own two eyes! gasped the youth, as he sunk on the floor from sheer exhaustion.

The saints presarve us, we're done for! and more than one stalwart man turned pale with fear.

Where are the military? asked Captain Le Vavasseur, who seemed perfectly self-possessed.

They're comin' down the boreen, near the fort; they're close to the shore by this time. I was watchin' on the top of the ould place, and when I see them I run for the bare life, and tuk a short cut across the fields.

There is a thraitor among us, fiercely broke in one of the men, and it's Paddy Egan the villyan! for he isn't to the fore to-night.

We can escape by the outlet near the fort, observed

O'Hara; there's a long passage lading from the vaults undher ground that way, it's known only to myself, I believe. Folly me boys if you wish to save yere necks from the halther! we'll chate the red coats yet!

Remain here, I can put you in a place of concealment, whispered Desmond to Le Vavas seur.

The lights were now hastily extinguished, and the party quickly followed O'Hara, leaving the two gentlemen alone in the council-room.

We have not a moment to lose, said the officer hurriedly—and he and Desmond precipitately retreated towards the stone-stairs. At the top they stopped to listen. The heavy tramp of men was heard in the subterranean passages, and the light of several torches flared through the gloom.

Thank Heaven we are saved! said Captain Le Vavas seur gladly, as he and his new friend, pushing the stone aside, passed into the hall of the Abbey.

Opening the door in the wall, they ascended the inter-mural stairs, and soon found themselves in the Abbot's chamber.

These passages are familiar to me, observed Le Vavas seur. How did you discover them?

O'Hara, whom you saw to-night, showed them to me when I first became an inmate of the vaults. I have been living concealed there for some days, he kindly supplying me with food. He said his grandfather had always lived at the Abbey, and from him he had learnt all about its secret entrances, and hidden stairs, and passages.

Cautiously approaching the window, Desmond looked

down on the cliff's beneath. Several dark figures were there, apparently guarding the outlet from the vaults.

They will find themselves disappointed, he observed joyfully ; how fortunate we were apprised of our danger in time to escape !

A few minutes afterwards the sound of footsteps in the hall below was heard.

They have ascended the stone-stairs and discovered the aperture at the top, remarked Desmond in alarm ; what shall we do ? there is no retreat from this chamber but through the corridor, and we should probably be observed.

We must remain in the intermural passage—the secret entrance to that will certainly escape them.

I think I shall go down and see what they are about observed Desmond ; why should I be afraid ?—this is my home.

Do not act so rashly, I beg of you, said the French officer eagerly ; what excuse can you give for being out of bed at this late hour ? You know in times like these, when rebellion stalks the land, suspicion is also abroad.

Perhaps you are right—"discretion is," they say, "the best part of valor ;" but listen ! are they not ascending the stairs?—they are even now in the corridor ! the next minute, peeping through the slight crevices in the wainscot they perceived an officer and half a dozen soldiers enter the Abbot's chamber. It was a moment of fearful suspense—of intense anxiety to Le Vasseur, and also to young Percival, for his life would be of little worth if he should be caught with his present companion. The survey of the room soon convinced the soldiers there was no person

hiding there. Afterwards they examined the rest of the dilapidated apartments opening on the corridor.

We are only losing time here! the commanding officer was heard to say—there is no one concealed in these ruins; we would be better employed scouring the country, we should then probably pick up some of the rebel rascals. The party then descended to the hall and shortly afterwards all was silent within the Abbey; they had joined their comrades on the beach, and soon the measured tread of their retreating footsteps was faintly heard in the distance.

CHAPTER V.  

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The soft dawn of a summer morning was spreading over the eastern heavens, and stealing through the richly-stained glass of the Gothic window, as Desmond and Captain Le Vavasseur ventured again to enter the Abbot's chamber.

You can remain here with safety now, remarked Desmond, and if you throw yourself on that old-fashioned couch, you may snatch a little sleep before breakfast. Here you will be undisturbed for some hours, as Inez seldom enters this, her private sitting-room, until the afternoon.

And who is Inez ?

My cousin, Miss Percival. You have seen her. She told me of the service you rendered her yesterday evening.

I thought she was your sister.

No, we are only cousins. Dr. Percival is my uncle.

And in what light do you regard her?—as a sister ? There was something of interest in Le Vavasseur's tones, and an earnestness in the gaze he bent on the face of his young companion.

Merely as a sister ! why do you ask ? he enquired with some surprise.

It seems strange that you should have lived all your life with such a very beautiful girl, and feel for her nothing warmer than a brother's love.

That very circumstance sufficiently accounts for it in my opinion—we have been brought up together, as brother and sister, carelessly remarked Desmond, as he moved towards the door; there he paused to point out to the French officer a means of securing it on the inside, until his return.

And if the fair owner of this antique boudoir were to demand admittance in the meantime, what must I do?

In that case you must unbar the entrance and make the best apology you can for your intrusion, but I think I shall see Inez before you do.

The sun was nearing his meridian altitude, when Desmond Percival again made his appearance in the Abbot's chamber. He brought a small basket, containing refreshments, of which Captain Le Vasseur, who had just awoke from a refreshing sleep, gladly partook. I have won over Dr. Percival to your interests, observed Desmond joyfully; he has consented to our affording you a place of concealment, until you can make arrangements for leaving this part of the country with safety. When I communicated the adventure of last night to Inez, she insisted on my acquainting my uncle with the circumstance; she said he ought to be made aware of your being concealed in the Abbey.

And she was perfectly right! I entirely approve of your doing so. If Dr. Percival should be unwilling to harbor me—for I know the penalty attached to his doing so—yet I am sure he is too honorable to betray me to those who seek my life.

You judge my uncle only as he deserves, said Desmond warmly, but if you have no objection, I will at once introduce him to you ; he waits in the corridor for permission to enter your retreat, and make your acquaintance.

He does me much honor, said the Frenchman gratefully, as he advanced to meet the doctor, whose commanding form soon appeared in the door-way.

Stirring tidings are abroad this morning! observed Dr. Percival, as he seated himself, after the ceremony of introduction was over,—some of the peasantry have risen in open rebellion.

I feared as much from the information I received last night.

Fear'd! repeated Dr. Percival. Is it not your wish they should do so? what motive but to incite them to this mad act, led you to join their secret societies, and countenance their treasonable proceedings?

This revolt is premature! the insurgent army is yet undisciplined—unprepared to take the field; if they had only waited the arrival of the French force they would have better chance of success. As it is, I expect nothing from this ill-advised proceeding, but entire discomfiture—total defeat. A disorganized peasantry, without proper officers, or sufficient ammunition, is altogether unfitted to contend with even a small military force.

This is no doubt a mad scheme—a daring act of a misguided people! observed Dr. Percival sorrowfully; much blood will be shed, horrible atrocities committed; yes! pillage and murder will stalk hand in hand through the length and breadth of the land! But the insurgents will

have the worst of it! what have they to expect in contending with a regular force, but to be recklessly and indiscriminately slaughtered! How much have those to answer for, he added indignantly, who have urged the infatuated and ignorant people to this wild insurrection—who have encouraged them in such a hopeless undertaking.

The French were misinformed—entirely deceived! observed Captain Le Vasseur, in a deprecatory manner. We were taught to believe that the whole Irish people were anxious to throw off the English yoke, and that every man would aid in emancipating his country from a thralldom so oppressive.

And you find, too late, that such ideas were only visionary! broke in the doctor rather sharply. There are too many Orangemen in Ireland yet to yield the dominion to any but a Protestant power! That we have grievances to complain of I will not deny! and some acts of heartless oppression on the part of the government, but there are people wise enough in the Emerald Isle to see, that freedom from England would be our ruin.

Not if it became attached to France! think of the glorious career of my nation at the present day! and Captain Le Vasseur's face glowed with patriotic enthusiasm. If such a man as Bonaparte,—who even now makes every crowned head in Europe tremble—if he were to aid this beautiful island in gaining its independence, in restoring it to its pristine glory, what reason have you to fear? Let Irishmen be but united in the glorious cause of freedom and with the powerful aid of France, they would soon secure their rights—their land would soon regain its former po-

sition among the nations. A form of government similar to that France now enjoys, might be easily established; commerce would then be unrestricted—your warm-hearted and brave peasantry, instead of swelling the English army, would be disciplined into a formidable national force, sufficient to maintain peace at home and resist foreign aggression.

Such a glowing portrait is no doubt very pleasing and flattering to our national pride! remarked Dr. Percival, but this state of things will never be! he added with a sigh.

And why may it not be so? why will not the nobility and gentry of Ireland join the lower classes in their noble enterprise? France has no other motive in assisting the insurgents but the commendable desire of affording others the blessing of liberty which she herself so richly enjoys.

And there is not the least spice of jealousy or enmity to England actuating her at all! observed Dr. Percival, with an ironical smile.

This blunt remark brought the rich color to the face of the French officer. The doctor observed it and hastened to apologize.

Pardon my observation, but the undying prejudice between the two nations is, you know, proverbial.

France in aiding the American colonies, and in volunteering to assist the Irish in defying Great Britain, is influenced by that bitter enmity and jealousy which she has ever borne towards that powerful empire—the only one she fears will check her triumphant career. On this topic we will not again converse, Captain Le Vasseur. I should regret

being guilty of making some rude remark, our opinions are so entirely opposite.

Am I then to conclude that you, as well as the majority of your countrymen, are averse to a separation from England, that you do not covet your national independence?

Not at the expense of religious liberty! Sir, you do not understand the true state of the country; you have been deceived by crafty men whose only object is to produce anarchy, or further their own ambitious views! There are two parties in this unhappy island—the Protestants and Roman Catholics, whose feelings towards each other are unhappily full of bitter religious animosity. Under a republican form of government, or as a dependency of France, the latter party would have the ascendancy; because it is the largest—and the Protestants of Ireland know full well that the national religion would be abolished, and that they themselves might become the victims of religious persecution.

But if religious freedom were secured to the Irish Protestants, if they were protected in their religious opinions, would they join the Patriots?

I fully believe they would, Sir! there is not an Irish heart but would glow with enthusiasm at the idea of such a national independence as you recently painted, if that independence could also be enjoyed with religious freedom! But the thing cannot be. A spirit of bigotry would be ever at work to mar our peace, and many would be the evils arising from religious intolerance. No, I repeat that a separation from Great Britain would be the ruin of the Protestant cause in this country. By remaining firm in our

allegiance to England we secure that system of religious faith and worship which our hearts approve. A Protestant government and British supremacy are our only safe-guards

All Protestants do not hold the same opinions, timidly broke in Desmond. As uncle is an Orangeman, his views are somewhat bigoted.

That may be—but we will waive this subject. May I ask when you expect the troops from France.

Shortly—I cannot say how soon—was the officer's reply.

They will come too late; the insurgent army will be cut to pieces—the leaders taken and executed, and the insurrection quelled, before the expected aid arrives.

Yours is a gloomy picture, but I am afraid a correct one, observed the Frenchman despondingly.

Do you intend to join the insurgents? asked Desmond.

Not until the arrival of my countrymen. There is no hope of success without their efficient aid.

You act wisely, observed Dr. Percival; but I do not think the French will land; they will hear of the disastrous defeat of the Patriots, and they will return to France without striking a blow for the freedom of Green Erin.

You misjudge my gallant fellow-soldiers; they will not act so dishonorably.

Wisely, or prudently, would be a more suitable word. Then we shall have the pleasure of your society for an indefinite time. We must take every precaution to conceal your being here. You know our affording you protection includes us in your guilt, and exposes us to your punishment.

Captain Le Vavasseur expressed his deep sense of the obligation he owed the family.

Do not mention it. I could not in honor do otherwise. I would not expose a fellow-creature to a sure and ignominious death—were I to refuse you the shelter of my roof, I should disgrace the far-famed hospitality of my country. But while you are here, we will not again introduce the topic of politics; that must be a forbidden word between us. We will talk of foreign affairs; you will describe to me some of the glorious achievements of your gallant countrymen on the continent. And I shall now introduce you to another member of my family. Desmond tell Inez I wish for her presence here. The society of this young lady, Miss Percival—he continued as Inez entered the room—will enable you to pass the time of your concealment here somewhat agreeably. The French are not only a brave but a gallant nation, equally ready to worship in the temple of Venus, as to follow the triumphal chariot of Mars.

The flush of pleasure which lighted up the handsome face of the French officer when his eye rested on the beautiful Inez—as with queen-like grace she entered the room, leaning on Desmond's arm—showed that this addition to the little party was indeed most gratifying.

A conversation on different subjects ensued. Dr. Percival listened attentively to the Frenchman's remarks, and seemed to admire, exceedingly, his brilliant conversational powers. His fine intellect, his glowing imagery in speaking of the brilliant career of Bonaparte in Italy, his cultivated mind and fascinating manner, made him altogether irresistible. To Desmond and Inez—both new to the world—he was ex-

ceedingly attractive. Even Dr. Percival was so influenced by his master mind, that in some things he yielded his own judgment to its potent sway.

The next day Desmond rode over to B——, to hear more news of the insurrection. There he learned that the Irish Independent Army was hourly increasing, and on its march to ——, spreading terror among the peaceful inhabitants wherever its disorganized force appeared. All the disaffected in the neighborhood of the Abbey of Rathmore had hastened to swell the Patriot ranks. Several persons of respectability and standing, were among the insurgents, and adherents to the cause of Irish independence, flocked to join the national standard from all parts. With intense longings to unite himself to the bold defenders of his country, Desmond rode slowly homeward—his breast glowed with patriotic enthusiasm, and with the romantic self-devotion of youth, he wished to join the noble enterprize and risk his life in the glorious struggle for his country's independence. That it would fail he feared from what he had heard his uncle and Captain Le Vasseur say on the subject—for he yielded his opinion to their superior judgment. How he bitterly regretted that the French troops had not yet arrived! With their powerful aid, he doubted not that the National Army would be irresistible; for although not sufficiently disciplined—was it not composed of some of the bravest hearts in Erin? were they not nerved to the struggle by acts of galling oppression on the part of a tyrannical government? and was not their national banner floating proudly o'er their ranks of green and gold? To the ardent and enthusiastic youth, defeat in such a cause seemed worse than death; and yet he feared utter discomfiture awaited these daring adventurers in the cause of freedom.

## CHAPTER VI.

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Day after day passed, and the news from the insurgent army was various. Some victories had been won, and many atrocities committed by the revolters, as well as by the military force opposed to them. Conflagration followed their path, and a fire-sheet appeared to envelope the land, for ruthless burnings seemed to be the watchword of both Royalist and rebel during this fearful contest. The remote situation of the Abbey of Rathmore prevented Dr. Percival's family from being exposed to the evils arising from this sanguinary struggle; besides, the doctor was such a favorite among the peasantry in the neighborhood, that he had nothing to fear from them. Desmond, who watched with deep interest the career of the Patriots, and who could scarcely be restrained from joining them, heard at last, with dismay, that the insurrectionary movement was everywhere repressed—the leaders taken, and the insurgent force disbanded. This intelligence was received with different feelings by the inhabitants of the Abbey. Dr. Percival heard it with mingled pity and satisfaction—pity for the distresses

of an aggrieved people, whose condition would not be ameliorated by the step they had taken—and satisfaction that the Protestants of Ireland were thus delivered from their fears of Papal supremacy. Captain Le Vavasseur and Desmond experienced unmingled sorrow and vexation. It was only what they had expected, yet the certainty of defeat filled them with overwhelming regret. Yet Desmond did not despair; youth seldom does; and a dim hope that the French would yet arrive and rescue Ireland from English thralldom, lingered in the recesses of his heart, causing him to watch for their appearance with the greatest solicitude. From the highest peak of the cliffs he would scan the waters of the Atlantic; examining through a telescope every vessel that skimmed its broad expanse. At length the appearance of some frigates, whose motions seemed rather suspicious, filled his mind with sudden hope and joy. With the telescope in his hand he rushed into the Abbot's chamber, where Captain Le Vavasseur, his uncle, and Inez were assembled.

The French vessels have arrived at last! he exclaimed, much excited. You can see them from this window. Look Captain Le Vavasseur, and judge for yourself. The officer eagerly took the glass offered him, and bent his gaze long and searchingly, on the ships seen about a league from the shore.

They certainly are French frigates, although English colors float from the mast-head. I cannot be mistaken—those persons on deck wear the French uniform, observed Captain Le Vavasseur with joyful animation; the hope of escape from his present insecure position, in a country

where his life was sought after, filling his mind with emotions of intense satisfaction. But the expression of his countenance suddenly changed, as his eye rested on Inez Percival—a look of deep sorrow grew into his face, and he walked to the window to hide his emotion.

Those are French frigates, no doubt of it; their sailing under false colors is to hide their national character, observed Dr. Percival, after he had taken a survey of them through the glass. But what has induced them to steer their course towards this remote shore. Better chance of success farther north! In a thickly-peopled part of the country they would find more persons to join their force—more patriot volunteers to rally round their standard.

I might join my countrymen in an hour, if I could procure a boat to put off to those vessels, said Captain Le Vavas seur; there is scarcely a breeze ruffling the ocean, and they seem to float lazily upon its surface, as if undecided where to effect a landing.

There is no difficulty about procuring a boat, said Desmond eagerly. I have a light skiff, and will be glad to accompany you.

At this moment, the sudden appearance of Norah at the door of the Abbot's chamber, drew the attention of the party towards her. She looked much alarmed.

Och masher dear, the sogers is coming! they'll be down upon us in no time! they're just at the very gate, she exclaimed in an excited manner.

The bell at the portal was now rung loudly.

There they are! they're coming for no good; it's the

Frinch officer they're after! Holy Bidy, where will we hide the craythure?

Norah is right, I fear, observed Dr. Percival in accents of the greatest alarm. Desmond, take Captain Le Vavasseur through the secret passage, opening on the beach. Beneath the beetling cliffs you can creep along to the end of the promontory, where your skiff is at present moored. Once upon the waters you will have every chance of escape.

I must seek safety for myself on board one of the frigates, observed Desmond, hesitatingly. I fear my life would be in danger should I dare to return.

You are right, my poor boy! your life and mine are now forfeited to our country, for the part we have taken in this affair. Farewell! we may never meet on earth again! May God bless and preserve you, if it be His blessed will.

Dr. Percival spoke in accents of deepest despondency, and for a moment seemed overwhelmed by this sudden calamity. Again an angry ringing of the bell was heard, showing that the military were impatient for admittance. Hastily bidding Desmond and Le Vavasseur adieu, Dr. Percival left the room. A hurried farewell passed between the two young men and Inez, in which the countenances of all expressed the grief that was crushing every emotion of joy and hope within their hearts. A few moments afterwards, young Percival and his companion were quickly descending the stone-stairs into the Abbey vaults.

On opening the gate, Dr. Percival found himself face to face with a party of regulars, commanded by a non-commissioned officer. The latter presented a paper. It was an order to arrest a French officer concealed in the Abbey;

information to that effect having been received by the authorities. Dr. Percival, who had recovered his self-possession, gave the required permission to search the Abbey, and a part of the men were soon thus engaged. After examining the wing occupied by the family, they proceeded to search the dilapidated part of the building. Whilst they were thus employed a shout from their comrades on the rocks outside the Abbey, drew their attention in that direction. A skiff had been observed to put off suddenly from the shore, and a suspicion of the truth instantly flashed upon the minds of the military.

He's not alone the d——d Frenchman! who is that with him? asked one of the men.

It is young Percival of course! who else would it be—but they will not escape us yet; we'll knab them both, the traitors. Here boys, you know the reward offered if we take that rascally foreigner alive; do not fire for your lives—you might have the ill-luck to kill the fellow—but seize the first boat you find on the shore, and be after them in double quick time. I will remain here with a few men to guard the place, while the doctor gets ready to start with us for B——; his life will pay the penalty any way, for these treasonable proceedings.

These words of the non-commissioned officer fell on the ears of Inez and Dr. Percival as the death-knell of every hope; but for the moment their own sorrow was forgotten in the eagerness with which they watched the escape of Desmond and his friend.

A boat, manned by the soldiers, soon put off in quick pursuit. It was a time of intense anxiety to the two brave

hearts in the skiff, as well as to those watching them from the Abbey. They were considerably in advance of their pursuers before the latter left the beach, but rapidly the distance between them diminished, as the sturdy arms of the soldiers quickly propelled their boat over the calm water. They were fast gaining on them, and escape seemed hopeless, when suddenly, Captain Le Vasseur raising an oar, tied his handkerchief to one end and hoisted it aloft, as a signal of distress. It drew the attention of some persons on board one of the frigates. Through his telescope Dr. Percival could perceive an unusual excitement on deck; a pinnace was immediately lowered and manned, the next moment it put off in the direction of Desmond's skiff.

Thank Heaven! they will yet be saved! said Inez, as with trembling emotion she kept her gaze fixed on the two beings for whose safety she felt so deeply interested.

The British soldiers, deceived by the colors floating from the mast-head, went fearlessly on, having no suspicions of the danger they were incurring. They were within a short distance of the skiff—making sure of their prisoners—when the true character of the pinnace bearing rapidly down upon them, suddenly making itself known, caused their hearts to beat with surprise and fear.

By St. George we are lost! exclaimed one of the men. Those fellows are not British tars! the English colors have deceived us; the French force has indeed come, but it's too late in the day; they had better return home again; they won't get Ireland this time.

Begorra, I think it's the best thing ourselves can do to return home again! exclaimed an Irish soldier—suddenly resting on his oars; them Parlez-vous will make us prison-

ers of war in less than no time. See! how beautifully they come towards us; it's the best of our play to turn and run for it. Here boys! a long pull, and a strong pull, and a pull altogether, and by St. Patrick we'll bate them yet.

But the boast was a vain one! Rapidly the British soldiers rowed o'er the tranquil ocean, which seemed like a giant slumbering in its might; but the French pinnace was too near to allow them to escape. Soon it came along side, and overpowered by numbers, they were made prisoners. Desmond and Captain Le Vasseur were received with much courtesy by the French officers; and now, feeling they were safe, at least for the present, Dr. Percival turned his attention to his own unhappy situation.

I must prepare for my removal to B—; you can remain here with the servants in comparative security, dearest Inez, he said sorrowfully.

But, why yield yourself a prisoner? she urged; you can hide yourself in the intermural passage, there it will be impossible to discover you. Imprisonment, if not death, awaits you, if you proceed to B—, she added, shuddering with emotion.

I cannot bear to expose you to the rude insults of the soldiers, he replied. Consider your unprotected state without my presence, and their anger would be roused by my disappearance. They would also remain round the Abbey to prevent my escape.

Then I will share your concealment! Let us hasten, dearest papa, do not hesitate! remember your precious life is in danger.

It seems like acknowledging my guilt, thus to hide from

justice, he remarked sadly. And yet I am guilty of having harbored an enemy to my Sovereign. Though perfectly loyal myself, yet, my having done so includes me in the punishment due to a traitor. There is no hope of justifying myself, after what has occurred this morning, therefore, I will take your advice; it is the only chance left me of escaping a violent death. Alas! how many of my ill-fated countrymen have suffered during these perilous times; some innocently—victims to suspicion. When will the darkness produced by an illiberal government on the one side, and a rebellious people on the other, pass from Green Erin? when will the day-star of peace arise on my unhappy country?

Hastily Inez removed a supply of food, and a few conveniences, into the intermural passage. She and Dr. Percival then shut themselves in, and with mingled hope and fear, awaited the issue of events.

The excitement of the pursuit had drawn away all the soldiers from the Abbey, to the extremity of the promontory. Their rage and disappointment knew no bounds; when they perceived the unexpected turn the affair had taken, and that their comrades were secured and taken on board the French vessels; for such they judged them to be. With eager haste they prepared to return to B—, to convey thither the first news of the arrival of the French. Dr. Percival was summoned to accompany them, but to their dismay he was no where to be found. Norah and Dermot looked as much amazed as the soldiers themselves, at the disappearance of their master and Inez. Leaving six men to guard the Abbey, the non-commissioned officer returned with the rest of his party to B—, there to communicate

the failure of his enterprise, and the fate that had befallen some of his fellow-soldiers.

## CHAPTER VII.

The landing of the French troops in a small bay near Killala, on the western coast of Ireland, caused a singular excitement in that part of the island, as well as throughout the land. The crushed hopes of the Patriot party revived—their brilliant expectations of effecting their independence seemed about to be realized. The tri-colored standard was unfurled over Green Erin—it floated from the frigates in the bay, and waved over the Bishop's Palace in Killala. The sight was a proud one to many Irish hearts, for as they gazed on the rich-colored folds, fluttering in the breeze, they trusted that it would never again be furled until the emancipation of their beloved country was accomplished. At the coming of the French, the bugle of revolt was again sounded throughout the island, and once more the two contending parties prepared for another sanguinary contest. Owing to the recommendation of Captain Le Vasseur, Desmond Percival was presented with an ensigncy in the "Legion"—as those Patriots were called who wore the French uniform. In the fight at Castlebar, Desmond distinguished himself by his daring acts of bravery, and won

laurels for his youthful brow. The few stirring incidents of this period were invested with peculiar interest in his eyes, for he was fond of military glory, and enthusiastically devoted to the cause of Irish independence. Since his sudden flight from the Abbey of Rathmore, a gloom hung over his spirit, produced by the agonizing suspense he suffered relative to the fate of Inez and Dr. Percival; and this gloom nothing but the excitement of actual combat could for a moment dispel. The recollection that his beloved uncle's life was in danger, on account of an act of kindness and hospitality, shown towards a helpless fellow-creature, filled his mind with indignation against the authorities, and increased that bitter animosity he had lately cherished towards the government, whose conduct appeared to him every way selfish, oppressive and unwise. It was this thought which incited him to such acts of reckless daring in the attack on Castlebar, which won for him the admiration of his own countrymen and their gallant allies; for he felt maddened by the recollection that one so dear to him was the victim of suspicion, and helpless in the hands of arbitrary power. He proudly hoped that the victory at Castlebar—where the Royalists were so shamefully defeated—was the harbinger of complete success to the Patriot cause; but how vain were these hopes! how visionary were young Percival's expectations! With their success at Castlebar ended the triumphant career of the Irish Independent Army, and their French allies. Soon came the information, that in other parts of the island the insurrection was crushed. Defeat had followed the movements of the Patriots—their spirits were broken, their brilliant hopes wrecked. A large royalist

force, under the command of Lord Cornwallis, was advancing to meet the French and the insurgents, in the west. A reinforcement of troops was expected from France, but did not arrive; therefore, the expedition having failed, nothing remained but capitulation of the whole force to the British commander, and this humiliating event finally took place at Boyle.

It was the night of this eventful day—a day of vain regret, bitter humiliation, and dark foreboding to the supporters of the Patriot cause in Ireland. A general amnesty had been granted to all under the rank of officers in the insurgent army, but as Desmond Percival as ensign, had borne the Patriot standard, this pardon did not include him; he was therefore obliged to provide for his safety in flight. He had parted from Captain Le Vasseur—who, as a prisoner of war, expected to return to France—and now once more attired in his civilian dress, lonely and a prey to fear and anguish, he secretly left the town of Boyle, under cover of night, and, striking into an unfrequented by-road, was soon some distance from its dangerous vicinity. His intention was to proceed to the Abbey of Rathmore. Captain Le Vasseur, who shared his sorrow and anxiety about the uncertain fate of Dr. and Miss Percival, had bribed a peasant to proceed to B——, and make inquiries relative to them. From this person they heard of their strange disappearance, and that as it was suspected that they were concealed in the Abbey, a military guard had been stationed there to prevent their escape.

It was arranged between the French officer and Desmond that the latter should proceed to the Abbey, enter by its secret passages, and, if possible, effect the escape of Inez

and his uncle. They were then to embark at the nearest sea port for France, where Captain Le Vavas seur fondly hoped to meet them again. This project was attended with the greatest danger, as it was more than probable Desmond would be taken up on suspicion of being one of the rebels, before he had travelled half way towards the home of his boyhood. Still, he determined to risk his own life in endeavoring to save those so dear to him, for without their companionship what would life be to him.

Through the hours of the night he sped on at a rapid rate, and as the early dawn of a summer morning broke with a stream of amber light, over the eastern horizon, he was several miles from the pleasantly situated town of Boyle. The morning was a glorious one; the air pure and invigorating. Some miles distant were seen the picturesque mountains of Sligo, with clouds of soft white mist rolling along their sides, revealing naked masses of granite, with here and there patches of vegetation. Soon the refulgent day-god rose upon the scene, and in its gorgeous light, the luxuriant heath that clothed some of the mountains, glowed with a rich purple hue. Too much absorbed in his own melancholy thoughts to cast more than a passing glance at the wild mountain-scene that on one side bounded his view, Desmond rapidly pursued his journey. Arriving at a place where two roads branched off in opposite directions, he was obliged to stop for a few minutes at a solitary cabin on the way-side, to make some inquiries relative to the road leading to B—. He had gained the necessary information, when, casting his eyes along the way he was to take, he perceived a small party of mounted militia advancing ra-

pidly towards him. To proceed and meet them would be incurring danger, and to seem to avoid them would look suspicious; he hesitated, not knowing what course to pursue. The cabin, at the door of which he was standing, was a shebeen or public house, of the humblest pretensions. After a minute's deliberation he thought it best to enter, under pretence of getting some refreshment, hoping that the soldiers would pass on. The startled expression that passed over his face at the sight of them, did not escape the notice of the woman who kept the shebeen. An instant perception of the dilemma in which he was placed flashed across her naturally acute mind, and all her womanly and patriotic sympathies were awakened in favor of the youth who stood before her, threatened with such imminent danger.

Step into the room beyant the shop avich! you'll be safe there till the sogers is gone by, she whispered.

Desmond looked into her face—its kind expression reassured him; the next moment he disappeared, just in time to escape being seen by the militia, who rode up to the door.

The top of the morning to ye Corporal Blake! shure it's bright and early ye're on the road! is there anything new about 'the boys' to-day? said the humble landlady, advancing to greet the new-comers.

'The boys' is dispersin' like chaff afore the wind, Mrs. Egan! it's all up with them since yestherday. The Frinch has surrendhered to Lord Cornwallis.

Ah thin! is it the thruth ye're tellin' me? murther alive!

what'll become of the misfortunate craythurs? they'll all be hung np like dogs?

By no manes ma'am! although that's what they deserve the rebels; shure it's too marciful Lord Cornwallis is intirely; they will all be pardoned if they give themselves up before six days—all barrin' the officers; but they'll swing for it, and serve them right the black-hearted thraitors! weren't they more knowledgeable than the poor ignorant people they deluded? and what else had they to expect when they fought agin the flag of their counthry. There is a power of them escapin', continued the corporal, and it's to pick them up we're scouring the counthry this blessed morning. Have you a dacent bit to give a man to ate, Mrs. Egan; we'll stop and take breakfast with you any how; and be quick and don't keep us waiting ma'am jewel, for we're in a mortal hurry; we must be in Boyle before ten o'clock.

Thin it's farther ye'll have to thtravel afore ye brake your fast, corporal dear, observed the hostess, with some embarrassment and hesitation. Sorra bit nor sup fit to put before the likes of you in my house this present moment, barrin' an egg or a noggin of milk, and that you wouldn't demane yourself by takin', when it's the best of ating and dhrinkin' the King's throops can command these times, and why not? Shure if they didn't keep the pace, the whole land would be burnt up and the quiet people murdered intirely.

Well, I suppose it's that genteel young man who we saw at the door afore we came up, that had the start of us, and ate all the provisions in your house this morning—not laving a single rasher for His Majesty's loyal yeomen, observed the

non-commissioned officer in a jeering manner, and slyly winking at his comrades.

Sorra bit nor sup crassed his lips thin! shure he was in too big a hurry to stop a minnit; he just axed for the road to Boyle, and I showed him a short cut down the boreen, and across the fields.

Now Mrs. Egan ma'am, I always took you for a loyal woman, and would never suspect you of harborin' a thraitor to your King and counthry, as ye are doing at this present minnit. Didn't I see that same youngsther enter this shebeen with my own two eyes, and by yere lave I'll prove they didn't decave me. Search the cabin, some of ye boys, and let the rest surround the premises and see that no one escapes.

At this moment the noble form of young Percival issued from the room, where he had been a deeply interested listener to the foregoing conversation.

If it is on my account you are going to search this good woman's house, you may spare yourself the trouble, he remarked haughtily. I am here to answer for myself. As a traveller I entered this public-house to ask for refreshment, and I now demand what cause for suspicion there is in my so doing?

Not much in that same to be sure; but, you must allow, young man, that it's rather quare for a gentleman like you to be thravellin' the counthry on foot. The thrubbles of the present time makes us mighty suspicious, and it's our orders to arrest every one we meet who can't give a good account of himself, and bring him before the nearest magisthrate. Now, young Sir, you'll plase to let us escort you to

Lord Annesley's; his place isn't far off. Shure if you can make it plain to him that you aren't one of them, it will be all right afore long, and no harm done.

Desmond quietly acquiesced; there was no escaping his fate; and giving a look of grateful acknowledgment towards his humble friend, the kind hostess, he silently left the shebeen.

Crowning a verdant slope, embosomed in a grove of ancient and majestic trees, Annesley Lodge was seen a few miles distant; its antique chimneys and time-stained walls peeping through the dark green foliage.

An avenue lined with lofty elms and beech, whose spreading branches o'er-arched the smooth gravel walk beneath, led to the front entrance. On one side of the mansion was a terrace-parterre, filled with many choice flowers, whose rich fragrance floated on the pure morning air. Seated in a tiny, octagon temple, its slender pillars in front entwined with rich creeping plants, whose crimson, golden or purple corollas contrasted strikingly with the luxuriant foliage, a lady of majestic appearance was seen. She was past the bloom of youth, but still very beautiful; and the expression of chastened sorrow that dwelt in her soft blue eyes, made her peculiarly interesting. As the soldiers, with their elegant-looking prisoner advanced up the avenue, she rose hastily, and advancing towards that part of the terrace overlooking the approach, leaned gracefully on the balustrade that surrounded it, and regarded them with apparent interest. Desmond's gaze rested on the beautiful being; his attention was drawn irresistibly towards her. Lifting his hat, he bowed with graceful courtesy as he was passing. A

faint cry broke from the lips of the lady, and with a faltering voice she asked his name.

Desmond Percival, he answered hesitatingly.

I knew it! I knew it! she wildly repeated; the hue of death spreading over her chiselled features, and she pressed her clasped hands tightly over her heart, as if to stop its wild throbbings; then turning hastily away to hide her violent emotion, with trembling steps she entered the house.

A few minutes afterwards a servant appeared to say, that Lord Annesley was not at home, and that it was Lady Annesley's orders the young man should await his return—the troopers might depart. They immediately acquiesced, although suspecting they had seen the last of their prisoner, yet the interest Lady Annesley evidently took in him, forbade their further interference.

They rode hastily down the avenue, and Desmond was conducted to a handsome apartment, where we shall now leave him, and return to the Abbey of Rathmore.

## CHAPTER VIII.

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Some days passed away, and still Dr. Percival and Inez saw no prospect of escaping from their irksome confinement. Owing to the length of the passage in which they were concealed, and the number of chinks in the wainscot, which freely admitted the air, they did not suffer much in this particular; and as long as the provisions, which the forethought of Inez had provided, lasted, they were delivered from their fears of immediate suffering. Still the torturing suspense they suffered on Desmond's account, as well as their own, preyed upon their health and spirits. Their condition became every day more gloomy. Dr. Percival's patience became completely exhausted; he chafed like a caged lion, within the narrow precincts of what was to him a prison, and talked of giving himself up to the authorities and enduring the worst that could befall him—anything would be preferable to such a life of suspense and confinement. Inez, woman-like, had more endurance. With patient fortitude she bore the evils of their lot, and tried to soothe the doctor's irritability, and raise his drooping spirits by talking of some unexpected deliverance that was sure to

come. Perhaps the Patriots, aided by their powerful French allies, would be successful, and soon it might be, Desmond or Captain Le Vasseur would return to the Abbey and deliver them from their unpleasant situation. Dr. Percival shook his head mournfully, at this suggestion. The rebel army will never conquer, my poor Inez! they and the gallant French must eventually submit to the more powerful Royalist force. Captain Le Vasseur may escape as a prisoner of war, but your rash and ardent-minded cousin will suffer a dishonorable death; and overcome by the gloomy picture his imagination painted, he dropped his head between his hands and groaned in anguish of spirit.

A few more days passed mournfully away; the military still kept watch round the Abbey, rendering the escape of their prisoners impossible, unless some one were able or willing to assist them. Almost their last portion of food, of which they had partaken but sparingly, was gone, and if another supply could not be procured, a longer continuance in their concealment must not be thought of. This fact Inez kept from the knowledge of Dr. Percival, but she had formed a plan to replenish her store, which she hoped would succeed, although considerable risk would be incurred in putting it into execution. It was the "witching hour of night,"—Dr. Percival stretched upon the pallet which Inez had thoughtfully provided for him, slept soundly, losing in the sweet oblivion of sleep—which is one of God's greatest blessings to the afflicted—the recollection of every woe. Noiselessly sliding aside the secret panel, Inez passed through the Abbot's chamber into the corridor. All seemed quiet within the Abbey. From the corridor a door led into the habitable

wing of the edifice. It was not fastened, and Inez, passing through, entered, unobserved, her own apartment. There she dressed herself in white, enshrouding her head and part of her face in a long white veil. Thus attired she hoped to pass for an apparition, if she should be seen by any of the soldiers. With a throbbing heart she descended the stairs leading to the hall below, and approached a door opening into the kitchen. It was partly ajar, and a light gleaming through the opening made her apprehensive that it was occupied. Through a chink in the door, she perceived three soldiers sitting at a table, on which was placed the plentiful remains of a supper. A bottle of whisky now engaged their attention, and from their excited manner it was evident that they had partaken of its contents rather freely.

Bedad that's capital stuff! it's the rale poteen and no mistake—observed one of the men pushing back his chair from the table—but I'll dhrink no more of it to-night, be-kase if I do, I'll not be able to mount guard.

And what's the use of mounting guard at all? remarked another. Shure it's only keeping watch over the bats and owls we are in this ould place, for if the docthor and young lady is in it they're starved long ago. We're only losing our time here boys!

Yes, remarked the first speaker, and to think of the fun there is going on in other parts of the counthry! Tim Daly was here to-day from B——, and he says a battle was fought at Castlebar, and that the Royalists was beaten, more shame for them to let a disorderly mob, and a parcel of furriners get the betther of them! But the day is coming when the Frinch and the rebels will get what

they don't bargain for. Tim says Lord Cornwallis is marching to meet them, and a strong party of Orangemen at his back, and them is the boys that will show fight, and let the rascally Frinchmen see that ould Ireland can take care of herself, and doesn't want their intherference. Shure if we want masthers it isn't to France we'll go to look for them!

It is time to relieve the guard! observed the other soldier who had not before spoken, and who seemed from his accent to be an Englishman. I dare say our comrades are impatient for their supper and hot glass.

As he spoke he moved towards a door at one end of the kitchen, opening into the court-yard. A few minutes afterwards the soldiers had disappeared. Hastily Inez entered the kitchen, and approaching the table, snatched up a large loaf and a piece of cold meat, then hurriedly retreating, she ascended the stairs, and passing through the corridor, once more entered the Abbot's chamber. Being anxious to procure some water, she again ventured to revisit the kitchen, but as she reached the door, the guard who had been relieved entered it from an opposite direction. Again applying her eye to the crevice, she surveyed the scene, while she listened eagerly to find out whether the provisions she had purloined would be missed.

Begorra there isn't much left for a hungry man to ate, observed one of the newly-arrived, surveying the supper table with a comical expression of dismay. Half a loaf, a few salt herrings, and not a taste of meat! Our comrades made a plentiful supper no doubt! but devil a one of me will put up with their lavings; I'll rouse that ould woman and make her fry us a dish of rashers off that beautiful

fitch hanging over the chimney; and seizing a light he advanced towards the door, at which Inez stood listening.

With the speed of a startled fawn she sprung up the stairs, but had not reached the top when the kitchen door was flung open—and the soldier strode into the hall. Her white figure instantly caught his eye, and uttering a cry of terror, he fled back into the kitchen.

What ails you man alive? what's the matter Burke? asked his companions, eagerly approaching him.

A livid hue overspread his face, and he sank into a chair unable to speak.

Begorra he is going off in a dead faint! it's a sperrit he saw I'll be bound! I knew there was plenty of ghosts in this ould place. Stir yourself man! take a dhrop of the crathur, it'll put the life into ye again!

It is best to sprinkle him with cowld water, observed another soldier, and suiting the action to the words he flung a pitcher of the pure element into Burke's face.

It had the effect of bringing him back to consciousness, and also of rousing his anger.

Devil take you Pat Murphy! what did you do that for? he gasped, his teeth chattering with fear. You nearly dhrowned me!

Shure it's the best thing to bring you to man! but tell us Burke, what was it you saw? what did it look like?

Oh shut the door for Heaven's sake, he replied, shuddering, I cannot bear to look into the dark!

Nor I nather! Hennessey, I often heard you boast you feared nather ghost nor goblin! Show your courage now man, and shut that door leading into the hall!

Hennessey hesitated, his companion's awe of the supernatural had communicated itself to him.

It's the best of our play to lave the place altogether, he observed.

Bedad your right, the ghosts doesn't like to be meddled with! and the fright I got has spiled my appetite for this night! observed Burke. Let us join our comrades on the cliffs.

Faix I'll bring the whisky with me any way! rejoined Hennessey, it'll keep the life in us, and dhrive the fear out!

Carefully avoiding another glance into the gloomy hall, where they fancied the spectral visitant was to be seen, the soldiers hastily left the kitchen—so true is it that in some minds the fear of the supernatural is all-powerful—and these brave soldiers who would have boldly faced death at the cannon's mouth, yet fled from a phantom conjured up by their own superstitious fancies—fear preventing their suspecting the fact, that the white form Burke had seen might be Miss Percival.

As soon as the kitchen was again unoccupied, Inez, who had overheard the soldiers' conversation, re-entered it, and took this opportunity to get an earthen jar of water, some more bread, and a bottle of wine. To procure the latter she had to enter the store-room on the other side of the hall, adjoining which was Norah's chamber. A slight noise which she made attracted the old woman's attention. She arose hastily and stood at the door of her room. The white figure of Inez issuing from the store-room and advancing towards her, sent a thrill of terror to her heart, but the well known voice of her young mistress soon re-assured her.

Holy Biddy! is it you that's in it, Miss Inez? I took you for a rale ghost—you're the very picthure of one! And where did you come from asthore? and where's the masther himself? the very heart within me is dissolate and broke intirely, since you ran away.

We are still in the Abbey, Norah, but in a place of concealment. I frightened the soldiers to-night—they all left the kitchen, and that enables me to come here for some provisions.

And as luck would have it, there's plenty of bread I baked this morning, and here's a nice piece of boiled ham avourneen; shure it's starved ye are! and ye're right to take the dhrop of dhrink to the masther, bekase he's always used to it! But when will I see you again my darlint, and what can I do to help you?

Nothing at present, Norah; if the soldiers would only leave the Abbey we might escape. They will be anxious to depart after this night's fright, Inez added laughing.

And lave it to me to tell them all kinds of g'host stories about this anshient place, remarked Norah. Troth meself wouldn't stop at the biggest lie ever was towld, if it would only frecken them away.

I must leave you now Norah; be cautious and do not let the soldiers suspect you know anything of our retreat.

Is it me to let on? shure I have more sense than that Miss Inez! but whist asthore! by all the saints the sogers is coming back. I hear their thramp in the coort-yard. Run for your life achorra machree!

Inez did run, and panting from exertion, gained the top of the stairs as the voices of the soldiers were again heard in the kitchen.

What a devil of a fuss about a ghost, that is no ghost at all! exclaimed the Englishman before mentioned; and who seemed to have some control over the others. I'll soon see if this ghost isn't flesh and blood like ourselves!

Inez waited to hear no more, but hurriedly retreated to the secret passage. She was scarcely safe within its walls when the heavy tread of men was heard in the corridor, and lights flashed through the crevices in the wainscot.

What a fool you were Burke, not to follow the figure! resumed the same speaker. It was Miss Percival herself, acting the ghost for some purpose of her own. Now, if you had caught her the old gentleman himself would soon be in our power, and our weary watch in this confounded old building would be ended.

Begorra I wish it was yourself that saw it, muttered Burke, who followed the party with trembling steps and a face pale from fear. Maybe you wouldn't spake so bowld my gentleman; the sight of it would freeze the blood in your veins, brave as you are, Corporal Vincent. Bedad you would take to your heels fast enough! it would then be, devil take the hindmost.

After a fruitless search through the ruins, the soldiers returned once more to the kitchen, relieving the anxious Inez from her fears for the present. The next morning she related to Dr. Percival her night adventure. The first smile she had seen on his face for some days, broke slowly over it as he listened to the recital, which gained much from her humorous description, for she tried to amuse him and divert the sad current of his thoughts.

Your prudence, courage, and forethought, are above all

praise, my dearest Inez, he said, fondly kissing her. I look upon you as my guardian angel. With the provisions you have managed to procure, our garrison can hold out for some time; the legal authorities must at last get tired of this fruitless watch over us; the soldiers will be withdrawn, and in that case a chance of escape will be left us. Let us put our trust in a Higher Power, whose providential care we have hitherto experienced, and hope for the best—if Desmond were but with us all would yet be well.

## CHAPTER IX.

Seated alone, in a richly-furnished apartment in Annesley Lodge, Desmond Percival passed nearly an hour, thinking less of his own unhappy situation than of the singular interest the beautiful Lady Annesley had shewn in his behalf. A light step approaching the door, at length fell on his ear; he looked up with eager expectation. A hand was on the lock, but the person seemed to hesitate for a few moments, then the door opened and Lady Annesley, pale and agitated, entered the room. Desmond arose, and awaited her addressing him, in respectful silence.

You are the son of a very dear friend of mine, she said in low trembling accents, sinking into a chair, apparently unable to support herself. Feeling the deepest interest in your welfare, I have come to make some inquiries relative to the cause of your being in the position in which I saw you this morning. Speak without restraint—confide in me—I will be your friend.

Desmond's confidence was won by her look and manner, and he related to her the events which had involved him in the unfortunate cause of Irish independence.

Am I then to understand that you would have taken no part in this unsuccessful rebellion were it not for the peculiar situation in which you were placed, by affording protection to the French officer? asked Lady Annesley, earnestly regarding him.

I should not! although my heart is devoted to the cause, he replied, a flush of patriotic ardor lighting up his fine features; but my uncle, Dr. Percival, to whom I owe so much, strongly opposed my wishes, and I would not act contrary to his will.

There was an expression of infinite tenderness in Lady Annesley's gaze, as it rested on the glowing countenance of the young man, while he spoke with earnest truthfulness.

Dr. Percival was right! she observed, gently; his mature judgment made him see the hopelessness of such a project as the Patriots meditated: when you are older you will think differently on this point. Still this step, although educed by circumstances, places you in a dangerous position; yet I hope to effect your escape from the peril that threatens you. You must leave this place before the return of Lord Annesley—he would show you no mercy, for he is bitterly opposed to the movers of this sedition; and, she added, hesitatingly, he must not know the deep interest I take in your fate.

Lady Annesley's eyes fell beneath the look of surprise and inquiry which Desmond raised to her face.

I have already told you, she resumed, after a minute's pause, that you are the son of one very dear to me—would, she added with sudden emotion, that I could reveal to you more, that I could tell you why I feel such overpowering

solicitude for your safety. She covered her face with her small white hands, and her frame shook with extreme agitation.

Have you ever heard Dr. Percival speak of your parents? she asked, after a short silence.

Of my father, Captain Percival, he spoke frequently, with fond affection, but of my mother—never! Once, when I made some inquiries concerning her, he replied abruptly, that he had never seen her, he knew nothing at all about her, and from his manner the painful idea occurred to me that there was some mystery connected with her, perhaps some stain resting on my birth, and this humiliating thought has often haunted me, causing me many pangs of shame and grief.

Your suspicion is entirely unfounded! oh why, even for a moment, harbor such a thought? asked Lady Annesley; an expression of deep pain breaking over her agitated face.

You were acquainted with my mother! oh tell me what you know about her! said Desmond, his face lighting up with sudden hope.

Again Lady Annesley gazed on him with passionate tenderness; again she dropped her face within her hands, and wept with uncontrollable emotion.

Merciful Heavens, I cannot bear this! she said, as if speaking unconsciously, the yearnings of my heart will not be subdued—to see him and not reveal myself! a mother's heart cannot endure this self-denial!

She rose and paced the room with wild excitement; at length stopping, with sudden resolution she said—the light

of maternal love flashing over her pallid face—Desmond, behold your mother!

An exclamation of mingled surprise and joy, burst from the lips of the young man; he sprang towards her in time to receive her fainting form in his arms. He bore her towards an open window—the cool air fanned her marble brow—but it was some minutes before the rich blood again colored her pale lips. A smile of joy stole brightly over her face, as with returning consciousness she encountered Desmond's gaze bent fondly on her. Mother! my mother! can it be possible? he murmured in agitated accents, as he tenderly supported her trembling form.

Yes, Desmond! your unhappy mother, she said sighing deeply, as she rested her head on his shoulder—unhappy I have ever been, since I last saw your cherub face, as you were torn from my arms shortly after your birth. The agony of that moment was a death pang! would that it had indeed rent the spring of my existence! what a life of sorrow I should have escaped—was not the holiest love of my heart—a mother's love—crushed at its birth! was not my life filled with agonizing yearings for the child I had lost! Sit down beside me Desmond, and I will explain to you the stern necessity which obliged me to give up all earthly happiness in resigning you. When I was yet in the first bloom and romance of girlhood, I became acquainted with Captain Percival, then stationed with his regiment at a small town in the interior of Ireland. I was residing with my widowed father, on a fine estate in the neighborhood. My father, Sir Philip Vaughan, was like many Irish gentleman, gay, hospitable, fond of hunting and gaming, and too much addicted

so pleasure. Owing chiefly to his gambling habits, his fortune became impaired, and his estate encumbered. One of our neighbors, and a frequent visitor at Castle Vaughan, was Lord Annesley; an elderly nobleman of princely fortune. It was to his Lordship that my father was indebted for the large sums he spent nightly at the billiard-table, and which I afterwards understood were lent him, on condition that I should become Lady Annesley. Among our occasional guests were the officers from A——; your father being one of the number. Of noble form, handsome and intellectual, he attracted my admiration, and the passionate attachment he professed for me was warmly returned on my part; but we both knew full well that my father would never consent to our union, as Captain Percival had nothing but his profession to depend on for support. I have said Sir Philip Vaughan was a widower; a maiden sister—a heartless woman—ruled his household. Like her brother, she possessed great family pride, and was like him, fond of gaiety and dissipation. Between her and me there was little companionship, and still less sympathy. A foster sister—my own maid—was the only person who possessed my confidence; we had been brought up together, and I regarded her as an humble friend. With her assistance I contrived to meet your father frequently in a retired part of the beautiful grounds around Castle Vaughan; for my aunt, as soon as she suspected his devotion to me, seldom invited him to the house. Young and inexperienced—having no mother's hand to guide me along the dangerous life-paths—I yielded to my fears of being finally separated from him who was inexpressibly dear to me, and consented to a private union.

The ceremony was performed by a Roman Catholic priest—a stranger in the country, who was on his way to Dublin, intending to embark for France; some political trouble obliging him to become an exile from his native land. Both the priest and Desmond Percival were secretly introduced into Castle Vaughan at midnight, during the temporary absence of Sir Philip and Miss Vaughan. Two months after our secret union, your father's regiment was ordered to India. He had a relative in that country occupying a high position in the government, and through his influence he hoped to procure some lucrative official situation which would enable him to maintain his wife in the rank to which she had been accustomed. Such were the glittering hopes that filled his mind, when he bade me farewell, cheering the agony of separation. He requested me to hide our marriage until I heard from him; ere long he trusted to return and proudly claim me as his wife. These bright visions of future happiness were never realized. The transport in which the regiment embarked, was lost at sea, and nearly every soul perished—your father sank to an early grave.

Lady Annesly paused, and overcome with the anguish of the recollection, she wept violently. With words of tender endearment, Desmond tried to soothe her grief, while tears of sympathy filled his own blue eyes for the untimely death of one so dear to both.

The misery that overwhelmed me at the news of this affliction, I will not attempt to describe, resumed Lady Annesley, as soon as she could control her agitation. In the agony of my bereavement I revealed my marriage to my aunt. She coldly looked upon my anguish, doubted my

recital, and called upon me to prove my marriage—basely insinuating that no ceremony had ever taken place; for would Captain Percival, she tauntingly asked, have left Ireland without me, if he were really my husband. Where was the priest who had united us? what was his name? I could not answer either of these questions. I had never even asked, for I trusted implicitly to the honor of your father. In his possession alone were the proofs of our marriage, and with him they were now engulfed in the fathomless deep. My situation was deplorable, for I had the prospect of becoming a mother. My cruel aunt, imposing on the innocent credulity of girlhood, represented to me that unless I concealed my situation I would be disgraced in the eyes of the world; she also promised to hide everything from my father—whose anger I dreaded—if I assented to her proposal. As I really had no means of proving my marriage, and dreaded more than death any stain on my reputation, I complied with my aunt's wishes. When the time of my confinement was approaching, I accompanied her to a remote bathing lodge of my father's, situated on the sea shore of the county S——; under pretence that I needed change of air. There, Desmond, you opened your eyes on this earthly scene—there too I became a mother, but childless! The agony of parting from you brought on a fever, and for some time I was delirious. When I recovered, my aunt told me that my child had been placed under the care of my husband's brother, Dr. Percival, who lived some miles distant; and that she had directed him to call his name Desmond; thus giving him a clue to suspect whose child he was, while the strong resemblance his tiny features bore to Captain

Percival would be sufficient to confirm such a suspicion. During your childhood, my maid Katharine frequently visited the neighborhood of the Abbey of Rathmore, to bring me all the information relative to my lost treasure, that I so earnestly desired. From her I heard you were brought up as Dr. Percival's nephew, and fondly regarded by him as such. To hear that you were well and happy was the only solace of my existence; the only thing capable of penetrating the cloud that had settled over my spirit. After the lapse of nearly twenty years, when this morning my eye first rested on you, imagination carried me back during that interval, and I thought I again saw before me the loved form of Desmond Percival. Your likeness to your father is most striking; you have the same bright blue eyes, the same clustering auburn hair—even his very features and noble form. My heart told me you were my son—it was drawn towards you with magnetic force. For eighteen years I have been the wife of Lord Annesley. To relieve my father of great pecuniary embarrassment—I might say total ruin—I yielded to his earnest solicitation, and gave my hand to his Lordship; but I had no heart to bestow. I knew no second attachment. The disparity in age between Lord Annesley and myself, and our want of congeniality, prevented our union being a happy one. How often in the loneliness of my childless married life, has the remembrance of you rolled in upon my heart—filling its very depths with vain regrets and passionate yearnings. And now when we have at last met, it is only to part again! Father in Heaven! must I endure this separation? why may I not yield to the strong impulsive love which urges me to fly with my son, to share his danger and his exile?

There was an appealing wildness in her voice, which thrilled to the heart of Desmond.

Do not think of it dearest mother, he said, in accents of soothing tenderness, deeply touched by her unselfish love for him. Remember you have other ties, other duties to perform.

You are right! she rejoined mournfully; this wild conflict within my heart must be subdued; I must not snatch happiness by wandering from the path of duty—the duty I owe my husband. I should have mentioned—she resumed—after a short silence—that during the last ten years I travelled in Europe, Egypt and Palestine, seeking in change of scene, forgetfulness of the past, if not happiness; but during that time I heard of you regularly through my aunt. I have only lately returned to Ireland. Since my arrival at Annesley Lodge my intense wish to see you made me determine to visit the Abbey of Rathmore, with the intention of confiding to Dr. Percival the secret of my union with his brother; but this the late insurrectionary movement prevented. How unexpectedly has the desire of seeing you been gratified! We will now talk of your plans for the future, and of the best way to accomplish the escape of your uncle and Miss Percival from the Abbey; they are still, I hope, safely concealed within its walls. To-night, as soon as it is dark, you must leave this place. An old servant of my father's, who has lived with me since my marriage, will await you with two horses at the end of the avenue. Well mounted and attended by a groom in Lord Annesley's livery, you will pass unmolested through any part of the country. This man will remain with you until he sees you

safe on board some vessel bound to a foreign port. On arriving at the Abbey of Rathmore you will yourself know best what plan to pursue for the liberation of your relatives. I will supply you with money necessary for every arrangement. You must not hesitate to accept it, she added, with a sad smile; my own fortune was settled on myself, and henceforth the best part of it shall be yours, as it is your right. It has always been my intention, as soon as you were of age, to provide liberally although secretly for you. When you arrive on the continent let me know where you will reside, and at some future time I will visit you in your new home. The prospect of that happiness will help me to bear this present separation, and will be, in the meantime, a well-spring of hope within me.

The remaining hours of the day were spent by Lady Annesley and her son in deeply-interesting conversation. The deepening shadows of twilight at length announced that the hour of Desmond's departure drew near. The parting was one of intense bitterness to both mother and son. How cruel seemed the necessity for their separation! Would they ever meet again? The whisperings of hope were faint within their hearts, for a dense cloud of uncertainty hung loweringly over the future.

CHAPTER X.

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The crescent moon was lifting its luminous bow above the ancient trees of Annesley Lodge, and gleaming through their waving foliage, as Desmond Percival—his heart oppressed with the grief of parting from the lovely being who had taught him to call her mother—walked hastily down the avenue, near the end of which he was met by O'Brien, Lady Annesley's groom; then mounting the spirited animal provided for him, he hastily resumed his journey. Travelling at a rapid rate, without molestation—although he met more than one party of soldiers—in a few hours he arrived within half a mile of the Abbey of Rathmore. Leaving O'Brien with the horses beneath the shelter of a solitary ruined cabin near the beach, Desmond approached the Abbey alone, and on foot. To enter the vaults by the outlet on the beach would have been attended with much hazard, as the soldiers generally kept watch on the cliffs above; but fortunately Desmond knew of the entrance near the old fort, through which the United Irishmen had escaped from the military, as related in a former chapter. O'Brien had provided a dark lantern, and guided by its

friendly light, Desmond hurriedly traversed the subterranean passages. On gaining the top of the stone stairs, he cautiously pushed aside the sliding stone and paused to listen. No sound was heard; a solemn silence reigned around. Stepping within the ivy-mantled arch-way, he surveyed the ruined hall; it was lonely, as usual. Desmond had taken the precaution to darken the lantern, but the bright star-light rendered surrounding objects indistinctly visible. Happening to glance towards the corridor above, a tall white figure, or rather the dim outline of what appeared such, caught his eye. A superstitious fear stole over him, for he remembered the many ghost stories with which Norah had amused his childhood, but he soon mastered this foolish feeling, and imagining that the supposed apparition might be Inez, he ascended the stairs with the intention of joining her. The creaking noise it made beneath his tread seemed to startle the figure, and it fled towards the door of the Abbot's chamber. Desmond now felt convinced his supposition was right, and following the retreating form entered the room just as its white drapery vanished through the secret door of the intermural passage. Sliding aside the panel, Desmond followed. Inez, overcome with terror, thinking she was pursued by one of the soldiers, had sunk almost fainting on the floor. The voice of Desmond soon removed her fears and filled her with sudden joy. Dr. Percival was now aroused from sleep to share the happiness of that meeting, and so unlooked-for was Desmond's appearance among them that he could scarcely be convinced that he was not under the influence of a happy dream. With eager curiosity and astonishment, the doctor listened

to Desmond's account of the interview with his mother. That she was of such high rank had never occurred to him, and a feeling of proud gratification filled his heart, that no stain rested on the birth of his nephew.

We will find out this same priest Desmond! he said, with joyful excitement. Yes! I will go to France chiefly for that purpose! The proofs of your father's marriage must be obtained, and then you can claim this high-born beautiful lady as your mother in the eyes of all Christendom! Poor lady! poor thing! he added in a tone of intense pity—to be obliged to give up her noble son to save her reputation! By Jove I will find out that same old priest yet, if he be in the land of the living!

Hush dear papa! said Inez, smiling; do not speak so loud! remember that the soldiers are on the cliffs outside. But it was some minutes before the excitement of Dr. Percival could be subdued. At length he was led to speak of his own situation, and to consider which would be the best plan to effect their escape.

We must leave the country by water, he remarked thoughtfully; our doing so will be attended with less danger of discovery. About a mile from the Abbey lives a fisherman named Magee, he has a large sail boat which could convey us all to Sligo; there we would find a vessel bound for some port on the European continent. You must see Magee, Desmond, he has always professed much gratitude to me for some little kindness I have at different times shown him. He will, I know, assist us to escape, and we can reward him handsomely. By to-morrow night every arrangement can be made. You must direct Lady Annes-

ley's groom to ride over to Sligo to meet us there, and provide for our accommodation until we can get on board some vessel. You had better leave us now Desmond, for before the morning breaks you must see Magee and send off the groom to avoid suspicion. During the day you can hide yourself in Magee's cabin—it is in a lonely spot, and there are none there but himself and his old mother, and she will be true to us.

Would it be possible to take Norah with us, papa? asked Inez, whose heart clung to her humble friend and the nurse of her childhood.

Oh, we must certainly take Norah, she would miss us much, and grieve if we left her behind! urged Desmond.

But how are we to acquaint her with our intended flight? asked his uncle. Inez cannot again act the ghost to-night, it is too late. See! the dawn already steals through the crevices in the wainscot.

I will manage to let her know, observed Desmond, as he arose to depart. Magee will see her through the day, and she can join us on the beach.

Inez accompanied Desmond to the foot of the spiral stairs, and there remained until the sound of his footsteps, descending into the vaults, was no longer heard.

The long hours of the day passed heavily away, for Dr. Percival and Inez counted the tardy minutes. Time never before seemed to pass so slowly, and as the day waned, their impatience and anxiety increased. Frequently Inez slid aside the secret panel and peeped into the Abbot's chamber to watch for the glowing sun descending in the west, and to chide his loitering movements. The brilliant luminary

was at length seen resting his broad disk on the rugged brow of a distant hill, and Inez viewed the gorgeous sunset for the last time, in the home of her childhood. Tears of regret filled her eyes at the recollection, and she gazed long and sadly on the crimson sunlight playing on the restless ocean. The scenes endeared to her by early associations she should never again behold—before another sunset she would be miles distant. Very sad to the youthful mind is the prospect of leaving forever the home where the happy days of childhood and youth have been spent. Inez felt this sadness; old memories rushed over her—reminiscences of other days came back with fearful power to pain, and she wept long and passionately,

The voice of Norah on the cliffs below the Gothic window, after a time roused her from her sad reverie. With thrilling melancholy, and wild sweetness, she was singing an exquisite melody of Erin. Inez doubted not but that the same sad thoughts which had rushed across her brain, were filling the mind of the old woman with poignant regret. That she would accompany them in their flight she knew, for Norah possessed all that warm attachment to Dr. Percival and his family so often seen in Irish servants, and which has frequently impelled them to leave their native country and share their master's fortunes in a strange land.

The ebon veil of night at length settled over the landscape, enshrouding ruined Abbey, and cliff, and sea, and dreary coast in its sable folds. It wanted but two hours of midnight and Desmond had not yet returned. A terrible fear that he had been discovered, and their escape prevented, stole into the heart of Dr. Percival and Inez. Another half

hour passed and still he came not. Inez crept to the foot of the spiral stair-case and watched for his coming foot-step. Soon a footfall fell on her listening ear. She sprang to her feet with eager expectation and noiselessly opened the secret door. The tall form of one of the soldiers was seen crossing the hall with a light in his hand. Scarcely repressing a cry of alarm she closed the door and awaited his approach in trembling fear—supposing he had observed her—but the soldier passed on, and soon his heavy tread sounded faintly in the distance.

The midnight hour came—the old clock in the Abbey striking twelve, interrupted the profound tranquility of the ruin. As the last stroke died away, and all was again silent, a stealthy step approached the secret passage. Inez arose with newly-awakened hope, her gaze was fixed on the private door—it opened, and Desmond entered. He gently chid her anxious impatience—said he had judged it best to wait till a late hour, that every arrangement for their escape was made, and that they must hasten to join Magee on the beach; where he and Norah awaited them. A few minutes afterwards Dr. Percival and Inez were following Desmond through the subterranean passages.

In a small creek about a mile distant, a large sail-boat was moored beneath a sheltering cliff. On the beach, their eyes earnestly fixed on a narrow foot-path which wound along the shore, two lonely forms were seen in the faint star-light.

They're mighty long in coming Magee, one of them observed. Och my grief! if anything should hindher them now, what would I do at all at all?

Whist woman! don't spake so loud! Shure the air will carry the sound of yere voice ever so far; there's no time lost yet, they'll be soon here I'll be bound. But what on earth have you got bundled up in them big parcels Norah? faix you didn't come empty handed any way; how did you manage to dhrag them all the way here?

On my back of coorse. I am going and coming ever since night-fall.

And what's in them if a body may ax?

All the masher's and Miss Inez' clothes, what else! Shure wont they want them in forrin parts? and bedad, it's little I left the soldiers in the way of ating and dhrinking. I took it all with me, as much as I could come across.

It was a great load for you to carry, said Magee laughing, and I hope you brought a bottle of the poteen Norah, it will keep off the sickness when yere on the wather. But here they are by Jabers! he added, joyfully, I must hoist the sails!

Here they are shure enough! the good Lord be praised for that same! and Norah lifted up her eyes to heaven with devout gratitude.

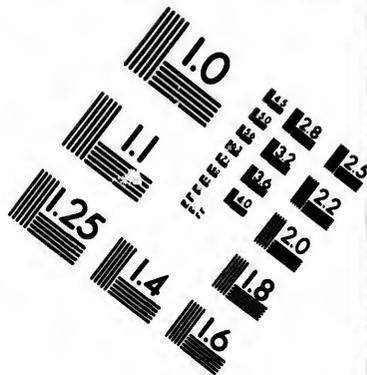
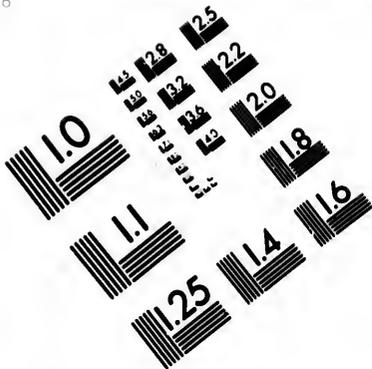
The little party met in silence, and hastily embarked.

It was not until they had got some distance from the shore and the boat was scudding before a favorable breeze, that Dr. Percival—relieved from immediate anxiety—addressed his faithful servant in friendly accents.

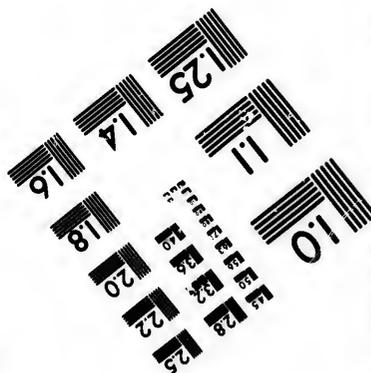
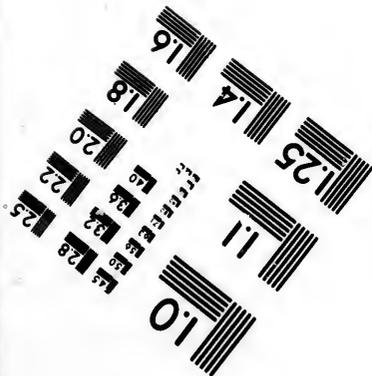
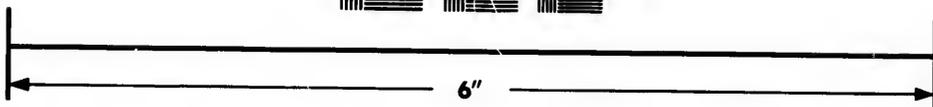
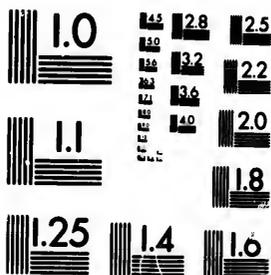
And so you have made up your mind to spend the rest of your days in a foreign land, Norah, and to turn your back on old Ireland?

And why not your honor? when it's going with you I





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am; what would I do at all without the childher? Shure the heart is light within me that I am not left behind this blessed night.

I am afraid the soldiers will miss you, Norah, and have their suspicions aroused.

Ah thin they wont your honor; for didn't I tell them I was going to the half-way house, to see a brother's son of my cousin Andy, who is going to Americkay; and that I wouldn't be back afore to-morrow night. But it's back to the Abbey I'll never go again! she added in a voice of touching sadness. Ochone! ochone! there it is, the ould place itself, just foreninst us, far away on the shore yondher! Look mather Desmond, jewel! there is the lights in the kitchen where the sogers is keeping watch, shining like stars far away. And to think—she continued—in accents half angry, half sorrowful, that it's come to this; that the mather should be flying like a thief from his own home—him that never harmed a living sowl in his born days! but it's nather law nor justice is to be found in Ireland this many a day! since we had our own to rule over us. And yet it's the sore grief to have to lave yon green isle of my heart. Erin mavourneen, Erin go bragh! and to think that I'll have to lave my ould bones in a sthrange land, far away from kith and kin, without any of my own people to keen over me; and overcome with the grief of such a thought, Norah raised that strangely-mournful and wild cry, with which her countrywomen are accustomed to lament for the dead, and which wafted on the night-breeze over the waves, might seem like the death-wail for a departed spirit. Her grief was contagious. Long and earnestly did her master and his adopted

children gaze upon the distant lights, gleaming in their ancient home, while tears filled their eyes and a feeling of deep sorrow oppressed their hearts.

If the breeze keeps on through the night, we'll be in Sligo early to-morrow, observed Magee—anxious to divert the thoughts of the fugitives.

The breeze did continue favorable, and when Aurora dawned on the ocean, the picturesque mountains of Benbulbin and Knocknarae, were seen raising their mist-covered summits towards the sky, not far distant. About eight o'clock the fishing-boat, entering the beautiful Bay of Sligo, sailed gracefully along its romantic shores, and at last anchored at one of the quays. There O'Brien met them with the joyful information, that he had engaged a passage for them in a barque bound to Bilboa, in the north of Spain—and that it would sail in the afternoon. They therefore went immediately on board, thankful to have escaped so far.

Desmond wrote to Lady Annesley, informing her of the success of his undertaking, and with this letter O'Brien returned to Annesley Lodge as soon as he had seen the vessel in which the fugitives had embarked, put out to sea.

## CHAPTER XI.

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With a steady, favorable breeze, the bark "Henrietta," leaving behind the dangerous iron-coast of the west of Ireland, moved rapidly onward, and after some days, entering the Bay of Biscay, rode buoyantly over its rolling waves towards the northern shore of Spain. Dr. Percival and his family were not the only passengers. A few young men—likewise involved in the late rebellion—were among the number, seeking in another land that safety which their own beloved country could no longer afford. One of the party, a young man of superior education, particularly attracted Desmond's attention—and one of those sudden intimacies so easily contracted on board ship, was soon formed between them. The stranger's name was O'Neill—a descendant, he said, of the princes of Ulster, the ancient royal race who so gallantly opposed the English invaders, and maintained their independence in the north, long after the rest of Ireland had submitted to the yoke of their conquerors. A proud patriotism glowed in the breast of this young man, which found an answering echo in the heart of Desmond; and for hours they would converse on the national

topics so interesting to both. The long-departed glory of the Emerald Isle was an inexhaustible theme. O'Neill exultingly recalled the time when the white banner of Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone—its device, a "Red Right Hand"—waved defiantly on the breeze as his gallant bands fearlessly opposed the army of the great Elizabeth, at the famous battle of Clontibret—when the proud flag of St. George was hurled to the dust before the impetuous charge of the fiery ranks of Tyr-owen—who, with their wild war cry of "the Red Right Hand for ever"! drove the hated Saxons headlong before them.

Hatred to the conquerors of our native soil has always distinguished my family, remarked O'Neill one day when conversing with Desmond. Twenty years ago my uncle, the Rev. Hugh O'Neill, was obliged to leave Ireland on account of some political offence. He took refuge in France, and I am now on my way to join him. On arriving at Bilboa I shall embark for Paris, where he resides.

Could this be the priest who had privately united Captain Percival to Miss Vaughan? A bright hope sprung up in the heart of Desmond. He communicated his suspicions to his uncle, and to both it seemed more than probable that the proofs of his parents' marriage might yet be obtained. Desmond determined to accompany O'Neill to Paris, and obtain through him an interview with his reverend relation.

It was a beautiful autumnal evening—the sky cloudless, the sea so calm as to mirror the passing sails in its tranquil bosom. The bark floated lazily on the blue waters; every sail set as if to court the loitering breeze so earnestly desired to speed it onward. The passengers were all on deck, en-

joying the invigorating purity of the air, and viewing with interest the Spanish coast—seen a few miles distant. A happy feeling of security pervaded every breast, when suddenly an unusual excitement was observed among the crew, and soon came the fearful tidings that the bark was on fire. The stoutest heart leaped at the startling news, and more than one face paled. The fierce element had been raging some time before it was observed, and soon it was seen bursting through the deck. To endeavor to extinguish it would only be loss of time; immediate preparations were therefore made to abandon the vessel. The boats were lowered and the crew and passengers hastily collecting a few valuables, put off from the burning wreck. It was quite dark when they reached the shore, for they had waited to watch the brilliant spectacle of the bark burning to the water's edge. The vivid jets of flame shot up into the darkening sky, and were reflected in the unruffled waters. For a considerable time the fire raged unchecked, till gradually lessening as the fuel which fed its ruthless jaws was consumed, the red light sunk, suddenly extinguished, as it came in contact with the watery element.

Running into a small romantic cove, the boats were drawn up on a gravelly beach, and the party began to disembark.

What is the name of the place we're in now, Miss Inez? asked Norah—looking about her with a bewildered air.

This country is called Spain, Norah.

Is it Spain agra? shure that's your own counthry, Miss Inez.

Mine! repeated Inez, in surprise—you must be dreaming Norah.

I think she is, remarked Dr. Percival, who had overheard the observation. She has been taking a nap in the boat, and is not yet wide awake.

The displeased tones of her master's voice, recalled to Norah the promise she had given him never to reveal to Inez the circumstances which had placed her under his protection. The young girl believed herself his daughter.

Thru for you, master dear! faix I believe the throuble is turning my brain, and no wondher shure to find ourselves landed in this outlandish place, and the vessel burnt afore our eyes! But it's mighty quare entirely, that this is Spain we're come to! she muttered to herself—the land that she come from! I wondher if she'll come across any of her own people.

The gloom of a starless night enwrapt the Spanish shore, and as no lights gleamed in any direction, the shipwrecked party feared there was no habitation near. Desmond and O'Neill climbed to the highest part of the beach, in the hope of discovering some distant dwelling. A joyful shout soon proclaimed their success. A little way off the dark outline of a large building was seen. Securing the boats, the whole party proceeded in the direction pointed out, the two young men hastening on in advance. The loud baying of some dogs greeted their approach to the house. It was an ancient structure—low and irregularly built. Some stately trees flung their spreading branches over the pointed roof, and the night air was laden with the rich scent of flowering shrubs and fragrant flowers. The barking of the dogs drew the attention of the inmates, and at an upper casement the gaunt form of a swarthy Spaniard appeared,

holding a light which cast its rays on the scene without, discovering the two young men, whom fear of the dogs had caused to halt some yards from the house.

Who are you, and what do you want? was asked in no pleasant tones.

We have been wrecked, and are come to beg shelter for the night, replied Desmond in good Spanish; but call off your dogs or we must shoot them, he hastily added—as the animals, encouraged by the presence of their master, rushed furiously towards them.

The command was promptly obeyed; the man disappeared from the window, but soon afterwards issued from a low door, almost hid by a rich vine. The rest of the party now joined them, and all were conducted into a large hall, which seemed the common sitting-room of the family; for at a table—on which was spread an abundant supper—an elderly woman and two young men were sitting. They rose in surprise, at the entrance of so many strangers, and regarded them with much curiosity. Inez, the only lady of the party, particularly engaged the woman's attention. She soon left the apartment, but returned, after a short absence, and proposed to Inez to conduct her to a more private room. She gladly assented, and Dr. Percival also accompanied her. The apartment into which they were led had an appearance of much comfort; a fire burnt brightly on the hearth, and threw out a ruddy glow; a large silver lamp suspended from the ceiling cast a chastened light over the antique but rich furniture, revealing a few articles of taste in bronze and marble, which were placed around. In one corner was a guitar, and on a stand near it a piece of unfinished embroi-

dery. The doctor and Inez gazed around in some surprise. Where was the occupant of this room? the woman whom they saw before them was not a person of refined taste; she seemed only a servant. Is the mistress of this dwelling absent? asked Dr. Percival with eagerness, for his curiosity was powerfully awakened—that feeling of our nature being by no means confined to the gentler sex.

I am the mistress, replied the woman—but, she added, in answer to his look of surprise—the lady to whom this room belonged is dead. She died about a year ago.

What was her name? he carelessly asked.

Donna Isabella de Castro.

Every particle of color fled from the face of Dr. Percival, and it was some minutes before he was sufficiently recovered to speak. How long did she live here? he asked, in a voice scarcely audible.

Twenty years, said the woman, in a hesitating manner—surprised at his intense emotion.

Merciful Heaven! to think she was living those many long years, and we so cruelly separated! burst from the quivering lips of Dr. Percival; and as a tide of overwhelming regret rolled in upon him, the strong man wept in anguish. Suddenly a hope sprung up within him. Had Donna Isabella a child? he asked, raising his eyes to the woman's face, with eager inquiry.

She hesitated. What right have you to ask—you are a stranger?

The right of a husband! was the excited answer.

Impossible! Donna Isabella's husband died years ago.

He stands before you! Answer me truthfully woman. I will know all! fiercely added Dr. Percival.

The woman looked terrified, but remained silent.

Answer my question—had Donna Isabella a child? That villain Don Pedro shall be unmasked, and all his accomplices punished! There was a wild agitation in the doctor's voice.

If you will promise to spare me and my husband, I will tell you all, said the woman imploringly.

The promise was given—and then the woman confessed that a daughter had been born the first year of Donna Isabella's captivity.

What became of her? does she live? asked the doctor, with trembling eagerness.

I cannot answer that question. Donna Isabella entrusted her to the care of her maid, who contrived to escape, with the intention of carrying the child to Ireland, where her husband's relations lived.

What was the woman's name! there was an increasing excitement in Dr. Percival's manner.

Juanna de Guzman.

That was the name of the supposed mother of Inez! With a cry of joy Dr. Percival clasped his adopted daughter to his bosom.

My child! my own Inez! he exclaimed, in a voice of thrilling emotion. Is it, can it be possible? Oh, why did I not know this before? If Juanna only had been saved all would have been discovered, and my lost Isabella snatched from her cruel captivity, and restored to her husband and child.

Oh my God! how strange are the ways of thy Providence! how grievously dost thou afflict thy sinful creatures! And yet forgive my murmurings, Father in Heaven! even this dispensation is tempered with mercy! for Thou didst make me the happy instrument in saving my child's life, and now in Thy own good time Thou hast led me in the ways of Thy providential goodness to the spot where this joyful discovery has been made.

It was some time before the doctor was sufficiently composed to proceed in his examination of the woman, who had been the jailor of his wife, during her weary captivity.

We must now carry our story twenty years back, and relate a few particulars in the early life of Dr. Percival, necessary to explain the incident just narrated.

During a temporary residence in Corunna—where the ship-of-war in which he was surgeon was undergoing some repairs—previously to sailing for South America—the doctor became acquainted with a beautiful Spanish lady of high rank and large fortune. Both became devotedly attached, but as the uncle of Donna Isabella was decidedly averse to their union, an elopement was found necessary. Before leaving Corunna, the marriage ceremony was privately performed in one of the churches of that city. Dr. Percival and his beautiful bride then fled some miles into the country, to spend the honeymoon in seclusion. It was late one night when they returned to Corunna, and as they were proceeding immediately to go on board Dr. Percival's ship—thinking it best to remain there until a reconciliation could be effected between Donna Isabella and her uncle—they were waylaid by a party hired by Don Pedro, who

carried off the unhappy bride, and left her husband almost lifeless in one of the streets. He was found in that situation by some of the sailors of his own vessel, who carried him on board. Immediately afterwards the ship weighed anchor, and when Dr. Percival recovered from his death-like swoon to a feeble consciousness of his situation, they had put out to sea. Owing to his excessive loss of blood, he was too faint to articulate more than a few unintelligible words. An opiate was speedily administered by the attendant physician, who saw that the excitement he labored under would prove fatal if not subdued; and for many hours he was kept in a state of semi-unconsciousness. His wounds were numerous, and his life was long despaired of. It was not until the ship approached the South American shore that he was able to leave his cabin. As soon as possible he re-visited Spain—but it was only to hear tidings which blighted the happiness of his life. Donna Isabella was no more! A severe illness, occasioned by grief and despair at her husband's supposed death, had terminated her life. As this report was fully believed in Corunna, Dr. Percival never suspected any imposition, and bade adieu to the Spanish shores, mourning deeply over the untimely death of one so dear to him. The high position of Don Pedro sheltered him from legal punishment for the part he had taken in the affair. This man, in order to become possessed of the large fortune of his niece, had announced her death, administering a narcotic which produced a death-like sleep; and while its effects continued, the mock solemnity of a funeral had taken place. The unfortunate lady was afterwards privately conveyed to the remote residence to which I have lately in-

roduced my readers. There she spent the remainder of her sad days in solitary confinement. For a few years her child was the comfort of her existence; but having reason to suspect that Don Pedro had designs on her young life, she yielded to her maternal fears, and sent her under the care of a faithful servant to Ireland; where she hoped some of her husband's relatives would protect her, and perhaps endeavor to procure her own release from the captivity in which she was spending her earth-life. Year after year passed away, and the hope of leaving her prison, and seeing her daughter again, grew fainter and yet more faint. At length the cherished hope died out of her heart; she believed her child and servant had perished at sea, and with meek submission she turned her thoughts entirely to that brighter world above, where she fondly trusted to meet again those loved ones, whose presence was denied her in her earthly pilgrimage. At length her spirit, sanctified by suffering, went to its immortal home.

The surprise of Inez and Desmond on hearing these particulars was very great. Desmond laughingly congratulated his cousin on being a great heiress, and nearly allied to a Spanish Grandee. Norah shared in her master's happiness at discovering that Inez was really his daughter. She declared it was her firm belief that the blessed saints themselves had made the ship take fire for no other reason but that the master might find his own, and Miss Inez gain her rights.

The next day the shipwrecked party—procuring conveyances at a town some miles distant—proceeded on their different routes. Dr. Percival and his family, accompanied

by the Spaniard and his wife, went to Corunna, where Don Pedro de Castro was then living. Through the aid of the British Consul, the doctor obtained an interview with his wife's uncle. He accused him of the crime he had committed, and confronted him with his two accomplices. The guilty man was compelled to acknowledge the deception he had practised on the world, and to resign to Donna Isabella's husband and child, the fortune he had so unjustly enjoyed.

Leaving Dr. Percival and Inez domiciled in a luxurious home in Corunna, Desmond accompanied O'Neill to Paris in order to have an interview with his uncle. His expectations were not disappointed—the Rev. Hugh O'Neill was the identical priest who had performed the ceremony which united his parents. The proof of their marriage was incontestible; and with grateful exultation Desmond wrote the joyful intelligence to his mother. Lady Annesley received the information when attending the death-bed of her husband. A severe attack of gout terminated the earthly career of Lord Annesley and Desmond's mother was now free to follow the dictates of her heart. The necessary arrangements for joining him on the continent were made as soon as possible, and not many weeks after their separation they enjoyed the exquisite happiness of a re-union, unalloyed by the fear of a future parting.

During his abode in Paris, Desmond had the pleasure of meeting his friend, Captain Le Vasseur—for the French prisoners of war had returned from Ireland.

Obtaining leave of absence, Captain Le Vasseur returned with Desmond to Spain—anxious to behold once more his kind Irish friend, Dr. Percival, and his lovely daughter. At

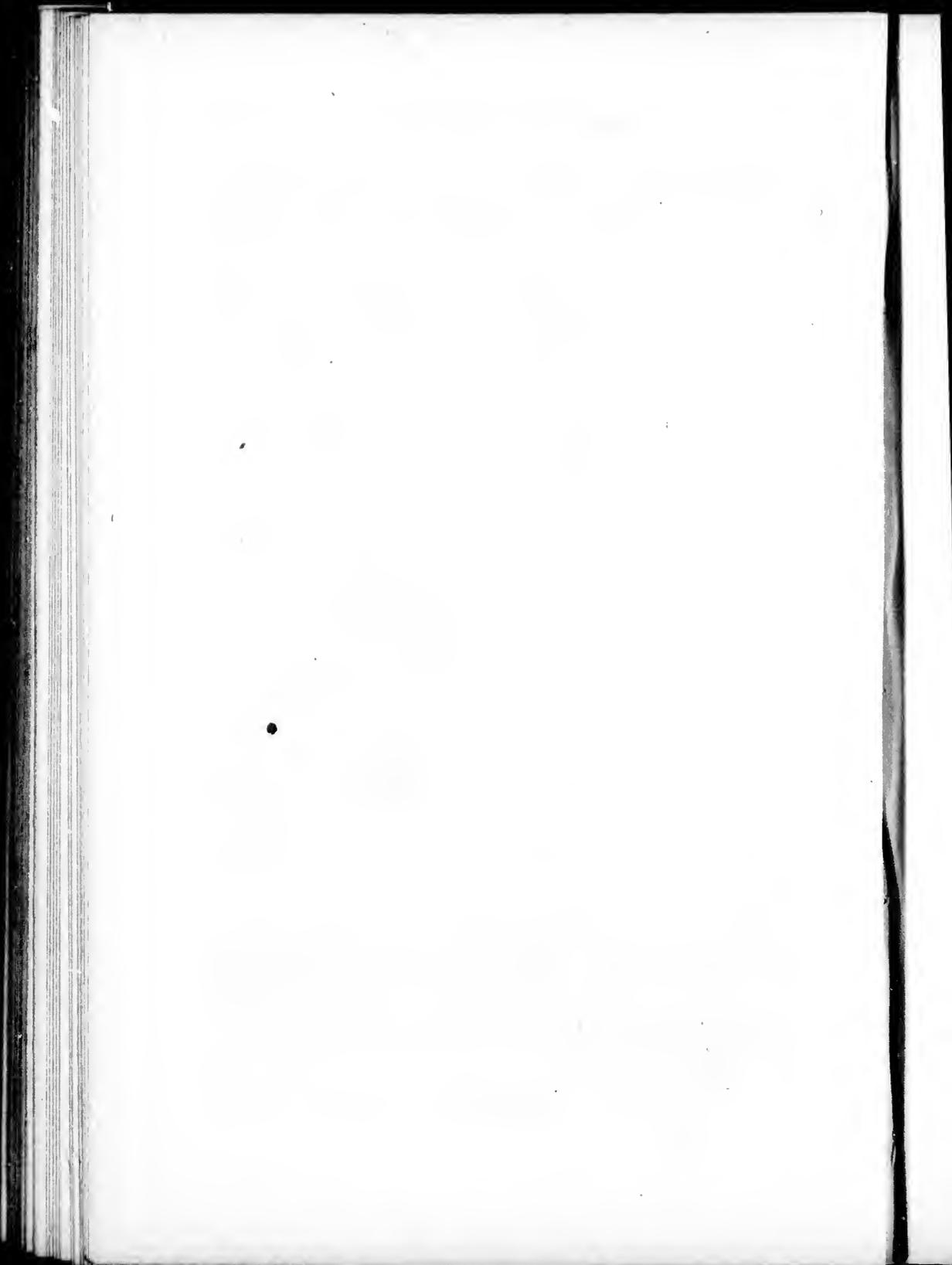
a beautiful estate in Galicia, amid the wildly-picturesque scenery of the Cantabrian Mountains, Captain Le Vavas seur again met Inez Percival. The emotion his countenance expressed—and which he vainly tried to conceal—revealed the love that the fascinating French officer had secretly cherished for the beautiful girl, whose society had contributed to render the few weeks he had spent in the Abbey of Rathmore, the happiest period of his chequered life.

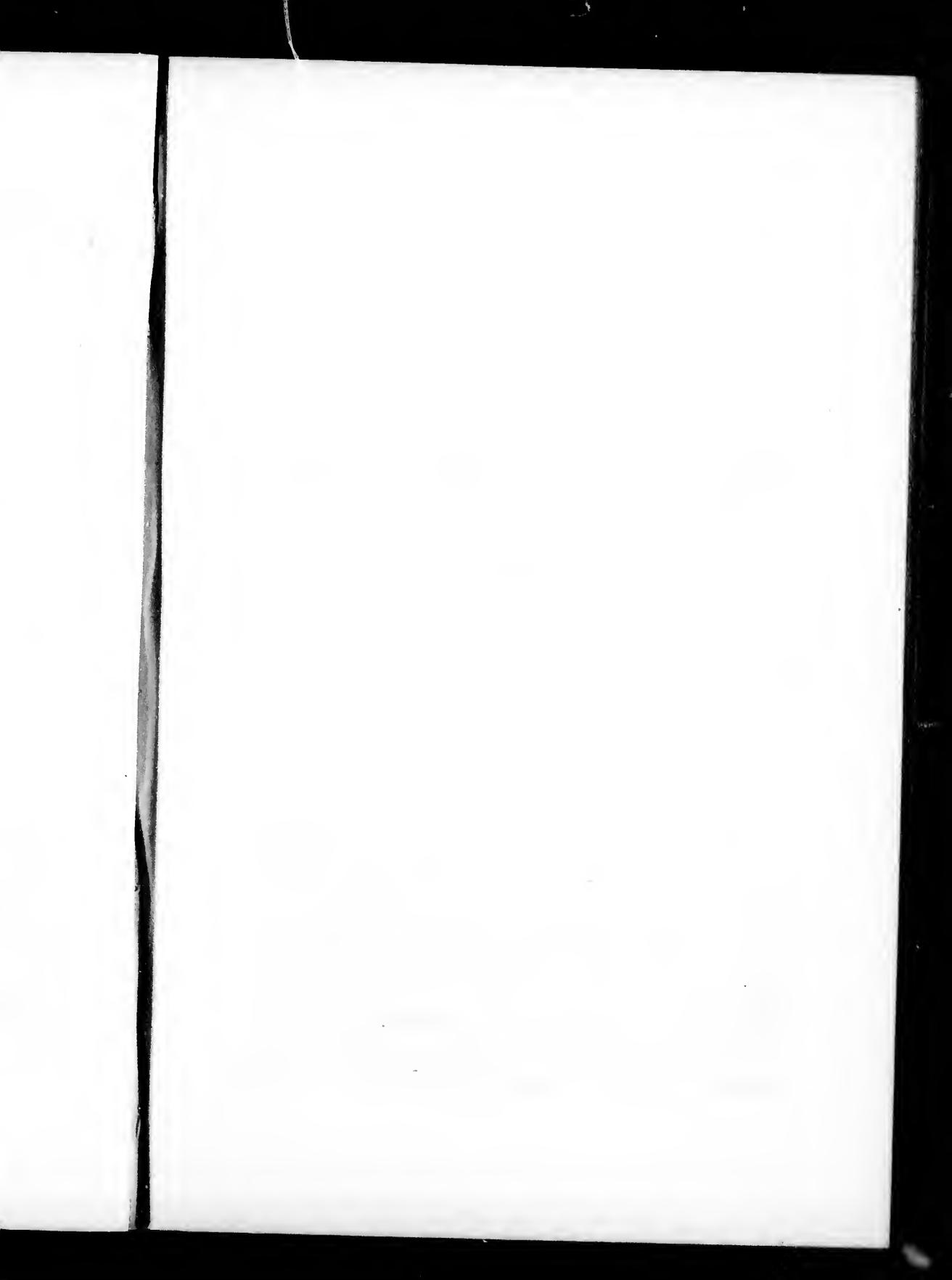
The revelation flashed a thrilling joy through the heart of Inez. Often—very often, during the weeks since they had parted so suddenly, had the image of Le Vavas seur haunted the inner chamber of memory, and her thoughts had dwelt upon him with a yearning desire that they should meet again. That wish was now gratified, and oh, happiness unexpected! she saw the light of love in his dark eloquent eyes, as hers timidly encountered their ardent gaze.

Day after day glided on, the flight of time being scarcely noticed by the happy inmates of Dr. Percival's romantic villa. Captain Le Vavas seur's leave of absence was prolonged. At length he prepared to return to France—but he was not to go alone. He had wooed and won the beautiful heiress of the de Castro estates. The marriage was solemnized with great pomp—the bride glittering in rich satin, Brussels lace, and superb family jewels.

After the ceremony Captain Le Vavas seur and his beautiful bride proceeded to Paris to spend the approaching winter. Norah's pathetic lamentation was, that the grand wedding of her dear young lady could not take place at the old Abbey of Rathmore!

THE END.





MADLINE BERESFORD,  
— OR —  
THE INFIDEL'S BETROTHED.

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CHAPTER I.

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Night's starry eyes looked down on Britain's favored land, and her sable drapery enshrouded its far-famed metropolis. But silence reigned not through the dense population of this modern Babylon—dissipation was abroad—holding undisputed sway, not only in the palaces of the aristocratic, but in the lowly abodes of vice. At the residence of the —— Ambassador, a brilliant crowd had assembled, and the scene was one of unusual splendor. High-born ladies in almost regal array, glittering in the far-fetched gems of Golconda

and Brazil, might be seen promenading through spacious apartments, fitted up by the hand of luxury and refinement ; or moving through the graceful dance, to the exhilarating tones of a military band—which filled the midnight air with its rich melody. But one there was among that galaxy of fashion, who shone not by the costly lustre of Oriental gems. The regal diamond flashed not on the brow of Florence Walsingham—no pearls from the coast of Ceylon were wreathed through her luxuriant tresses—yet, in her simply-elegant attire she was the cynosure of the ball-room. “*La plus belle parmi les belles*”—her beauty being of that exquisite nature so rarely seen—which the poet has described as not requiring “the foreign aid of ornament.”

Admiration, however, was not the only feeling which Florence Walsingham excited—envy, that most unenviable feeling, was also experienced wherever she appeared ; and now more than one coterie of exclusives was engaged criticising the beauty, dress, etc., of this new star of attraction in the world of fashion—as well as canvassing her pretensions to birth, and her rights to admission within their charmed circle. By listening to their conversation—carried on *sotto voce*—the following particulars might be gathered relative to the fair being now introduced to the reader.

Colonel Walsingham, the father of Florence, was the younger son of a noble but impoverished house. His prevailing characteristic was ambition ; this was the master-passion which governed him through life. Florence was his only child, and upon this fair scion were placed his cherished hopes of family aggrandizement. From an early age she had been marked as a sacrifice to the idol he wor-

shipped. The *debut* of Miss Walsingham at the drawing-room at St. James's, had produced an unusual sensation. Young, eminently beautiful and accomplished, Florence was well calculated to become the brilliant meteor of the fashionable circles in which she moved, and her proud father saw with exultation, more than one peer of the realm bend in lowly homage at her shrine. Among those who, as satellites, moved within the attractive influence of this newly-risen orb, was the Earl of Errington. A title, unbounded wealth, and a long line of noble ancestry, were the chief attractions of this young nobleman. His figure was not conspicuous either for symmetry or elegance, and the expression of his plain features was uninteresting, yet such was the husband whom Colonel Walsingham had selected for his daughter—for in his eyes what were personal or even mental defects, when counterbalanced by rank and a princely fortune!

The Earl of Errington made one of the *elite* crowd which had, upon this night, assembled at the —— Ambassador's. His attentions to Miss Walsingham were more marked than usual; and taking advantage of a favorable opportunity, when, for a few minutes, she retired to the recess of an open window to enjoy the coolness of the night air, and the refreshing fragrance with which it came laden from an adjoining conservatory, he poured into her ear a tale of love, intimating that he had already received Colonel Walsingham's permission to address her on the subject. Florence listened in silence, and Lord Errington felt the hand which rested on his arm, tremble. He attributed her emotion to pleasure, and passionately urged her to tell him if he had

any reason to hope. She deferred giving any answer at present, and her voice was so low and faltering, that the Earl could scarcely catch the meaning of her words. Gladly would she have then decidedly refused the offer of his hand, but she knew her father's wishes on the subject; she must not follow the dictates of her heart. Wishing to be alone for a few minutes, she requested her companion to procure her a glass of iced lemonade; then enshrouding herself behind the ample drapery of the window curtains, she tried to conquer her agitation, and to force back the tears that sprung to her eyes—for she foresaw that the happiness of her future life would be sacrificed at the shrine of her father's ambition.

A well-known voice, addressing her in low tender accents, soon interrupted her sad thoughts, and looking up she encountered the passionate gaze of a very handsome young officer in the — regiment of Scotch Greys. Captain Montrose was the poorest, yet the most favored of Florence Walsingham's admirers. His strikingly handsome person, and fascinating manners, added to his fervent attachment to herself, made him an object of peculiar interest to the young girl. It was supposed he would carry off the prize which so many hearts coveted, and the increasing attentions he was permitted to pay Miss Walsingham in public, served to confirm this opinion. The love of Montrose for this strangely-beautiful being, was of a nature not often felt. From the moment he first beheld her he became her slave. Can she be "a thing of earth, or perishable elements," he said mentally, for never had he seen a creature so beautiful. Forms of loveliness had often in the romantic dreams of

youth, captivated his imagination, but even the most bewitching of these visions of fancy, was surpassed by Florence Walsingham.

Having been detained by military duty, he had only recently made his appearance in the gay assembly. On entering the ball-room his eye had anxiously sought the one loved form; he had seen her leaning on the arm of her titled lover—had, with a jealous pang, noticed her emotion as he spoke in low earnest tones, the import of which he imagined—and now, taking advantage of his momentary absence, he advanced to request the honor of her hand for the next dance. A bright smile broke over the face of Florence as she rose to comply, chasing, like a sunbeam, the cloud of sorrow which a moment before had obscured its beauty. Politely thanking Lord Errington for the refreshment with which he now returned, she turned coldly away, and the next minute was whirled round the room in the arms of her handsome partner, to the inspiring music of a favorite galop, which the band now struck up in brilliant style. This was the first dance Florence enjoyed during the evening, for, before, he was absent whose presence could alone gild the scene with sunshine, and in the intoxicating pleasure of the present moment all fears for the future were for a time forgotten.

When the galop was ended Florence complained of fatigue, and Captain Montrose pioneered the way into another reception-room, where only a few of the guests were assembled. It was a superbly-furnished apartment, the drapery of the windows and the covers of the ottomans and chairs, were crimson velvet; the walls were hung with mirrors of

foreign manufacture, reflecting and multiplying the various objects in the room ; while the spaces between these were draped with rich hangings of gold and crimson. Various articles of curious and costly workmanship from India, China and other parts of the world, filled the tables and stands, while a few exquisite specimens of sculpture, here and there met the eye.

A fancy ball to be given in a few days by the Duchess of A——, was the topic on which many of the occupants of this room were conversing, as Captain Montrose and his beautiful companion entered.

"Have you received an invite?" asked Florence, as she bent to inhale the rich odor of some rare exotics, which, from golden vases, shed their delicious fragrance through the apartment.

"I have been so fortunate," Montrose replied. "It is, I believe, to be a very exclusive affair. May I hope to have the happiness of meeting you there?"

"I shall probably go. I have never yet attended a fancy ball. The scene will, to me, be novel."

"What character do you intend to assume?"

"I have not determined. I am undecided whether I shall represent a heathen divinity, or Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt."

"The character of Cleopatra, would suit you admirably"—observed Montrose.

"Then I shall assume regal pomp, and be a Queen for one night, said Florence gaily."

"And who would grace a Throne so well? on what brow more beautiful could a diadem be placed?" said Montrose passionately.

"What character will you represent?" inquired Florence.

"The character of Mark Antony—the most devoted slave of the Egyptian Queen"—he replied, in low accents, gazing with passionate meaning into her luminous eyes, which were quickly averted.

At this moment, when a declaration of his love hovered on the lips of Captain Montrose—when, with trembling emotion, he was about to express in words what his eyes had before so eloquently revealed—their tete-a-tete was abruptly interrupted. An elderly gentleman, of commanding appearance, entered the room; his gaze sought Miss Walsingham; it rested on her with an angry, stern expression, which, for a moment, chilled the life-blood in her veins: she shuddered slightly, and the smile of happiness which before irradiated her countenance, instantly vanished.

In the crowded ball-room Colonel Walsingham had overheard the conversation of some fashionable young men, in which allusions were made to the attachment of Captain Montrose to his beautiful daughter, and her evident preference for him. They had also hinted that a trip to Gretna Green was meditated by the gallant son of Mars. At the moment that the Colonel was listening, unseen, to these remarks, he saw Florence pass through the gay throng, fondly leaning on the arm of her handsome lover. The fears of the ambitious man were roused—he saw the necessity of removing her from such influence, and his resolution was immediately taken. He followed them as quickly as the crowd would allow.

"It is late Florence, and the carriage waits," he said, in cold, haughty accents, advancing to lead her from the room.

If there was any being on earth whom Florence dreaded, it was her father; from her earliest age, in order to advance his own ambitious views, the heartless parent had repulsed the warm, natural affection of his child toward himself, and had taught her to fear, instead of love him. Instantly complying with his wish to return home, she cast a farewell glance at Captain Montrose, as she bowed hastily; then taking her father's arm, silently left the gay scene.

They never met again. Next day, Colonel Walsingham's house in —— Square was shut up; and visitors received the surprising information that the family had left town for their country residence in a remote part of England. The intelligence created a nine days' wonder in the world of fashion, and caused various surmises; but the mystery was soon solved. A paragraph in a London paper announced, that the Earl of Errington had led to the Hymeneal altar the brightest star of the season—the beautiful Florence Walsingham. The ceremony had been privately performed at Walsingham House, and immediately afterwards the Earl and his youthful bride had left England for Italy.

It was now evident to the gossiping coteries of fashion, that Colonel Walsingham had abruptly removed his daughter from London, to prevent her elopement with Captain Montrose; and that in the solitude of the country he had persuaded her to accept the hand of her titled admirer.

Where now was Montrose? Awakened from the illusive day-dream, which had thrown its "rainbow spell" around him, he retired for a short time to a remote part of Wales—where, in solitude, and without restraint, he indulged the violence of his grief. Florence Walsingham he devotedly

loved—she was his idol! Alas! how wrong, how dangerous, to give the heart's best affections to anything on earth! He who alone is worthy of so much devotedness, has commanded His creatures to love Him supremely; and was it ever well when it was otherwise? Montrose's hope of happiness was placed in Florence, and now that she was lost to him for ever, existence seemed "a waste of wearisome hours." From that period his character underwent a striking alteration; he was never again what he had once been; the gay, happy being, with life's bitter cup untasted, who seemed as if this world had no trials for him: for the future, "melancholy marked him for her own."

More than a year passed away, at the end of which the Earl and Countess of Errington returned to England. Her health had been for some time declining, and she was advised to try the air of her native country for its recovery. To Errington Castle—which was situated near Cheltenham—she came to reside, but it was soon evident that her days on earth were numbered. Consumption—occasioned by that "sorrow of the world which worketh death"—was hastening her to the tomb; her spirit forsook its earthly tenement, and she had done with this world and its sorrows for ever.

Montrose was at Cheltenham with his regiment at the time of Lady Errington's death; he had not seen her since her marriage, and as he was most anxious to behold her once more, he formed the strange design of gaining a secret admittance to Errington Castle; which he effected through the assistance of a favorite attendant of Lady Errington's. Midnight was the hour appointed for his visit. A private

entrance, communicating with the suite of apartments belonging to the Countess, admitted him to the Castle. The chamber to which he was conducted, was hung with black, and lighted with large wax tapers. On a bed, in the centre of the room, was laid the inanimate form of the youthful victim. With trembling steps, Montrose advanced towards it, but as his eye rested on the altered features, he uttered a groan of bitter agony. And was that senseless form the brilliant, the beautiful Florence Walsingham? Alas! how changed was she now! There she lay, like any other child of earth, beneath the feet of the Pale Horse and his Rider; neither youth, beauty, rank nor splendor could avert the inevitable doom; or save her from that fate which cometh alike to all! It was little more than a year since they last met, yet Montrose could scarcely recognize, in the attenuated form before him, that bright creature whom he had once almost considered as a being of another world. The wasted cheek—the sunken eye—once so soft, so dazzling—but particularly the deep expression of melancholy which marked the cold pale brow—all loudly told that sorrow and disease had been busy there. How awful is death! awful to all, but how much more so to him whose thoughts of it are few! The mind of Montrose was now, for the first time, led to dwell on the solemn realities of another world—and as he could not contemplate them with that “hope full of immortality” which the Christian alone possesses, they seemed awful to him. For more than an hour he was permitted to indulge his sorrow and solemn reflections, uninterrupted; but at the end of that time, he was obliged to depart. It was some minutes before he could relinquish the

melancholy pleasure of being near Florence even in death ; and as he left the room, after giving the last look at her who had been the polar star of his existence, he felt that all earthly happiness had fled for ever. And it was well for Montrose that he did experience that sorrow is the portion of every human being. Religion is the asylum of those who mourn, and in it he was happily induced to seek for consolation. His mind was gradually weaned from the contemplation of earthly troubles, and he was enabled to lift an eye of faith to a happier world on high. His early disappointment did, in time, accomplish the purpose for which it was in mercy sent, and he became a Christian, not in profession only, but in principle.

## CHAPTER II.

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A period of several years must now elapse, before I again introduce Montrose to the reader's acquaintance. Time, as it fled, had brought its changes. After spending some years in active service, he had left the army—having attained the rank of Colonel—and retired to spend the remainder of his life in the delightful seclusion of a fine estate, left him by the death of a distant relative; which was situated near the romantic shores of Lake Lomond. The house—an imposing and antique mansion—crowned a verdant height; trees of magnificent growth formed a fine back-ground, while in front it was open to the lake, commanding a view of its highly-picturesque scenery—overhung by the majestic Ben Lomond.

Colonel Montrose was still unmarried; his heart yet fondly cherished the remembrance of her, who had been in youth "the star of his idolatry;" it knew no second attachment. A widowed sister and her two daughters were the inmates of his home. For some years he enjoyed a large portion of happiness, but sorrow again visited him. His sister, after a lingering illness, died, but he was not left

without consolation; his nieces were committed to his guardianship; they had long been cherished objects of his affection; but he now felt in them a peculiar interest—he regarded them with almost a parental love. Madeline, the eldest girl, was in her nineteenth year, and Blanche was two years younger. Both were eminently beautiful. Blanche was a fascinating young creature—

“The fairest, brightest child of earth,  
One of those spirits which the wing of joy  
Brush’d with its lightest feather.”

Her figure was much below the middle size—slightly formed, with a graceful elasticity of motion. Her face was like a Hebe’s—its expression had a child-like beauty. Though much taller than her sister, Madeline’s form was equally light and graceful; but there was a native dignity in her every movement. Her style of beauty differed from that of Blanche—it was of a more striking nature. Dark grey eyes, of changing hue, shadowed by long silken lashes, revealed the glorious soul within; illumining her classic features with the beauty of intellect—that beauty so superior to physical charms. Yet, when both are combined, how irresistible is their fascination. The character of Madeline was uncommon, and high-minded. The death of their mother was severely felt by both sisters. The grief of Blanche was loud and passionate, that of Madeline gentler—deeper. This severe affliction made a strong impression on her reflective mind, and served to confirm those strong and pure principles of religion which she had been early taught.

For nearly two years after the death of Mrs. Beresford, Colonel Montrose and his orphan nieces lived in entire se-

clusion; but when the period of mourning for their loved one was nearly ended, they began again to visit with a few families of distinction in the vicinity of their residence. One of their most intimate acquaintances was Lady Augusta Sinclair—a young English bride whom the Honorable Kenneth Sinclair—a gentleman of large fortune in the neighborhood—had lately brought to his ancestral home. Lady Augusta and Miss Beresford were of the same age, and becoming warmly attached, they were frequently in each other's society. The Abbey—as Mr. Sinclair's residence was called—was a continual scene of gayety; for Lady Augusta, accustomed to a life of fashionable dissipation, was only happy when engaged in a routine of ever-varying amusement. To Madeline, who had lived in retirement, so gay a life was new; but though it had the gloss of novelty, it did not possess many attractions for her. Her pleasures were of a purer nature—she felt the emptiness of such amusements, and how incapable they are of satisfying the desires of an immortal spirit. One morning as she and Lady Augusta were returning to the Abbey, after having paid a visit to a family at some distance, they were overtaken by a thunder storm which suddenly broke forth with awful fury. Affrighted by the red glare of the lightning, Lady Augusta's horses took fright, and having no one to restrain them—for the coachman had been thrown from his seat—they proceeded onward with terrifying velocity. Lady Augusta was much alarmed at the violence of the storm; and her fears now overpowering her, she sank insensible into the arms of Miss Beresford. Madeline too, felt the danger of their situation, and her marble face and trembling

form showed how great was the terror that had seized upon her; but with a strong effort she conquered this feeling; hope in the merciful providence of God came to her aid, and committing herself and Lady Augusta to His care, she was calm, notwithstanding the imminent peril. For nearly ten minutes the horses continued to proceed at the same furious rate; at length Madeline felt the coach suddenly stop; the mad career of the frightened animals was arrested by an intrepid act: afterwards a gentleman opened the carriage door. It was he, who had, at the imminent risk of his own life, headed the flying horses, seized their reins, and assisted by some men from a cottage on the road-side, had succeeded in taking them from the carriage. Raising the inanimate form of Lady Augusta Sinclair from the supporting arm of Madeline, the stranger carried her to a cottage. Remedies for restoring animation were then tried, and in a few minutes her Ladyship recovered. The stranger was known to Lady Augusta—he was the Honorable Sherwood St. Ledger; an English gentleman of noble family and large fortune. He was travelling for pleasure, and attracted by the far-famed scenery of Loch Lomond, had come to spend some weeks in the neighborhood. Both ladies expressed their gratitude for the service he had rendered them, and Lady Augusta gave him a flattering invitation to the Abbey, which he accepted with pleasure.

From this period Mr. St. Ledger became a constant visiter at the Abbey, and at Montrose House. His stay in the romantic vicinity of Loch Lomond was gradually prolonged. The summer months had passed and still he lingered; beauty had thrown her witcheries around him, love's adamantine

fetters had enchained his heart. Madeline Beresford's surpassing beauty had at first attracted his attention—her stately but graceful bearing—her many fascinations—had won his admiration—but when he came to know her better ; when he saw the high-mindedness of her character—the sweetness and purity of her inner nature—he became passionately attached to her ; enshrining her image in the innermost chamber of his heart ; and pouring out before it the homage of a powerful and beautiful affection.

Madeline too, became warmly attached to him : his was a character similar to her own ; their tastes, their sentiments seemed to be in unison. His appearance too, was highly attractive. His tall figure was finely proportioned and aristocratic-looking. Rich masses of dark hair clustered about his nobly-shaped head ; partly shading his high forehead—while eloquent hazel eyes, flashing with glowing thoughts, gave an intellectual charm to his pale, handsome countenance.

As there could be no objection to his alliance, the offer of his hand to Miss Beresford was accepted ; and preparations were making for their marriage, when an unexpected circumstance prevented their proceeding. Sherwood St. Ledger was an Infidel ; one, however, who carefully concealed his principles ; but Madeline accidentally made the fatal discovery. Instantly the light of joy forsook her face ; that happiness which had a moment before seemed too great for earth, was suddenly enshrouded by the dark storm cloud that burst upon her, as the terrible truth flashed across her mind. In anguish, too great to be concealed, she left the apartment where she had been conversing with St. Ledger,

and retired to her own room, to indulge in uncontrollable sorrow. All her bright hopes of happiness had fled; like all meteors of earth-born joy, they had only glittered for a while, then sunk in "eternal eclipse." Sherwood and she must part, and for ever! Religion—a deep sense of the duty she owed to God, and of the imminent danger her own religious principles might incur were she to become his wife—all demanded the sacrifice. She could not possibly unite her fate with his. She felt that to give him up was an imperative duty; yet it was some time before she could determine on their final separation. How frequently did she kneel at the throne of the Eternal, supplicating strength to enable her to do that which, in the weakness of her human nature, she found almost impossible. And her prayer of faith was heard. He who can feel for the infirmities of His creatures, was her support in this hour of trial; and she was enabled to resign him who was dearest to her on earth, rather than risk "that hope full of immortality." Being unwilling to meet St. Ledger again, Madeline wrote to him, explaining her reasons for breaking off her engagement. The letter was full of passionate regrets for the necessity there was for her thus sacrificing her happiness to a sense of religious duty. St. Ledger would not be denied an interview; he would only hear his dismissal from her own lips; his heart clung to the hope that he would be able to overrule all her fanciful objections; he trusted in his power over her affections; he supposed that in woman's heart, love for an earthly object is all-powerful. He knew nothing of that purer spiritual affection of which the female heart is capable—that homage which it yields to a crucified Redeemer

—that love, above all earthly love, which in some minds is the governing principle of life. Pale as death itself, yet calm with the determination of a strong will—for she was strengthened from above—Madeline entered the library where her lover awaited her, in trembling expectation. The change in her appearance struck him forcibly, as he advanced to meet her. The fearful tempest of the heart, which had swept over her during the last few days, had written its ravages legibly in her pallid countenance.

“It was cruel in you to demand this interview, Sherwood,” she said, in accents very sad and slightly reproachful; “it can answer no purpose but to distress us both.”

“Say not so dearest Madeline—you will not certainly persist in a line of conduct, which evidently causes you, as well as me, much suffering.”

“That I will not deny, yet nothing which you can urge will alter my determination; we must part for ever.” There was a forced calmness in Madeline’s tones.

“Why thus heartlessly destroy my happiness, Madeline?” asked St. Ledger, with a slight irritation of manner—“merely because I cannot subscribe to all the truths which Revelation would teach? Oh that I could believe,” he added with passionate earnestness, “that my reason only could be convinced!”

“Faith alone is necessary, dearest Sherwood; when reason fails to penetrate the mysteries of religion, then faith lifts her triumphant eye—piercing the mystic veil—and enabling the Christian to believe confidently all that the Word of God reveals.”

“I have not that bright faith, Madeline; yet I cannot see

why the want of it should prevent our union. It might be," he continued eagerly, "that if our lives were spent together, a constant intercourse with you would effect a healthy influence over me; gradually enlightening my darkened mind, and kindling in my soul the pure fire of devotion." There was a persuasive eloquence in his voice and look, which the tortured heart of Madeline found it difficult to resist. The specious thought had occurred to her own mind, but after mature deliberation, she saw that danger might arise to her own soul, in so intimate a communion with one of infidel principles. She knew how easily we are affected by the evil influence of others.

"It cannot be!" was her only reply; and there was the calmness of despair in her death-like countenance.

A pause ensued. St. Ledger paced the room with a distracted air; hope was dying within his heart; he saw in Madeline a mighty will—he feared that nothing would change her resolution.

"Madeline! Madeline!" he cried in accents wild and full of anguish, "why will you thus consign me to utter wretchedness? I cannot drink the cup you would press to my lips—this agony of parting is unsupportable."

Madeline covered her face with her hands, she could not look upon his woe.

"Madeline," he continued—with a sudden burst of angry emotion—"you are trifling with my happiness; you have been deceiving me hitherto; you do not love me—if you did, would you cast me from you for a trifling reason? would you cast from you as a thing unworthy of your acceptance—the homage of my heart, because that heart is

not as pure and holy as your own? Is this woman's love?" and he laughed wildly—bitterly.

Madeline turned her white face reproachfully towards him; her tones were expressive of wounded feeling. "You are unjust in those remarks, Sherwood. You know that I prize your love above all earthly affection, and that to part from you causes me a death pang; yet, though it should rend the spring of my existence, I must resign the happiness of being your wife; the Divine injunction must be obeyed—I dare not unite myself with an infidel." Then yielding to the profound anguish of her spirit, she rested her head on her clasped hands, and wept passionately.

In a moment, every trace of resentment passed from the face and voice of St. Ledger. His better nature triumphed. With a look of infinite tenderness he approached Madeline—seated himself beside her, and drew her fondly towards him. "Forgive me, beloved one! I was wild with anguish—I knew not what I said."

The depth of Madeline's love for him he could not doubt; her heroic nature too, won his highest admiration. "Can that faith be a delusion which thus fortifies a weak being, and enables her to resign earthly happiness rather than risk her soul's interests?" he said mentally. "Oh that I too, had this powerful faith. If there is a God, would that he might shed o'er the chaos of my soul a life-giving ray of spiritual light!" Did not that prayer, breathed from the heart, pierce the Eternal ear? and will it not be answered?

"I will not prolong this painful interview, my own Madeline," resumed St. Ledger, after a short interval. "I will not selfishly add to your unhappiness. Yet let us part in

hope—it may be that at some future time I may be blessed with a ray of that confiding faith which glows in your pure heart. Pray for me, dearest ; if there is a God it must be that the intercessions of such as thou art will be answered." He folded her in a passionate embrace ; then turned to leave the room. At the door he paused to take a last look. Madeline was gazing after him—there was in her face the expression of an intense woe—of passionate regret. St. Ledger returned—a look of hope, flashed over his agitated face. "Madeline you will relent!—oh do not drive me from you!" he said, in wild imploring accents.

"Tempt me not dearest Sherwood ; were I to follow the dictates of my own heart, I would not be happy ; yes, with the reproaches of conscience, life, even with you, would be misery."

St. Ledger sighed profoundly. Again he kissed her passionately, then rushed from the library.

Madeline quickly approached the window to catch a farewell look, as he rode from the house. His eye glanced towards the library windows as he mounted his horse. It caught the agonized face of her who was to him "the light of life"—from whom he was parting, he feared, for ever : his gaze lingered for several moments with appealing anguish, but that beautiful, though wan face, was unchanged in its expression of lofty determination. He felt there was no hope. Suddenly withdrawing his gaze, he pressed his hand upon his eyes, as if to crush back the tears—so expressive of man's strong agony—then rode wildly down the avenue.

Madeline's stony gaze remained fixed on the spot where

he had disappeared. At that moment she felt as if the very foundations of her being were giving way; and she wished for death. What had life to offer her now? her spirit lay shrouded beneath the pall of despair, and the future, as well as the present, was shadowed by its gloomy drapery. What a weight of suffering does the human heart endure, and yet break not! Madeline did not sink beneath her trial, severe though it was; she lived to suffer, but she was not unsustainable. In the great battle of life, underneath the Christian, are the Everlasting Arms. Sorrow is sent as a regenerator, and in the hour of anguish, angels who ministered to the Man of Sorrows, in the Garden of Gethsemane, hover around the frail child of mortality—whispering consolation, and holding out the crown of life, to stimulate his feeble efforts, and to lure him over earth's rugged paths to an eternal home.

Several months passed away unmarked by any occurrence. St. Ledger sought in other lands—in change of scene—some alleviation of his misery, while Madeline, tried in the daily duties of life, in ministering to the wants and the happiness of others, to banish wild regrets, to subdue the vain, constant yearning for that happiness she had lost—or rather which she had sacrificed—on the altar of high religious principle.

## CHAPTER III.

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About a year after the events recorded in the last chapter, Lady Augusta Sinclair, who had been travelling in Italy, returned to the Abbey, accompanied by a party of fashionable friends. This event occasioned much gratification to Blanche Beresford; to whom the retirement in which she had been lately living, was far from pleasing. Unlike Madeline, her disposition was gay, and her mind was now filled with glowing anticipations of the happiness she should enjoy in the various scenes of festivity at the Abbey, with which she knew Lady Augusta would seek to amuse her guests. Immediately after her Ladyship's arrival, she issued numerous invitations for a ball. Madeline determined to go, to gratify her sister.

The ball night so anxiously expected by Blanche, at length arrived. It was late, and she was still engaged at her toilet, when Madeline, elegantly attired, entered her dressing-room.

"Are you not yet dressed, Blanche?" she asked, advancing towards her.

"I will be ready in a few minutes, Madeline! but do as-

sist me to wreath these pearls through my hair, in the same becoming style you have arranged yours. How did you contrive to complete your toilet in so short a time?"

"Simply because I had no particular object in dressing for the ball, and therefore was not too anxious to look well."

A servant now came to say the carriage was at the door, and as Blanche was at length dressed, they proceeded to the drawing-room, where Colonel Montrose was waiting for them.

"How delightful a life of fashionable gayety must be, when one ball can be a source of so much pleasure!" remarked Blanche.

"It is the charm of novelty which makes it appear so fascinating," replied her sister; "were it not for that, it would not afford you so much enjoyment."

"But this ball will be very delightful! there will be a crowded assembly; there are so many strangers at the Abbey, and all the officers from —— will attend it! Dear Madeline are you not delighted?"

"I am happy since you feel so," she replied.

"Does she not look beautiful?" said Madeline, playfully leading Blanche towards Colonel Montrose, as they entered the drawing-room.

"From the length of time she has occupied in dressing, she ought to look irresistible," he said, smiling; "my patience is completely exhausted. But she does look very well to-night," he continued, viewing her admiringly. "And my Madeline is more than usually charming. But it is time for us to go: we shall make our entrance before a crowded room, I am afraid."

The Abbey was a few miles distant from Montrose House. Half an hour elapsed before they arrived there ; several carriages crowded the avenue, and it was some minutes before Colonel Montrose's chariot was permitted to approach. As they entered the brilliantly-lighted hall, a beautiful Scotch reel was played in fine style, by a military band. Blanche could scarcely forbear stepping to the exhilarating music.

" How delightful!" she exclaimed, as with a light step and sun-gilded thoughts, she ascended the stairs.

The ball was well attended ; parties had come from every direction, and the scarlet uniform of the military gave a striking effect to the scene. As the graceful and distinguished figures of the Misses Beresford entered the ball-room, they attracted every eye ; while a hushed murmur of applause ran through the gay throng. Among the strangers who requested an introduction to them was Lord Stanhope, a young English nobleman ; one of the visitors at the Abbey. He had been particularly struck with their appearance. Both he considered very beautiful, but Madeline he admired most : there was something uncommon in the nature of her attractions—an expression of subdued sorrow in her fine countenance that was deeply interesting. During the evening his attentions to her were very marked, and like a satellite, moving in the brightness of its particular planet, he seemed unable to leave the sphere of her attractions.

Shortly after her entrance, Lord Stanhope requested the pleasure of dancing with Miss Beresford. She felt no inclination to dance, but unwilling to appear singular, she complied. Blanche was among the set which they joined.

Her partner was a very handsome young man—Sir Walter Douglas—who resided on a beautiful estate some miles from Loch Lomond, but who had been living on the continent for the last few years. Madeline thought she had never seen Blanche look so beautiful. There was such an expression of happiness and innocent gayety in her countenance, while the excitement of her spirits deepened the color on her cheek, and added an unusual brilliancy to her large blue eyes. After the dance was finished, Madeline complained of the heat, and expressed a wish to leave the ball-room, which was crowded to excess. She, therefore, proceeded into an adjoining room where some of the company were amusing themselves with cards. Lord Stanhope was pleased at the opportunity now offered him of enjoying Madeline's conversation—and he exerted all the powers of his brilliant mind to engage her attention. His Lordship was the only son of the Earl of Errington and Florence Walsingham; he was strikingly handsome, and bore a strong resemblance to his mother: he had seen much of the world—his conversation was amusing—and his manners were highly polished and insinuating.

The card room opened on a balcony, looking out upon Loch Lomond, and almost overhanging its calm waters; for the Abbey was situated on a wooded promontory that jutted far into the lake. It was a summer night, and finding the atmosphere of the brilliantly-lighted and crowded room rather oppressive, Madeline stepped out upon the balcony to breathe the cool night air, perfumed with the sweet odor of many flowers. From her empyrean throne the "Empress of the Night," resplendent in her borrowed light, was

pouring her silvery effulgence over the exquisite landscape that stretched beneath, gleaming o'er the dark expanse of water, and marking out distinctly the huge outline of the lofty mountain that added its picturesque sublimity to the scene.

"How romantic is the scenery of your home, Miss Beresford," observed Lord Stanhope, as he gazed admiringly around. "I have seen nothing grander than this in England—it is only in Switzerland and Italy, in the vicinity of the towering Alps, that you meet lakes with scenery to surpass it; but the far-famed Lake of Geneva—La Bella Maggiore—and enchanting Como, stand indeed unrivalled!"

"Have you travelled much in foreign lands?" asked Madeline.

"I have just returned from a tour through Europe, and part of Africa. I have looked upon the strange icy beauty of the Arctic regions—its trackless wastes robed in spotless snow—its cliffs hung with countless icicles, seeming, beneath the intense light of the moon, like so many sparkling jewels. I have beheld the dazzling spectacle of a midnight sun, and have passed days without being gladdened by his glorious rays. Again, I have watched his re-appearance when his nearness to the horizon made itself known by the soft orange tints that his approaching light flashed across the sky."

"I have heard, that only those who have visited the frigid regions, can form any adequate idea of the wondrous sublimity of the scenery," observed Madeline.

"It is so! there the beautiful phenomenon of the aurora borealis is seen to perfection; there, too, the moon, during

her long reign in the Arctic heavens, floods the frozen solitudes beneath, with a glorious light; making the snow-white cliffs and magnificent bergs appear like so many glittering piles of adamant."

"How I should like to visit scenes of such strange beauty!" said Madeline with enthusiasm.

"I fear the Arctic regions are inaccessible to the tiny foot of woman!" observed Lord Stanhope smiling; "her delicate frame would sink in the icy grasp of the Frost King."

"You said you traveled in Africa; did you visit the land of the Pharaohs?"

"Yes! I spent some time amid the stupendous monuments of Egypt; visited its vast relics of antiquity. I stood among the gigantic ruins of "the city of a hundred gates"—I traversed the rock-hewn galleries of the catacombs, in which the embalmed dead have reposed for centuries; I climbed the Pyramids, and viewed from their top the plain of the Nile, green with luxuriant vegetation—I crossed the Sahara, enjoyed its oases; sat beneath its palm-trees, and drank from its desert-springs, water of delicious coolness."

"Having seen Nature in her robe of dazzling snow, and sparkling decorations of hoar frost and ice gems, what a contrast she must have presented in her southern garb robed in emerald, garlanded with fragrant flowers and crowned with delicious fruits. In which of her homes did she please you most?" asked Madeline.

"Her southern aspect was very inviting; still, I admired her most in her ice-bound dwelling; probably because her appearance there presented such a rare character of beauty. During my journeyings in Egypt"—continued Lord Stan-

hope, after a short pause—"I travelled with a very pleasant party—a rich old Hebrew and his beautiful daughter, and the Honorable Sherwood St. Ledger."

That magic name! how the unexpected mention of it brought the rich color to the cheek of Madeline, and made her heart throb with sudden emotion.

"Have you ever seen a beautiful Jewess, Miss Beresford? if you have not you can form no idea of the matchless charms of that dark-eyed daughter of Israel."

"It must have been very pleasant to have such a lovely *compagne de voyage*"—observed Madeline, with a quiet smile.

"It would have been perfectly delightful if the whole attention of the superb creature had not been monopolized by St. Ledger. The lucky fellow, how I envied him; his efforts to captivate her were completely successful; she regarded him, I believe, in the light of a demi-god, and he seemed entirely devoted to her."

A jealous pang shot, with acute pain, across the heart of Madeline; and a feeling of desertion rolled in upon her mind with intense bitterness. Did Lord Stanhope know that his words, so lightly spoken, fell on the ear of the young girl at his side like the death-knell of hope? Still, she was calm; pride in the heart of woman is mighty to subdue outward emotion.

"St. Ledger was seized with a sudden desire to study Hebrew"—continued Lord Stanhope—"and the bewitching Miriam offered to become his teacher. She was very learned and accomplished. Some hours of every day were devoted to study. St. Ledger progressed rapidly, but at the

same time that he was acquiring a knowledge of the ancient sacred tongue, his eloquent eyes were teaching his beautiful mistress a language less difficult to be understood."

"What was the name of this fascinating Jewess?" asked Madeline, with forced calmness.

"Miriam de Rosenberg: her father was a German Jew—a man of vast wealth; he and his daughter were both Christians—lately converted, I understood."

"Did they return with you to Europe?"

"Yes, we crossed the blue waters of the Mediterranean together, and visited the classic land of Greece; there I bade them adieu, and travelled northward through Russia. I felt it was dangerous to remain; I could no longer guard my heart against the witcheries of that enchanting daughter of Zion. I am particularly susceptible to the influence of dark eyes and ebon tresses. With Byron I admire exceedingly 'the light of a dark eye in woman!'"

The voice of Lady Augusta Sinclair was now heard.

"Miss Beresford! where is Miss Beresford?" she asked, and the next minute, advancing from the card-room, she stood upon the balcony.

"I have been sent in search of you, Madeline. I missed you and Lord Stanhope from the ball-room, but I am glad to find you so pleasantly occupied; talking sentiment in the bright moon light. I regret to interrupt your tete-a-tete, but I come commissioned to solicit a favor. Some friends await Miss Beresford in the music room, hoping to have the exquisite gratification of hearing her sing. The five Misses Macgregor, and the innumerable Misses Macintosh, have successively exerted themselves to amuse the company:

they have done their part—they have sung their last song, and played their very last polka, and now Miss Beresford it is your turn to charm the listening ear; you will not refuse—you cannot be so cruel!"

Lord Stanhope joined his solicitations to those of their fair hostess, and Madeline complying unwillingly, accompanied them to the music room.

A select few were there expecting her, and they greeted her with a smile of welcome. Seating herself at a harp, with blushing dignity—for she felt she was the centre of attraction—she asked what song they wished her to sing. The one selected was a favorite of Sherwood St. Ledger's. The last time she had sung, it was for him—he was leaning fondly over the instrument—his fine eyes fixed on her with passionate admiration. That look haunted her now; scenes of lost happiness came up before her, and a momentary expression of anguish flitted across her intellectual face. But mastering this emotion, she drove back the agony of vain regret, and called pride to her aid; remembering that she had just heard he had forgotten her—given his heart's homage to another. Madeline's voice was exquisite—it had been highly cultivated; and there was now a thrilling sadness in its fine tones that made it peculiarly fascinating. The guests listened with deep attention, and many in low tones expressed their admiration. But their murmured compliments fell coldly on the ear of Madeline; her thoughts were far from the present scene—they were with St. Ledger.

Colonel Montrose was among the company in the music room. He had heard that Lord Stanhope was the son of

the Earl of Errington, and he felt his heart drawn irresistibly towards the child of Florence Walsingham. His Lordship's resemblance to his mother struck him forcibly; he thought that the eyes of his youth's idol looked upon him once more, when he encountered the gaze of the young nobleman. He engaged him in conversation—seemed to think very highly of his understanding, and expressed the pleasure he would feel in seeing him a frequent visitor at Montrose House—an invitation which evidently gave Lord Stanhope much gratification.

For the remainder of the night Madeline supported a cheerfulness she did not feel; and exerted herself to conceal the bitterness of feeling which the information relative to St. Ledger had occasioned. It was with much pleasure she saw the guests at length begin to depart, and heard her uncle's carriage announced. During the drive home the silent abstraction of her manner, contrasted with the gayety of Blanche. Notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, she declared herself unwearied, and exclaimed against the folly of leaving so early.

"Do you call three hours after midnight early?" asked Colonel Montrose, smiling. "You must have spent a very pleasant evening to be so unconscious of the flight of time. I am glad to see you enjoy your first ball so much; it is not always attended by unmixed enjoyment."

"The evening was indeed delightful!" exclaimed Blanche with enthusiasm—"the music, the dancing, the gaily-dressed crowd—all made it to me a scene of intense enjoyment."

"Which of all your numerous partners in the mazy dance pleased you most? was it that handsome officer in Highland

uniform, or the young laird of Strathmay, Sir Walter Douglas? both seemed particularly attentive, but I imagined I saw a slight preference in your manner for your old friend Sir Walter."

"I felt glad to see him again," said Blanche, with a little embarrassment. "You know how intimate he was at Montrose House before he went to Italy."

"Yes, and I fancy he will again become a frequent visitor there"—observed Colonel Montrose, with a smile of peculiar expression. "That Lord Stanhope is a very fine young man—do you not think so, Madeline?" he continued, abruptly addressing her.

"He is handsome and seems intellectual"—she coldly replied.

"Seems intellectual!" repeated Colonel Montrose. "Lord Stanhope certainly possesses a brilliant mind, and having travelled much, his conversation is highly entertaining. He was, I think, the Adonis of the ball-room; did you not admire his splendid eyes? they were so luminous, yet so full of softness."

Blanche laughed. "Why uncle you seem to admire him excessively; if you were a lady I should say that such rapturous admiration was suspicious; it could not exist without love."

Blanche did not know the secret cause of her uncle's preference for the young nobleman.

The carriage had now reached home and Madeline gladly retired to her own apartment. There, in secrecy and unobserved, she indulged that grief which she had suppressed during the evening. That Sherwood St. Ledger had forgot-

ten her—that she was no longer loved, was an idea fraught with intense bitterness. She felt as if this trial were more severe than their separation. In all her misery, her heart had clung for consolation to the thought that his affection for her was unchanged; while in the secret recess of her heart had lingered the faint hope that one day Sherwood would see the error of his infidel views—that her constant intercessions for him would be answered. Now that hope was wrecked—the stay of her spirit was rudely broken. Fond memories of past happiness came back with fearful power. Agonizing regrets for the love she had lost, rushed like a torrent over her. For a time she seemed overwhelmed by earthly sorrow, but this state of feeling did not continue. She knelt and supplicated God to bend her will to His—to enable her to drain her cup of suffering. Resignation, with meek sad eye, drew near her bowed form; she lifted the cross whose weight was crushing her, and helped her to sustain it. She arose, strengthened,—calm, yet very sorrowful.

CHAPTER IV.

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Since the evening of the ball, Lord Stanhope and Sir Walter Douglas became constant visitors at Montrose House. The attentions of his Lordship to Miss Beresford, were very particular; but she received them coldly—her heart was yet filled with the image of another. Still, Lord Stanhope persevered; he saw that Colonel Montrose desired his alliance, and he hoped in time, to conquer Madeline's indifference. Love is ever full of glittering hope.

Sir Walter Douglas became much attached to Blanche Beresford, and having the happiness to engage her affections, he made her an offer of his hand and was accepted. Shortly after their marriage, Blanche proposed taking Madeline to Italy. She hoped that change of scene would eventually remove the gloom that had settled over her mind—that was shadowing her young life. Colonel Montrose gladly agreed to the proposal, and Madeline, making no objection, Lady Douglas hastened the preparations for their departure.

The Alps! the sky-piercing Alps! with what mingled sensations of wonder and delight, did Madeline and Blanche gaze upon their towering summits, as, having travelled

through "La Belle France," they approached the base of that chain of these stupendous mountains, which separate France from Italy. The road over the Alps which they intended to pursue, was the passage across Mount Cenis. As they ascended, the scenery opened into increasing wildness and sublimity. On either side rose the snow-robed summits in majestic beauty. In many places the sides of the mountains were clothed with dense forests of pine and fir, which, owing to the hovering clouds, exhibited an exquisite variety of light and shade. Some of them seemed formed of stupendous masses of bare rock, piled one above another as if by a Titan's hand; and rising in abrupt and savage grandeur. Down these precipitous heights wild torrents rushed, dashing from cliff to cliff in picturesque cascades; sometimes lost to view in a labyrinth of tangled foliage in the depths below; but more frequently foaming and struggling over the rocky bed of some deep defile. In the distance appeared the sparkling pyramids of Chamouni, and towering far above the whole Alpine range—in lonely majesty—was seen the snow-clad glittering summit of Mont Blanc; appearing to the imaginative Madeline like the crystal battlement of Heaven, whence the celestial messengers might rest and view this lower world.

The travellers proceeded slowly, and frequently rested to view the marvellous scenery around them. Then, while Lady Douglas amused herself gathering the dark auricula, blue campanella, gentian, and Alpine rose, which grew in profusion around—Madeline was employed sketching the most striking features of the varied scene. At one time it would be a quiet hamlet resting in the shadow of a gigan-

tic height ; or a vine-clad cottage embowered in trees, in some secluded valley. Again, a ruined tower crowning an unbroken range of cliffs, apparently guarding the rude mountain pass; would catch her artistic eye; or it might be a rustic bridge, spanning a frightful chasm; or an ancient monastery placed on the brow of a tree-clad eminence. It was here that nature reigned in majesty, and from the contemplation of her varied works, the spiritual mind of Madeline rose in adoring admiration to the great Architect, whose Almighty hand had clothed her in a garb of such sublime beauty.

The day had been oppressively sultry, and towards evening some dark thunder-clouds wrapping the lesser peaks in misty drapery, portended an approaching storm. Blanche was much alarmed—she knew the danger from lightning in their elevated situation, and she entreated the guide to conduct them to some place of shelter, before the storm burst upon them.

“ Yonder is a small chapel, perched upon that naked cliff,” observed the guide; “ it is the nearest building, and by passing along the ledge-path of this precipice, we can reach it in about twenty minutes.”

The path was dangerous, yet in order to escape a drenching shower, which threatened to fall every minute, the travellers proceeded in the direction of the lonely chapel. They had scarcely reached its sheltering roof, when the storm broke forth in awful grandeur. The intensely-brilliant flashes of the lightning terrified Lady Douglas, and hiding her face on her husband's shoulder, and encircled by his pro-

pecting arm, she listened shudderingly to the terrific peals of the thunder.

Madeline, unawed—for the perfect love of God which filled her heart, cast out every other fear—gazed upon the red lightning, and listened to the “artillery of Heaven,” as its multiplied reverberations bounded from height to height, the sound continually renewed by the answering echoes from the surrounding vales. She seemed to feel nearer heaven—nearer the unseen spiritual world, as she stood upon those mighty Alps, listening as it were to the glorious voice of God himself speaking in the loud thunder. For the moment, her trials were forgotten—her soul was raised above all sublunary things, and for the time she held communion with her Maker, rejoicing in the thought that among all the surrounding glories of His creating, she was not overlooked—she could claim this Almighty Being for her guardian and Father, for ever.

The violence of the storm at length exhausted itself, and the rain poured in such torrents that the little party congratulated one another that they were sheltered from its fury. Gradually the threatening clouds dispersed; the mists gathered themselves up from the mountains' brows, and rolled away on the cooling breeze. The atmosphere was now delightfully pure, and the sweet fragrance of countless wild flowers came up from the valleys below. The sun was rapidly descending the western sky, and his refulgent beams were flooding the Alps with a gorgeous light. At length, resting his broad disk on a lofty pinnacle, sunset wrapt the magnificent prospect in glowing beauty. The immense glaciers and snowy peaks were bathed in a

golden radiance; afterwards, as the bright orb sunk lower, a pale pink tint, its hue deepening rapidly, diffused itself over the broad expanse of everlasting snow. The travellers, leaving their picturesque retreat during the thunder storm, regained the public road and re-commenced the toilsome ascent of the mountains, anxious to reach the little village of ——, at the foot of the summit of Mount Cenis, where they intended to pass the night. They were yet a considerable distance from the village, for the delay of the storm and the leisurely manner in which they had travelled during the day, had prevented their making much progress. Even now they lingered frequently to view the new and enchanting forms of beauty which the scenery assumed, in the soft twilight hour. The grey vapours of evening hovered about the loftiest peaks; these gradually creeping down their sides flung their shadowy drapery over rude cliffs and dense forests, and picturesque village, and secluded dwelling, and silvery cascades. A deep tranquility reigned in this elevated region; the silence was unbroken, save by the sweet chimes of a vesper-bell from some sequestered convent, or the spirit-stirring sound of a hunter's horn, re-echoing from cliff to cliff, and dying away in sweet intonations in the far-off glens. At length, as the twilight deepened, all that remained visible was the giant outline of the mountains, marked out dimly as they rose, spectral-like, around.

Unwilling to proceed on the journey while night veiled the dangerous way, Blanche now stopping her uncle, declared she could proceed no further, and asked if there was no dwelling nearer than the village of ——.

"Close by, in that glen below, there is the Convent of St. Ursula," replied the guide.

The travellers looked in the direction in which he pointed, and perceived the dim outline of a large structure, which the darkness had before hid from their view.

"Do they admit travellers to spend the night?" enquired Sir Walter Douglas.

"Sometimes, especially ladies, when they are benighted."

"But I dare not descend into that deep vale without light to enable me to see the way," urged the timid Blanche.

"We can wait for the moon, dearest," observed Sir Walter; "we can seat ourselves on these low rocks, and wait the approach of night's lonely watcher."

"Oh that is a good idea—we shall then see the glorious Alps by moonlight! Would you not like it, Madeline?"

"It will be a sight worth waiting for, although we shall have a long watch; the moon does not rise till late."

"Not for an hour"—observed the guide. "If the ladies wish, I can procure lanterns from the Convent to light the steep descent into the glen."

"Oh no!" interrupted Blanche—"we can wait very comfortably here, we wish to enjoy this grand scenery by moonlight. Perhaps," she added, after a moment's pause, "you can tell us some mountain legend, or some story about banditti, to while away the time."

The guide, who was an old man, possessing intelligence and education above his rank in life, looked gratified at this request, and after a few minutes' silence he related the following adventure, in which he had himself borne an active part.

“Half way up the mountains you must have observed the massive ruins of an old chateau, placed upon a range of cliffs overlooking a deep defile, and sheltered from behind by a pine-grove. Many years ago it was the summer residence of a French Baron, but when it fell into decay, the family deserted it, and for some time it remained untenanted. At last an old couple and their two sons took up their abode there, and seemed to have no other occupation but that of shepherds, tending a small flock on the mountains. They were Italians, from the other side of Mont Cenis, and speaking a different language they had no intercourse with the people of the neighboring hamlets. The whole family were ill-looking and disagreeable, shunning and being shunned, by every one. I was then a youth, gaining my living by guiding travellers over these mountains. Travelling was not at that time so much the fashion, or so convenient as it is now. One day I was engaged as guide to a small party of travellers crossing from Italy into France. I then lived on the Italian side of Mont Cenis—being a Piedmontese by birth. The party consisted of an elderly gentleman, his son and daughter—all Italians—and a young English gentleman who was travelling with them. Darkness overtook us when we had descended the mountains half way, and as night closed in, a terrible thunder storm broke fiercely over our heads. It was one of the worst I ever witnessed; the thunder-crash was awful, and the lightning blazed without ceasing. The travellers eagerly asked if shelter for the night could be obtained in some neighboring dwelling. Right above us, frowned darkly, the ancient chateau I have mentioned; I pointed it out to them, and

said it was the only abode, until we reached the base of the mountain.

“ ‘Conduct us thither,’ quickly said the old Signor Alberti; ‘the lightning is blinding, and now the rain begins to pour.’ I gladly obeyed, and climbing the steep, zig-zag path, leading to the chateau, we at last stood before its low-arched entrance. It seemed uninhabited, for not a light gleamed in the building. Sounding the rude horn which hung in the ruined portal, its echoes were for some time the only answering sound. At last the opening of a narrow casement above the entrance, made us look up, and by the glare of the lightning, the grim figure of Stefano, the old man who occupied the building, was seen.

“ ‘What do you want?’ he gruffly asked.

“ ‘A pretty question to ask such a night as this,’ replied the Englishman indignantly. ‘You hear the storm rage, and you see a party of benighted travellers, therefore you can easily understand what we require at your hands—shelter till the storm ceases, or rather till the night is past, when daylight will again enable us to pursue our journey.

“ ‘You shall have it,’ coldly replied the old man, as he disappeared from the casement.

“Ten minutes passed before we saw anything more of him, during which time not a few curses were showered on his head, for the rain was drenching. Suddenly we heard the bolts of the massive door withdrawn. Slowly it swung aside, creaking on its rusty hinges, and Stefano, holding a lantern in his hand, bade us enter. We found ourselves in a long vaulted passage, along which we followed our host. At the end an arched door opened into a large hall, lighted

by an iron lamp suspended from the ceiling. A blazing fire of pine-logs burned at one end, sending a cheerful glow around; at the other extremity was a partly-broken staircase, leading to a corridor which overlooked the hall. A table was spread with some coarse brown bread, goats' milk, fruit and a flagon of good wine. How it came into the old man's possession was then a mystery to me. I had always supposed him miserably poor, but there was an appearance of comfort in the dwelling very unaccountable to me.

“Taking off her wet travelling cloak, the Signora Monica—for such was the young lady's name—drew near the comfortable fire, for the rain and cold mountain air had chilled her. She was, I must say, one of the most beautiful of my beautiful countrywomen; and the young handsome foreigner seemed to think so too, if I might judge from the many glances of admiration he stole towards her. After they had partaken of a frugal supper, Signor Alberti inquired if there was a room where his daughter could spend the night. Stefano answered yes, and that each gentleman could also be accommodated with a bed chamber if he wished. In answer to my look of surprise at this information, he observed that benighted travellers some times stopped at the chateau, and on that account he had provided some plain accommodation for them. Although poor, it was as good as he could afford, and the travellers did not complain of it—they generally slept soundly. I fancied I could detect a sinister look in his eye at this remark, and my suspicions were a little awakened. Still they were merely suspicions. Signor Alberti immediately accepted the offer of a bed-room for himself, for his

journey had tired him; but his son and the Englishman said they would sit up later—they did not feel inclined to sleep at present. Calling to his wife—who was sitting near one corner of the fire-place attentively watching the party—Stefano told her to conduct the Signor and Signora to their apartments. An intelligent glance passed between the old couple, which I observed, and my suspicions became more aroused. Taking up a light, the old woman proceeded up the ruined stair-case, followed by the gentleman and his daughter. I watched them as they entered the corridor above and saw them stop at separate rooms, then both disappeared as the door closed on them, and the old woman slowly returned to her former seat near the fire. Towards midnight all was silent in the chateau; the young Signor and the Englishman had retired to their rooms, and I was alone in a small chamber overlooking the portal. I had not gone to bed, for an unaccountable fear made me watchful. It was just at this hour that the blast of the horn at the gate sounded startlingly in the stillness of the night. I quickly approached the casement to reconnoitre. The storm had swept past, and now the moon was high overhead, shedding a bright light around. In the shadow of the portal beneath, I saw five bandit-looking fellows in the dress of hunters, two of whom I recognized as sons of our host. At this moment some stealthy steps in the corridor outside my room, caught my ear. Noiselessly I opened my door and peered into the gallery. By the dim light of the lamp from the hall below I saw the old woman treading cautiously along, as if afraid of being heard. As I was watching her movements a door opened near me, and issuing from

Signor Alberti's room Stefano appeared—a stiletto gleaming in his hand. As he followed his wife along the corridor I stole into the Signor's chamber, dreading the worst. I was not mistaken. One glance showed me the murdered form of the old gentleman lying on his bed; he had been stabbed when asleep, and his soul had passed away in a state of happy unconsciousness. Seizing my pistols, with a quick, stealthy step, I followed Stefano. The old villain was descending the stairs as I reached the top. A moment afterwards and his lifeless body rolled into the hall below; an unerring shot from my hand had reached his heart. Again the horn at the gate sounded impatiently. Hurrying across the hall I saw the old woman. She was hastening to admit the newly-arrived party. To seize her, drag her into one of the rooms and lock the door, was the work of a minute, then quickly ascending the stairs and re-entering my chamber, I opened the casement and roughly asked the banditti what they wanted. One of Stefano's sons indignantly asked who I was, and by what right I kept them out of their own dwelling.

“ ‘Your villainy is found out,’ I answered. ‘Stefano the murderer has himself been murdered, and you will share the same fate if you venture to enter here.’ I then hastily closed the casement.

“Talking loudly, they left the portal, and disappeared down the steep path, leading from the chateau.

“I congratulated myself on getting rid of them so easily; then went to rouse young Alberti and the Englishman. The tale of horror I communicated seemed to freeze their blood.

“ ‘Is Signora Monica safe?’ was the first thought of the

Englishman. I answered hesitatingly, I did not know ; for just then it struck me that it was from the door of her room the old woman was moving when I first saw her. Rushing to the door of his sister's chamber, young Alberti knocked loudly and called upon her name, but no answer was returned. Frantically he burst it open and entered. At his cry of horror we followed. The beautiful young lady had shared the same fate as her father—her slender throat was cut from ear to ear, and she presented a ghastly spectacle in the pale moonlight. The grief of her brother was frantic.

“ ‘Who did this?’ he asked savagely turning to me. I communicated my suspicions about the old woman. ‘Lead me to her,’ he said—his eyes glowing with fierce rage. The young Englishman expostulated with him; for although deeply grieved at the Signora's death, yet he shrank from shedding the blood of an old woman.

“ ‘It matters not,’ hissed Alberti through his closed teeth—‘she is a fiend, and deserves to die; my sister's blood shall be avenged; neither her age nor sex shall save her.’ We found the old woman cowering with terror in a corner of the room, into which I had shut her. She confessed herself guilty of Signora Monica's death ; but implored mercy. To plunge his stiletto into her heart, was the only answer vouchsafed by Alberti. He then stood watching, with savage joy, her wild despair, as she struggled in the death-agony. The murder of his father and sister had maddened the young man. I turned shudderingly away, and followed the Englishman into the hall, which he was gloomily pacing.

“ ‘Do you think the rest of the banditti will return?’ he asked, abruptly addressing me.

“ ‘Very likely, but unless they know of some secret entrance they cannot enter the chateau.’ As I spoke a noise like the distant shutting of a door caught my ear.

“ ‘They will soon be upon us!’ I said with much excitement; ‘there is doubtless some subterranean passage known only to them.’

“ ‘Let us ascend to the corridor above’—suggested the Englishman. ‘From that position we can command the hall, and have an advantage over them.’ Calling to young Alberti to follow us, we mounted the stair-case, and hastily collected our fire-arms. Then leaning over the balustrades we watched the approach of our foe. It was a moment of intense excitement, but we were not long kept in suspense. Soon a dusky form was seen entering noiselessly through a door at the extreme end of the hall. Another, and another followed, till the five brigands, who had lately demanded admittance, appeared before us. A moment afterwards, and two of them were stretched wounded and helpless on the flagged pavement of the hall. Uttering a cry of vengeance the other banditti fired in return, but fortunately without effect. Again the Englishman fired, and another bandit was the victim. With fierce curses the two remaining robbers dragged their wounded companions from the hall, and disappeared through the secret door. Dashing impetuously down the stairs, the Englishman hurried across the hall and tried to find the private entrance; but without success—he could not discover the secret spring. He was therefore reluctantly obliged to give up the pursuit. Through the remaining hours of that fearful night we kept a constant watch, but were not again disturbed. The gray dawn was

a welcome sight, as it broke through the antique windows of the chateau. As soon as the sun was up, I proceeded to the neighboring village and informed some gens d'armes of what had occurred. They removed and buried the dead bodies of Stefano and his wife. Signor Alberti and his daughter were interred in the vault of the Convent of Santa Ursula, where you will pass the night. Since that time the old chateau has remained uninhabited."

CHAPTER V.

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The travellers listened with interest to the guide's bandit adventure, and at the request of Lady Douglas, he related another similar story, communicated to him by his grandfather. He was just concluding his tale of horror, winding up with a midnight massacre, when the brilliant orb the party waited for was seen, peering above the brow of a giant Alp; looking down upon the scene before she flung her radiant mantle over it. For half an hour the travellers watched her course, as she moved in glory upward, changing, as with a magic touch, the various features of the scene—and giving her own soft, refulgent beauty, to the stupendous mountains. The Convent of Santa Ursula was now distinctly visible, for the moon was lighting up the glen in which it stood; gleaming on its antique turrets and Gothic windows. Carefully the party descended the winding precipitous way leading to it, which was partly shaded by overhanging trees, the tracery of whose foliage the rays of the moon cast upon the rocky pathway they canopied.

At length the travellers stood before the Convent gate. In its secluded situation, with the majestic Alps towering

above, it seemed shut in from the world which its inmates had sworn to renounce. The sound of the portal bell broke upon the solemn stillness of the mountains—startling innumerable echoes from the adjacent heights. The travellers met with a cordial reception from the sisterhood. The appearance of strangers—especially English ladies—was an unusual occurrence, and both nuns and novices, were anxious to see the fair foreigners.

Lady Douglas—who was fatigued with her journey—retired for the night soon after her arrival; but the idea of being in a Convent—a Convent among the Alps—was, to the somewhat romantic Madeline, sufficient to banish sleep from her pillow. To the old nun who conducted her to her apartment she expressed a wish to see the chapel. Sister Bianca willingly complied. The chapel was dimly lighted by a few lamps, scattered here and there before the shrines of the Saints. Part of the aisles was in deep shadow, but in some places the moonlight streamed through the high Gothic windows. A solemn, reverent feeling stole over the mind of Madeline as she traversed the quiet deserted aisles, and gazed upon the life-like form of the Crucified—which was suspended over the principal altar, and was executed by the master hand of an Italian artist. For the moment she thought that she too would like to retire from the world and its cares, and spend the rest of her life in the seclusion of the cloister; but then the thought occurred, that by continuing in the world but not of it, she could better work out the great end for which she was created—serving God and being useful to her fellow-creatures. The recollection, too, flashed on her mind, that the Convent walls cannot shut out

human woe; and that those who sought a refuge from misery within its gates, were too often in the solitude of their cells a prey to devouring grief, which they might more easily have forgotten in the active duties of life; for it is wisely ordained that constant employment should be the great solace for human sorrow. As this thought filled her mind, a suppressed groan fell upon her ear. It was the moan of an anguished spirit. Madeline looked curiously around, for hitherto she had not observed any one in the chapel.

Sister Bianca pointed to a side aisle, where, prostrate before the shrine of the Madona, was seen the form of a young novice.

"It is Miriam de Rosenberg," whispered Bianca; "when her novitiate is ended, she is to take the veil."

Madeline started. Miriam de Rosenberg! it was the name of the beautiful Jewess whom Lord Stanhope told her St. Ledger loved. For a few minutes, surprise, and various emotions kept her silent.

"How long has she been in the convent?" she eagerly asked.

"About a year. She is a converted Jewess, and wishes to become one of our holy order."

There could be no mistake; that prostrate form, then, was the being whom she had lately regarded as her happy rival—the object of St. Ledger's affections. Had Lord Stanhope deceived her? might it not be possible that Sherwood still loved herself; that his heart was unchanged? and as these thoughts passed rapidly through her mind, her heart thrilled with rapturous emotion.

"Is her father living?" asked Madeline,

"No, he died before she entered the Convent. It was his death, and, I believe, some other great sorrow, which induced her to seek an asylum here. Religion, you know, alone can minister to an afflicted mind; it is only within the Convent walls that the heart, crushed by sorrow, can find consolation and enjoy happiness."

"Are the inmates of the Convent of Santa Ursula, then, exempt from sorrow? has Miriam de Rosenberg found freedom from misery within its gates? I think not; that wild paroxysm of weeping indicates the contrary"—observed Madeline sadly.

"Time and the blessed Saviour will heal her wounded spirit," said Sister Bianca devoutly.

"The power of healing human griefs does indeed belong to Him who suffered to redeem a guilty world; but that power is by no means confined within the Convent walls; it is shewn in the different walks of life—in the marble palace as well as in the lowly hut—in the crowded city and solitary dungeon, as well as in the lonely cloister," remarked Madeline, earnestly.

A quiet smile flitted across the face of the nun. "We will not quarrel on this point," she said, good-humoredly. Recollecting some duty which must be attended to, she now left Madeline alone, promising to return shortly. At this moment the young novice rose, and advanced down the aisle where Miss Beresford stood. The light of a lamp fell on the face of Madeline, revealing its expression of mingled curiosity, pity and admiration. Earthly feeling was not quite dead in the heart of the beautiful novice. She lifted her eyes to the face of the stranger, as she passed.

A faint cry of surprise escaped her—she stood motionless, gazing at Miss Beresford.

“Tell me your name, if you do not deem me too impertinent”—she said in tremulous accents.

Her voice was very musical, and her foreign accents peculiarly pleasing.

“My name is Madeline Beresford.”

“I knew it! he showed me your likeness. I recognized you immediately! there can be but one face with that rare beauty of expression—stamped by the angelic purity of the soul within.”

After a minute's silence, she drew from her bosom a miniature, set in jewels. “Do you know this face?” and she held it up to Madeline's eager gaze.

It was a likeness of Sherwood St. Ledger.

Madeline's eyes fell tenderly on the well-known features. The Jewess observed their expression.

“You loved him! you love him still! he is one not easily to be forgotten”—and there was deep sadness in the tones in which these words were spoken.

“You seem acquainted with some particulars respecting me,”—observed Madeline, in accents of surprise. “Did Sherwood St. Ledger confide them to you?”

“He told me,” continued Miriam, “of your attachment to each other, of your broken engagement, your heroic self-sacrifice to religious principles. How unhappy he seemed when I first knew him. It was his deep melancholy which excited my pity, and drew me towards him.”

“And you were, I understood, so fortunate as to make him forget his sorrows.”

There was an anxious inquiry in Madeline's voice. She wished to find out the truth of Lord Stanhope's assertion. Miriam looked surprised.

"Were you aware of our acquaintance?" she asked.

"Yes. Lord Stanhope, who travelled with you in Egypt, mentioned it and said ——"

Madeline hesitated.

"Said that we were attached to each other, did he not?"

"He asserted as much."

"Lord Stanhope deceived you—or rather," she added, as a deep blush colored her pale face—"he told you the truth only as regarded me. I loved St. Ledger, but loved in vain. I make this humiliating confession," she continued, much agitated, "to relieve your mind of any unjust suspicions you may entertain, relative to one whose heart never swerved from its devotion to you. Oh how passionately he does love you—nothing can make that powerful affection die out of his heart!"

Very sad were the tones in which these words were spoken.

An expression of intense joy irradiated Madeline's countenance. St. Ledger still loved her! The exultant thought chased every cloud from her life's horizon. For the moment she forgot that they were still separated—that the obstacle to their union still remained—and that each must pursue a different path along earth's rugged highway. She could only for the present, bask in the sudden sunshine, which the knowledge of his unaltered love poured in upon her heart.

Miriam gazed upon her—she noticed her beaming happiness; she sighed deeply, but a look of resignation soon stole over her face.

"Have you seen St. Ledger lately?" she asked.

A negative was Madeline's reply.

"You are not, perhaps, aware of the happy change in his opinions respecting religion."

"I did not know there was any;"—and Madeline's eyes gleamed with the eagerness of hope.

"A severe illness, a sick-bed brought vividly before his mind the awful realities of eternity. The powerful operations of Divine grace chased the shadows of Infidelity from his soul. How heinous now appeared his guilt in denying the triune Jehovah. Death and the idea of appearing before His judgment-throne, were appalling beyond description. He felt that the severest judgments of God's wrath were what he deserved, but sheltering himself beneath the Cross of Calvary, he lifted an eye of trembling hope to an Omnipotent Redeemer, and was spared."

While Miriam spoke, Madeline listened with a bewildered look. She doubted the reality of her senses. The happiness that thrilled her heart seemed too great for earth; it was so sudden, so unexpected. Trembling with the intensity of her feelings she leaned against a pillar for support, and wept with rapturous emotion. Soon, however, she subdued her agitation, and with assumed calmness, inquired when this happy change took place.

"A few weeks since; it was his intention to return to Scotland as soon as he was able to travel."

Madeline's eloquent eyes expressed the surprise she felt that Miriam should be so well acquainted with events connected with St. Ledger.

The Jewess understood the look.

"He wrote to inform me of his conversion," she remarked. "During our journeyings together, we had frequent discussions about religion, in which my father took a prominent part. We read the Scriptures in the Hebrew tongue, and we tried to convince him of the truths of Judaism as well as Christianity. God's omnipotent grace has at length fastened the convictions on his mind. As he knew the peculiar interest I took in his welfare, he informed me of an event which he felt assured would afford me great happiness."

"It is now more than a year since I last saw him," resumed Miriam, after a short silence. "As soon as he suspected my attachment, he bade me adieu; having first confided to me his blighted hopes and never-dying love for you. The nobleness of his conduct in this instance, exalted him in my opinion. The humiliation of an unrequited love lost much of its bitterness, when I considered the high-minded character of him who was the object of my secret devotion. As a friend, a sister, he tenderly regarded me, and with this poor substitute for the homage of his heart, I was forced to be content. For you, alone, is reserved the happiness of being St. Ledger's wife."

Again the beautiful Jewess sighed profoundly.

"Shortly after his departure," she continued, "my beloved father died. The only tie that bound me to the world was then broken. I desired rest—rest for my wearied spirit; if not in the grave, in the grave-like seclusion of the cloister. The Superior of this Convent is my relative. I determined to retire within its walls, enrich it with the wealth now valueless in my eyes, and spend the rest of my saddened existence in its holy solitude. When my novitiate is ended I shall take the veil."

A feeling of intense pity filled the mind of Madeline, as she listened to the sweet sad tones of the young novice. Her own exquisite happiness contrasted forcibly with the utter desolation which seemed to have swept every joy from the heart of Miriam. She yearned to impart some consolation. Yet what could she say to yield comfort to a heart crushed by one of the bitterest of earth's trials—unrequited affection.

"Why do you wish to bury yourself and your sorrows within the cloister?" she asked, hesitatingly; "would it not be wise to wait time's healing touch; this shadow will pass from your life—happiness is yet reserved for you—oh, do not thus destroy all chance of earthly happiness, by shrouding yourself beneath the pall-like drapery of the convent veil?"

Miriam smiled sadly.

"You have loved St. Ledger! do you imagine that his image can be easily effaced—that the affection he is capable of inspiring can ever die in a heart like mine? Oh no! it is no sudden, thoughtless fancy, my taking the veil. I have weighed the matter well; without his love—his presence—earth would be a wilderness. If my father had lived, I should have remained with him, cheering his old age, and trying to forget my own anguish in making his life happy, but Heaven has removed him to a brighter scene, and now I am alone! In the retirement of the convent—in communion with Heaven, I shall, in time, have peace."

The ringing of the convent-bell for midnight prayers, now broke upon the silence of the hour, and the conversation of the young girls was interrupted.

"We must part now," said Miriam hurriedly; "how unexpected was this meeting! Tell St. Ledger that I think you worthy of his love—that having seen you I no longer wonder at the depth of his affection for you. Adieu! I will remember you both in my prayers. May you be happy! In that glorious home above, we shall all meet, when this earth's probation is ended; there, amid the glorious revealings of eternity, our souls flooded with ineffable joy, we shall forget the petty sorrows of this lower sphere, and thank the Infinite that our life-path was through 'a Zaphath, a place of furnaces,' since suffering was to us a refiner." Miriam pressed the hand which Madeline affectionately offered her, then turned quickly away to hide the tears which gushed from the overflowing fountain of a broken heart.

## CHAPTER VI.

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After crossing the Alps, our travellers stopped for a few days at the beautiful city of Turin, to visit the royal palace and the gardens. The museum also attracted their attention, and some hours were spent in admiring its extensive collection of Egyptian antiquities. Since her visit to the Convent of Santa Ursula, a marked change was visible in Madeline's spirits. Hope and joy—bright stars of our existence—had again risen upon her horizon. Glittering were the thoughts she cherished,—

"Soft visions  
Threw their spells around her—charm'd her dreams  
With glowing hopes and golden gleams."

Miriam had told her that Sherwood St. Ledger had gone to Scotland; every mail therefore she hoped would bring her tidings of him, confirming the joyful intelligence communicated by the beautiful Jewess.

One evening Lady Douglas proposed taking a walk on the ramparts, to enjoy the beautiful prospect which they commanded of the Alps, the majestic Po, and the luxuriant country, adorned by the villas of the Piedmontese nobility.

The crimson brightness of the setting sun threw a rich lustre over the variegated landscape, which stretched beyond the city and within its walls.

“ Temple, and pinnacle, and spire  
Shone out as if enwrapt in fire ;  
Turret, and tower, and marble pile  
Seem'd gilded by the sun's proud smile.”

They were leaving the ramparts, when a gentleman approaching them, attracted the attention of Sir Walter.

“ It is Lord Stanhope !” he exclaimed, as he advanced to meet him with evident pleasure.

The reception given him by Lady Douglas was also flattering, but there was a coldness in Miss Beresford's manner which sent a pang of disappointment to the heart of the young nobleman.

“ How long have you been in Turin ?” asked Sir Walter.

“ Not more than an hour ! one of your servants, whom I saw at the inn, informed me you were in the city, and directed me to the ramparts.”

“ And to what cause are we to attribute the pleasure of seeing you ?” inquired Lady Douglas.

“ Finding existence insupportable in England, I have come to seek beneath the sunny skies of Italy that happiness which no other country could at present afford.”

There was a slight accent on the word *at present*, and a timid glance at Madeline.

“ Italy must then have peculiar attractions !” said Blanche, with an arch smile.

“ What parts of Italy do you intend to visit ?” she continued.

"My *route de voyage* shall be regulated by yours, if your ladyship do not object," replied Lord Stanhope.

"You will join our party then," said Sir Walter. "Such an addition would afford us pleasure."

This was an invitation which Lord Stanhope had anxiously desired.

"How did you like your journey over the Alps, Miss Beresford?" he asked, now addressing Madeline.

"Exceedingly! the scenery was sublime—it surpassed my highest expectations! We passed a night among the mountains in an Ursuline Convent," continued Madeline, as she and Lord Stanhope walked on together, "and there I saw an old acquaintance of yours, the beautiful Miriam de Rosenberg."

"Indeed!" exclaimed his Lordship, in surprise. "She was also travelling. I presume?"

"No, she is a novice in the convent; she intends to take the veil, her father is dead, and she is alone in the world."

Lord Stanhope's countenance expressed the surprise he felt.

"And where is the Honorable Sherwood St. Ledger? did she tell you why they separated?" and he bent his eyes searchingly on Madeline.

She felt she could not answer this question. After a moment's hesitation she asked, evasively—"Why are you surprised that they should at last have relinquished the pleasure of travelling together?"

"Because I imagined they would have travelled the journey of life together," he replied, laughing; "they seemed devoted to each other."

"The world often forms an erroneous judgment in such matters," observed Madeline, coldly.

Lord Stanhope walked on thoughtfully.

"There must be some reason for Miriam's sudden fancy to immure herself in a cloister," he said—"some disappointment of the heart; is it not so, Miss Beresford?"

"Probably it is; yet why attribute her desire of seclusion to this cause? You are suspicious, Lord Stanhope."

"That may be, still I presume my supposition is correct. I am afraid the Honorable Sherwood St. Ledger is in some way the cause of this unnatural seclusion. He has, I fear, trifled with the affections of the bewitching Miriam." His Lordship glanced at Madeline as he ventured to make this observation; he saw her face flush with indignation.

"Sherwood St. Ledger is incapable of the dishonorable conduct you attribute to him!" she said haughtily.

A dark shadow passed over the face of Lord Stanhope, and a bitter feeling settled round his heart. He saw that Madeline had not forgotten her former lover, and the cherished hope of winning her affections grew dim indeed. An embarrassing silence succeeded. Lord Stanhope changed the conversation.

"How long do you intend to remain in Turin?" he inquired.

"We leave to-morrow for Florence."

"You will visit Rome, I suppose?"

"Yes, we are very anxious to see the Mistress of the world. Its famed monuments of antiquity, its magnificent piles of modern architecture, but especially its inimitable paintings and sculpture, give it peculiar attractions. I

should also like to visit Tivoli and Lake Albano—the scenery is, I understand, beautiful.”

“I think I shall prefer Venice to any other city in Italy,” observed Lady Douglas, who had overheard her sister’s last remark. “I have read such animated descriptions of its gondolas gliding along the moon-illuminated Adriatic; its Rialto, marble pallazos and arcades. It must have a strangely-beautiful appearance, rising as if from the sea, with its domes and spires and other magnificent buildings.”

“It does resemble a scene of enchantment, seeming to float on the quiet waters—a residence there is calculated to fill the imaginative with visions of romance,” remarked Lord Stanhope.

The lateness of the hour now obliged them to return to their hotel. At Florence, the native city of Galileo, and Michael Angelo, the travellers tarried a few days to visit the celebrated Florentine Gallery, and admire its exquisite collection of statues and paintings, they then proceeded to Naples, that “Queen of beauty,” as it is called. The hotel at which they resided during their stay in the city, was placed in a fine situation, commanding a magnificent prospect. Standing upon the richly-sculptured balcony in front of the dwelling, the travellers looked out upon a panorama of almost incredible beauty. Stretching before them in deep blue repose, lay that wondrously-beautiful sheet of water, the Bay of Naples; the city rising like an amphitheatre, part of it embosomed in fragrant groves of orange, myrtle and citron,—convents, palaces and slender spires, shooting up from amid the dark rich foliage, with which their snowy whiteness glitteringly contrasted—villas of ornamental ar-

chitecture—their white marble pillars covered with creeping plants, among which might be seen the climbing rose and the delicate starry flowers of the *Mesembryanthemum*. In the tasteful grounds around these bijou-dwellings, were seen marble fountains, tiny temples and vine-clad arbors, scattered here and there through the flowering trees; while hedges of oleander, with its rich-colored blossoms, skirted the gravelled walks. In the back ground of this magic picture rose the terrible Vesuvius; its sides clothed with luxuriant groves, and fruitful vine-yards, and picturesque villas. Everything looked smiling and secure, yet the fearful character of the mountain indicated itself in the white, cloud-like smoke, hovering over its crater. Rising heavenward in its glorious beauty, it seemed to protect the enchanting shore it shadowed; yet how delusive that appearance. Let but the lurid fires within its bosom escape, and soon that glorious landscape would be shrouded in the gloom of utter desolation. The ancient cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum, buried for centuries, are monuments of the fearful destruction slumbering within that burning mountain.

One evening, a few days after their arrival, Madeline was standing on the balcony, engaged looking through a telescope at the picturesque scenes along the deeply-indented coast of the Bay—the islands stretched across its mouth—the towns along the base of Vesuvius, the promontories of Misenum and Sorrento—the romantic islands of Ischio and Capri, the fabled homes of the Nereides, Circe and the Syrens, and other places of classic celebrity, all of which, by the powerful aid of the telescope—though distant—seemed in close proximity, as her delighted eye scanned the

matchless scene within her view. Lord Stanhope, while he supported the glass, described every place, which he had frequently visited, and Madeline listened with much interest to his glowing description.

At one moment, happening to cast her eyes into the court of the hotel which the balcony overlooked, among a party of travellers lately arrived, she perceived a face and form which sent an expression of flashing joy over her features, and caused her heart to throb with wild emotion. It was Sherwood St. Ledger; he was gazing up earnestly at the balcony; his eyes were fixed upon her, but their expression was, oh! so cold, so stern, so melancholy! it sent the rich blood back to her heart, and caused the gloom of a great disappointment to fall upon her spirit. But pride is a powerful feeling to keep back the gushing tears, and to calm the wildly-beating pulse. She felt that Lord Stanhope's eye was upon her; she saw the look of exultant joy which grew into his face, as he marked the cold demeanor of St. Ledger. With a strong will she concealed her anguish, and with a calm voice and self-possessed manner, continued her interesting conversation with the young nobleman. After a little time she again glanced into the court below. In a vine-wreathed arbor, beneath the shade of some beautiful accacias and pointed aloes, St. Ledger had seated himself, apparently admiring the gorgeous prospect before him; but in reality furtively watching Miss Beresford and her handsome companion. The appearance of Lady Douglas on the balcony to remind her sister that it was time to dress for a concert, which they were to attend, at length enabled Madeline to retire to her apartment and indulge in that pas-

sionate grief she had so well controlled. What had caused this change in Sherwood? how cruel this trial now, when all was hope! that dark eye so cold, so indifferent! how it haunted her! she pressed her hands over her face to shut out its expression, but still it gleamed before her. She was yet lost in bitter reflections when a servant came to say the carriage waited. She started as if from a dream—she had forgotten the concert—she cared not to attend it—yet as her absence would seem strange, she hastily commenced her toilet. It did not occupy many minutes, yet she never looked more beautiful. The crimson of mental suffering was on her cheeks, giving a glorious brilliancy to her luminous eyes. The gaze of many strangers assembled in the hall of the hotel, rested admiringly on her as she passed through it, leaning on the arm of Lord Stanhope. Near the door, as they approached the front entrance, Madeline's eye caught the form of St. Ledger; he was earnestly watching her as she advanced; his face wore the same grave, cold, sad look; both bowed silently as their eyes met. Lord Stanhope felt the hand that rested on his arm tremble, but it was only for a minute; with a calm look and proud bearing, Madeline passed on.

Part of the way to the city—for the hotel was at a little distance from it—the carriage drove along the shore of the Bay. Night had veiled the variegated scene, and nothing could be discerned but the lurid light of the burning mountain, as its volcanic flame shot up into the ebon sky. Madeline rode on silently, listening to the soothing sound of the rippling waves as they broke gently against the shore; while she gazed upon the crimson jets from the crater of

Vesuvius, which seemed to rise as a lofty light-house to the mariners on the blue Mediterranean. The night-air, laden with the perfume of orange and myrtle groves, fanned her brow, but was ineffectual to cool the fever of disappointed hope, which, like the volcanic fires, slumbered within.

The concert was fashionably attended—and the music and singing were exquisite, but Madeline was too unhappy to enjoy any amusement. She looked with indifference on the gay crowd, and listened with apathy to the dulcet tones of a celebrated Prima Donna. She was glad when the concert was over, and they rose to depart. It was then she perceived among the fashionable throng, him who had occupied her thoughts. Again his eyes were bent upon her; he seemed as if he could not remove his gaze from her face.

The entrance-hall was crowded with persons waiting for their carriages. Silent and unhappy, Madeline stood alone, the crowd had separated her from Sir Walter and Lady Douglas, and Lord Stanhope had gone to see if their carriage waited. The voice of Sherwood St. Ledger was now heard, conversing with an English gentleman residing in Naples. The well-known tones, heard for the first time in many months, thrilled the heart of Madeline.

“We must remain here a few minutes,” observed St. Ledger, “as I think there would be great difficulty in piercing through those ranks of beauty and fashion.”

“They certainly are ranks of beauty,” answered his companion, glancing gaily round—“the oval face, the regular features, the raven hair and dazzling eyes, do render the Italian ladies irresistible; but do you not think the meteor which has lately risen on our horizon the most brilliant luminary you saw to-night?”

"Miss Beresford?" said Sherwood, and Madeline thought there was a tremulousness in the tone in which he pronounced her name.

"Yes! Lady Douglas is also beautiful."

"How long have they been in Naples?"

"Only a short time; they are making the tour of Italy."

"Is there not an English nobleman also of their party?"

"Yes! Lord Stanhope, a singularly handsome fellow; you might have observed him conversing with Miss Beresford—his attentions to her are very particular."

"I have heard she will become Lady Stanhope, when they return to Scotland," observed St. Ledger.

"Your information is not correct. I understand from good authority, there will be no alliance between the families. It is hinted that Miss Beresford's affections are engaged."

"Ah! is it true?" said Sherwood eagerly.

Owing to an onward motion in the crowd, St. Ledger now stepping from behind the pillar which had before concealed him, found himself unexpectedly beside Madeline. Their gaze met. The look of tender reproach in the eyes of Madeline caused a sudden joy to flash over the face of Sherwood.

"Madeline! my Madeline! dare I still call you so?" he said, in low passionate appealing accents.

"How could you for a moment doubt my affection, dearest Sherwood?" said Madeline with timid fondness, as she confidently placed her hand in his.

"Forgive me, my beloved! such suspicions were unworthy of you! but I was wild with the fear of losing you now

when every obstacle to our happiness is removed. It was my intense affection for you which made me an easy prey to the demon, jealousy. In Scotland I heard from Lady Augusta Sinclair of Lord Stanhope's devotion to you, and the encouragement given to his hopes by Colonel Montrose—of his having followed you to Italy, and I feared the worst. And yet he is a formidable rival you must allow," Sherwood continued, with a playful smile—"Stanhope is one well calculated to attract admiration, and win a lady's love."

"But not one to make me ever forget you!" was Madeline's reply.

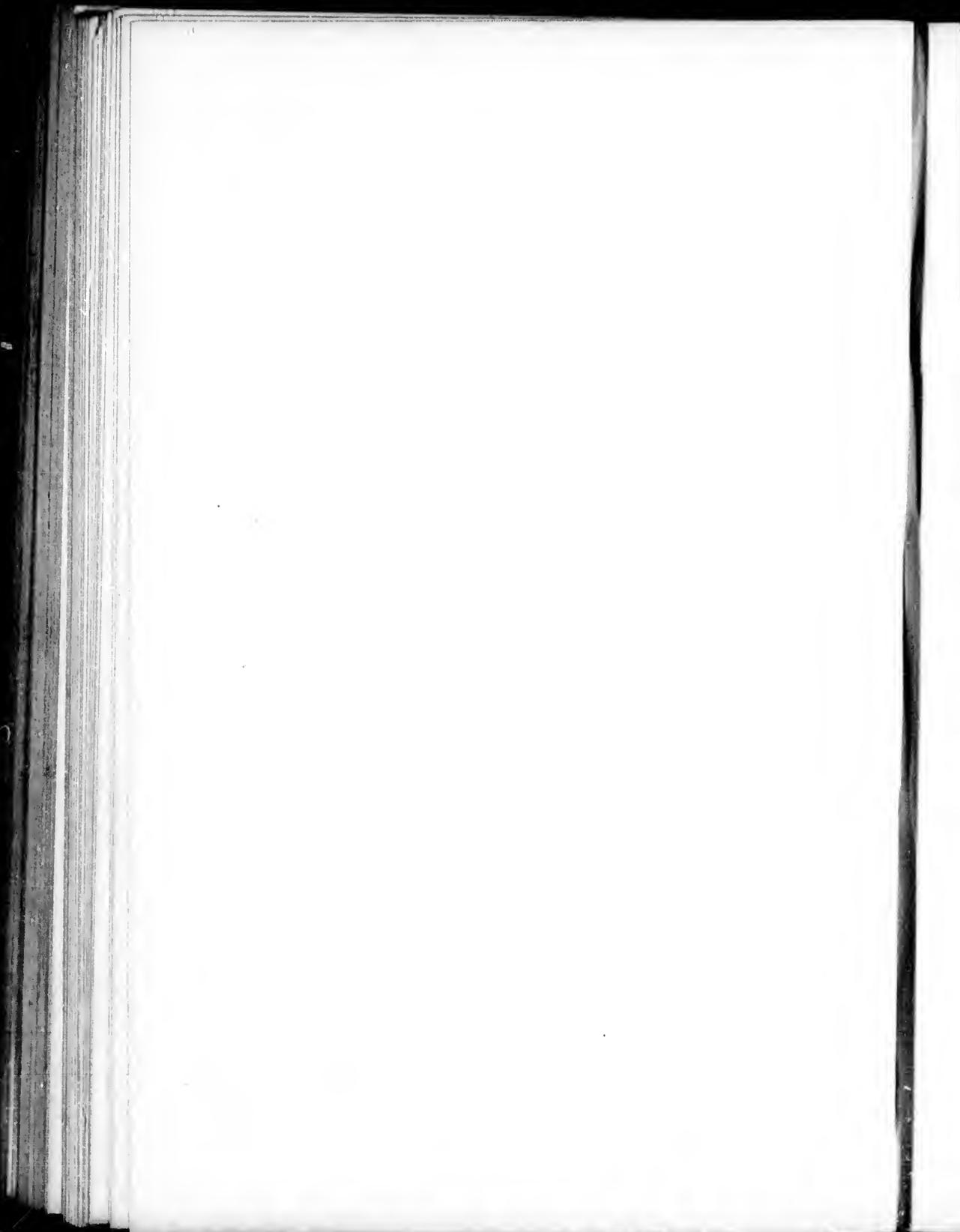
Lord Stanhope now returned. The light of happiness in Madeline's face as she stood leaning on the arm of St. Ledger,—whose gaze was fondly bent upon her, sent a sudden agony to the heart of his Lordship,—hope was instantly eclipsed, and a storm of jealousy and disappointment swept over him. He felt he was *de trop*—he bowed haughtily, and turned away. That night he left Naples.

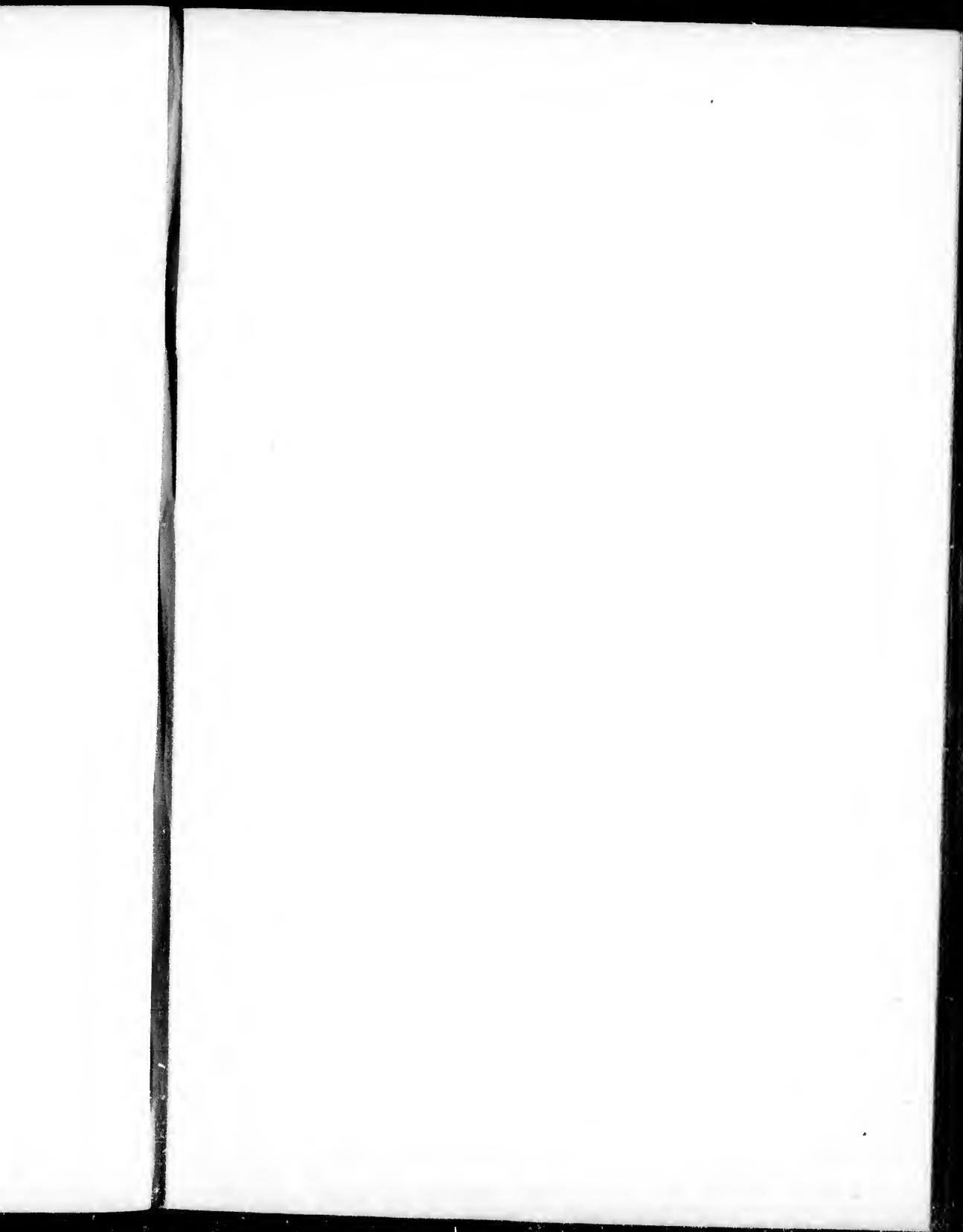
In the society of Sherwood St. Ledger, inexpressibly happy, Madeline visited various places of beauty and celebrity on the classic shores of Italy. With him she descended into the exhumed cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum;—visited "Genoa the Proud,"—the native place of one who immortalized his name by discovering a hemisphere. Lingered for weeks in the eternal city, viewing its Coliseum, churches, arches, palaces, and the master-pieces of Raphael, Michael Angelo, and other immortal artists—crossed the beautiful purple-tinted Apennines,—sailed along the romantic Adriatic—admiring the picturesque costume of the

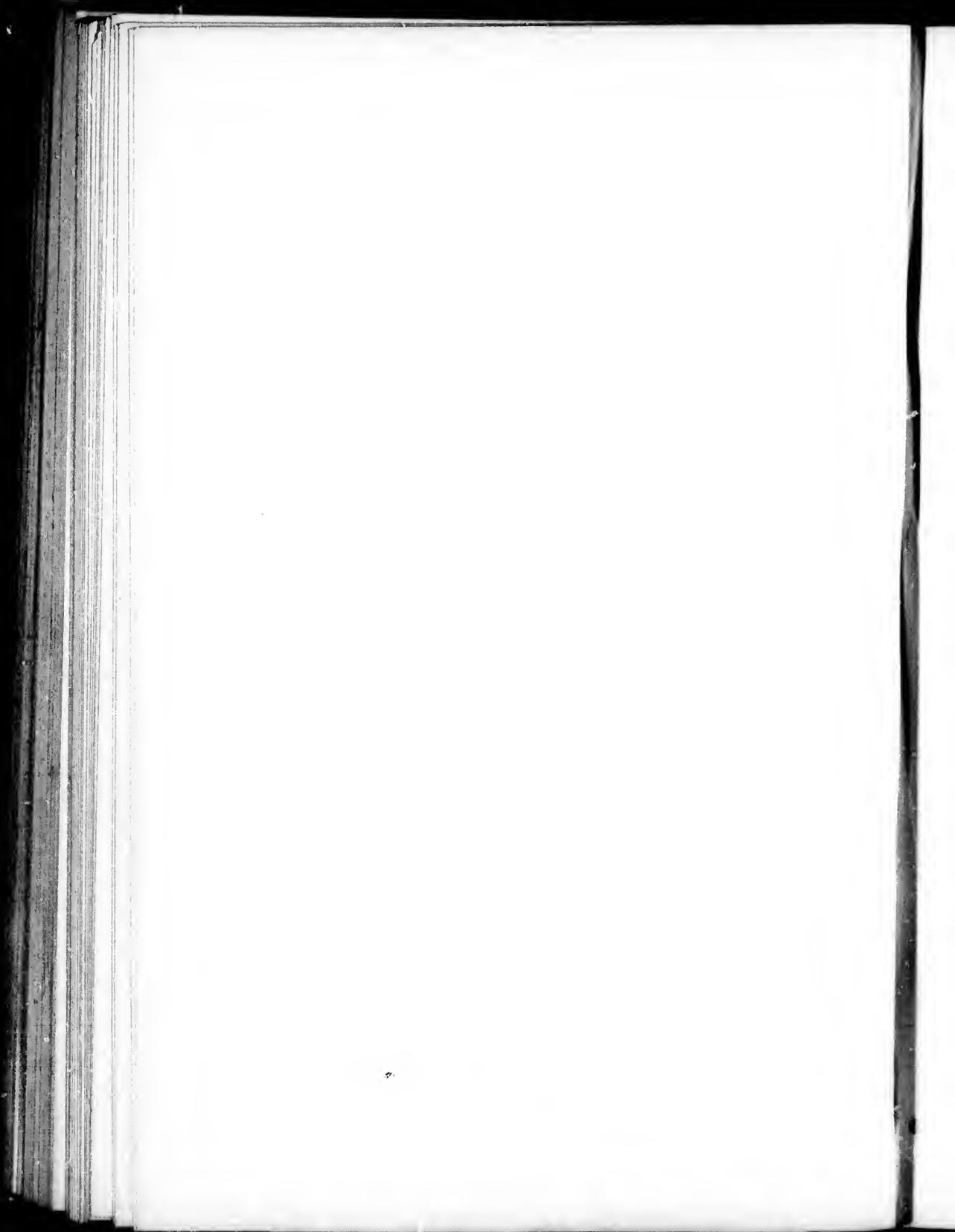
Albanian mariners, and finally re-crossing the Alps, returned late in the autumn to Scotland.

Shortly after her return to Montrose House, preparations were again made for her marriage with the Honorable Sherwood St. Ledger—and this time they were not made in vain, for Madeline Beresford's trial was ended.

THE END.







GRACE RAYMOND,  
—OR—  
THE SLAVE'S REVENGE.

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CHAPTER I.

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Late in the spring of 1840, a large American brig, freighted with emigrants, left the port of G——, on the western coast of Ireland, and put to sea with a favorable but freshening breeze. Groups of passengers were on deck, conversing in saddened accents as they mournfully regarded the well-known scenes along the shore so rapidly receding, as the brig buoyantly rode over the bounding waters.

Apart from the rest—and distinguished from them by a certain air of refinement, notwithstanding the plainness of

her attire—sat a young and singularly beautiful girl, of, it might be, twenty summers. On the bold outline of rock-bound coast her gaze was also riveted. Her eyes were tearless, but there was in their dark depths a subdued expression of sorrow, very touching in one so young. The home of her youth—her native land—she was leaving for ever. Bright scenes of other days passed rapidly before her mental vision. Loved forms of severed friends crowded the chambers of memory. Each moment the shade of sorrow deepened on the brow of the young girl, and her eye wore a yet sadder expression, as the outline of her beloved country became more and more indistinct in the increasing distance.

A voice near, at length roused her from her sad revery. An elderly gentleman, who, from his strong resemblance to her, was evidently her father, stood on the upper step of the companion-ladder.

“Grace, dearest, you must come below, it blows a gale, and a longer continuance on deck must be uncomfortable.”

The vessel did heave considerably, and Grace had for some time felt its motion unpleasant. She now rose to comply with her father's wishes and her eye, resting on the angry ocean, she became immoveable, gazing with mingled emotions of awe and delight on the sublime spectacle around her, which, wrapt up in her sad thoughts, she had not before noticed. Far as the eye could reach appeared the waters of the Atlantic, roused from slumbering in unfathomable recesses, and rushing onward in the glory of their might, they seemed about to overwhelm the distant land with desolation, apparently unmindful of the august decree

of Him who has said: "Hitherto shalt thou come and no further, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed."

Nothing amid the varied works of creation is capable of exciting in the human mind such emotions as the tameless ocean calls forth! How glorious it is in the sunset hour, when the departing Day-God floods with crimson light its restless waters! And it is beautiful when the full-orbed moon, threading the ethereal depths, flings a stream of silver radiance athwart its dark expanse; but how sublime a sight is the wide Atlantic when resistless hurricane over its mighty bosom rushes—then in majesty it proclaims itself the weak symbol of Omnipotence!

Such were the thoughts that passed through the mind of Grace Raymond, as she beheld, for the first time, a storm at sea; and she retired to her cabin deeply realizing the infinite power of that Divine Being, who, by His omnipotent word, created the great deep, and holds its raging billows "in the hollow of his hand." In earnest prayer she committed herself and fellow-passengers to His Almighty care; and then resting securely in the shadow of His protection, she remained calm amid surrounding dangers.

For some days the gale continued, though after the first twelve hours its violence considerably abated. However, as the wind was favorable, the passengers were consoled by the assurance, that the brig was rapidly nearing its destination. The voyage was unusually prosperous, and in about twenty days from the time they lost sight of the Emerald Isle, the blue hazy outline of the American continent appeared on the distant horizon.

The shadows of night yet mingled with the grey

dawn, when the brig, with its cargo of human beings, entered the bay of New York. Even at that early hour, some of the passengers were on deck, all eager to behold that New World which had so long been to them the Land of Promise—the El Dorado where their future lives were to be spent in exemption from care and sorrow. Alas! that such visions are so seldom realized. Gradually the sun appearing above the eastern horizon, dispersed the mists of twilight, and gave his own gorgeous coloring to the scene; revealing to the emigrant's delighted eye, the rich and beautiful scenery along the shore, as the vessel glided steadily onward. At length the voyage was ended, the brig was moored in safety, and amid the bustle and confusion of disembarkation, the passengers landed in New York.

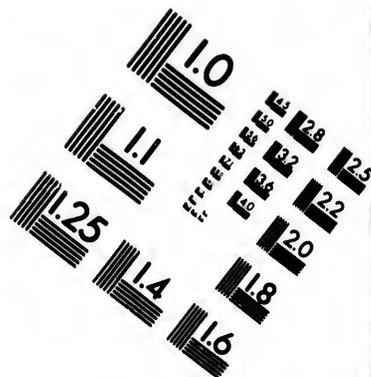
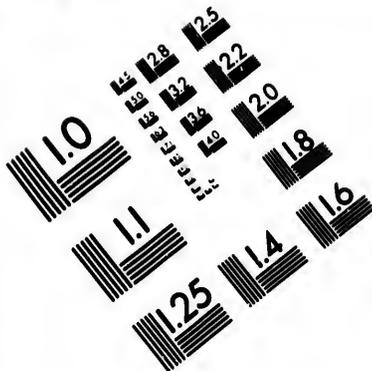
## CHAPTER II.

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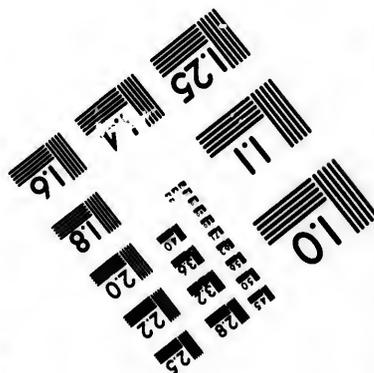
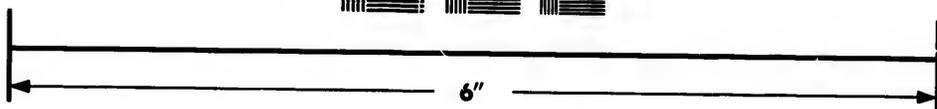
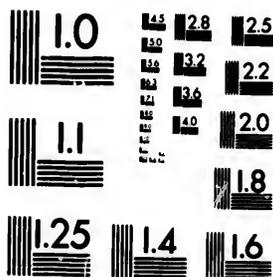
Night's starless drapery hung gloomily over the Empire city, enshrouding those magnificent piles of modern architecture, which are to be seen rising within the precincts of this great western metropolis. Suddenly upon the midnight air rung out a startling peal, and the appalling cry of "Fire! fire!" resounded through the silent streets. A large hotel, in a densely-populated part of the city, was in flames. The fire had been burning for some time internally before it was observed, and now, having attained a fearful height, it was seen bursting through the lower windows of the extensive building. Brightly into the darkened sky shot up the crimson light, shedding a fitful brilliancy upon surrounding objects, and casting a lurid glare on the tall spires of the numerous churches which loomed up in the distance.

In an upper story of that burning edifice, Grace Raymond slept her first sleep in the New World. The noise of the fire engines and the outcry in the street at length roused her from her slumber. The brilliant light that dazzled her opening eyes, made her instantly aware of her danger. Springing from her bed, she hastily dressed herself. She





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then sought her father's apartment, which she knew was at the end of the long passage in which her room was situated. The doors of several chambers were open, but their occupants had fled. Already clouds of smoke, rushing up from the fire below, rendered respiration somewhat difficult.

Hurriedly Grace knocked at the door of her father's room, and called loudly on his name, but no answer came to her repeated cries. In an agony of terror she threw her slight form against the door, vainly hoping that her feeble strength might effect an entrance. "Father! father, wake! the house is in flames! escape will soon be impossible," she shrieked wildly, beating the door with her delicate hands. Still no voice cheered her in reply—no sound stirred within the apartment.

At this moment a step was heard rapidly advancing along the passage; the next instant a manly form stood beside her. One glance showed the distracted girl the handsome and prepossessing countenance of a young man whom she had seen in the drawing-room of the hotel—with whom her father had freely conversed during the evening; and whose evident admiration of herself had not escaped her notice.

When aroused from sleep by the cry of fire, Mr. Carrington's first thought had been about the beautiful foreigner, in whose fate he felt no little interest. Hurriedly through the few apartments yet untouched by the flames he had vainly sought her, when, catching the sound of her frenzied accents as she pronounced her father's name, he hastened to her side. Dashing himself against the door, he soon burst it open, and Grace at length stood within her father's room.

Mr. Raymond had not retired to bed, he was still seated

at a table with an open bible before him. His eyes were closed, his head reclined on his breast, and his daughter thought he slept.

"Wake, father dear! oh rouse yourself quickly or we are lost!" she exclaimed, springing towards him and catching his hand, which hung listlessly at his side. Its icy touch chilled her, and she uttered an exclamation of horror. One glance at the ghastly countenance, distinctly seen in the fire-light, showed Carrington that the Angel of Death had been there. He placed his hand on the pale brow, it was rigid and cold as marble; he felt for the pulsation of the heart, it was stilled for ever. "He is dead!" he said solemnly.

As these words, confirming her own fears, fell upon the bereaved daughter's ear, with a cry of agony she threw herself beside the corpse, then sunk into insensibility. In this state she was borne from the apartment by her companion, who felt that a longer continuance there would only endanger her safety and his own.

Their danger had now become imminent, indeed. Dense volumes of smoke filled the passage, and the stair-case communicating with the lower apartments was in flames, making escape in that way impossible. Slight seemed any chance of avoiding the dreadful fate which threatened them. Already other parts of the building had fallen in, leaving the walls alone standing; and each moment Carrington feared that the floor on which he trod would sink beneath his feet, and precipitate himself and his senseless companion into the burning mass beneath. His only hope lay in procuring aid from without. To rush across the passage into one of the

vacant rooms situated in the front part of the edifice, and throw open the window to escape suffocation by the admission of fresh air, was the work of an instant; then shouting loudly, he endeavored to attract the attention of the crowd below. Two or three fire companies filled the street: these perceiving it impossible to save the hotel, were endeavoring to stay the fire by pouring water on the adjoining buildings. A few minutes elapsed before he was observed, and to Carrington these minutes seemed so many hours. At length he caught the eye of an elderly gentleman who was standing on the steps of a house opposite, and who directed the attention of some of the firemen towards him. A cry of horror rose from the crowd, when it was known that two human beings were still within the burning dwelling. A ladder was immediately placed beneath the window at which Carrington stood holding the inanimate form of Grace, and two firemen sprung up the steps to their rescue. To save them, however, was attended with some difficulty, for the intense heat scorched the men as they attempted to near the top. The merciless flames seemed still determined to cut off all escape, for darting through the burning windows demon-like they wreathed their fitful embrace around that part of the ladder which rested against the house. The watchful eyes of the firemen below instantly perceived this new danger, and a continuous stream of water was quickly directed to this particular spot, quenching for a few minutes the devouring element, and enabling Carrington and his unconscious charge to descend unscathed. But scarcely had he touched the ground when the rest of the burning wood-work fell in with a loud crash, and a

column of intensely-brilliant light shot up from the mingling fire-masses. With it ascended a fervent thanksgiving from the lips of Carrington for the preservation of Grace Raymond and his own. With deep commiseration the crowd gazed upon the pallid but beautiful face of the young girl thus rescued from a fearful death. The elderly gentleman before alluded to, who was a physician, now stepped forward, and with sympathizing kindness, begged Carrington to remove the young lady to his house in an adjoining street, which offer was thankfully accepted. The cool night air soon restored the suspended animation of Grace, but with returning consciousness came the recollection of her sudden bereavement; and those who witnessed her wild agony as the terrible truth burst upon her mind, wished that her insensibility had continued yet longer. Nothing could exceed the kindness shown her by Dr. Carlyle and his family; but no kindness could alleviate grief like hers. Reason was for a time dethroned, for no tears came to relieve her anguish; and it was at length found necessary to administer an opiate, under the influence of which she again sunk into a state of happy unconsciousness.

CHAPTER III.

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Placed in a picturesque situation on an abrupt acclivity, whose base was washed by the waters of the Hudson, stood a cottage *ornee*, the residence of a wealthy New York merchant. To an elegant apartment in this bijou of a dwelling, I will now introduce my readers. The hour is morning—a life-giving balmy morning in May. The spring had been early, and already many beautiful flowers decorated the tasteful parterre in front. Upon these the eye might rest with pleasure, or wander over the romantic scenery along the shores of the far-famed Hudson, on whose tranquil waters various crafts might be seen, from the magnificent steamer to the tiny skiff, with its white sail glittering in the sunlight. A gentleman and two ladies occupied the apartment. The elder lady was presiding at the breakfast table. She was a plain-looking woman, whose vulgar appearance, notwithstanding her fashionable dress, was strangely at variance with the air of refinement which surrounded her. Near her, in a luxurious fauteuil, reclined a young girl, evidently her daughter, whose petite person was attired in an ultra-fashionable style. Her face was handsome, so far as

regular features, luxuriant hair, and faultless complexion, could make it so; but those who looked for beauty of mind, who considered intellect as giving the chief charm to the human countenance, would see little to admire in Isabel Tracey. Her features were as inanimate as a wax doll's, and her large blue eyes had as little expression. The gentleman was the only one of the party whose appearance was prepossessing. He was in the meridian of life, and one of nature's noblemen. His countenance was not American, it was decidedly Milesian, and when he spoke his accents retained somewhat of the richness of his vernacular tongue.

"What so particularly engages your attention in that morning paper, Bel, that you will not allow me to get a look at it?" he asked, good-humoredly, pushing back his chair from the breakfast table, having done ample justice to the luxuries with which it was loaded.

"I am reading an account of a late fire in the city—a large hotel burnt."

"No lives lost, I hope."

"One person is said to have perished in the flames. There is a romantic incident related here of the escape of a young lady, saved by a noble Southerner at the risk of his own life. The girl was an Irish emigrant just arrived—her name is Raymond."

"Raymond! did you say? Merciful Heaven! can it be my own niece?" and with much excitement Mr. Bingham seized the paper offered by Isabel. "There cannot be a doubt of it," he added, mournfully, after perusing some lines. "It is Grace Raymond, my dead sister's child, and

it was her father who died suddenly. Poor Raymond! how little did he think when crossing the wide ocean that he was only coming to America to find a grave, or rather a funeral pyre;" and he bowed his head on his hands to hide his deep emotion. After a few minutes he rose hastily and rang the bell.

"The steamer for New York will pass in a quarter of an hour," he said, looking at his watch, as a servant entered. "Get the boat ready to put off to her, I must go to the city immediately. Mrs. Bingham," he added, addressing the elder lady, "you will see that a room is prepared for the reception of a guest. I shall return in the afternoon, accompanied by my niece."

"You might first ask if she would be welcome to the rest of the family," observed Mrs. Bingham in no gentle accents, her brow darkening. "After all she may be no niece of yours; many persons of that name come from Ireland."

"There can be no mistake in the matter. Last winter Raymond wrote specifying his intention to emigrate this spring with his daughter."

"Still I cannot see why I should be troubled with her, she is no relation of mine."

"Have you no motherly sympathy for the unhappy girl thus suddenly bereaved? is your heart made of stone, madam? But mark me, I will be obeyed; my orphan niece shall not be left among strangers in a strange land; her uncle's house must be her home;" and bending his eye sternly upon his wife, Mr. Bingham abruptly left the apartment to avoid any more altercation. Mrs. Bingham quailed beneath that look. It was seldom her husband opposed her wishes, but when he did she knew resistance was useless.

"But she shall not remain long here, I'll manage that," she resumed after a gloomy pause. "A provoking thing, indeed, it would be, if, after bringing my husband a large fortune, when he himself had not a penny, I should see it lavished on his poor relations."

"You may make her useful, mamma," quietly suggested Isabel. "You know you want a governess for Ada, she is now old enough to require one."

"That's a bright thought, Bel; that would answer capitally. Yes, she shall save me the expense of a governess, and earn her support in that way. I wonder what she looks like," she continued, taking up the paper and glancing at the account of the fire. "They say here she is a miracle of beauty, but I don't believe it; I never yet saw a beauty among the Irish emigrants."

"But the Irish ladies are said to be very handsome, mamma. However, they have not the delicate beauty of us Americans, they are too robust," observed Isabel contemptuously.

"This Mr. Carrington is from the South—perhaps some rich planter. I hope Mr. Bingham will think of inviting him here. How would you like a Southern home, Bel?"

"Above all things, mamma! I should there live like a princess, waited on by so many slaves. So different from the north! where our servants think they are as good as ourselves. How I hate such horrid equality!"

"I never heard Mr. Bingham mention this niece before," resumed Mrs. Bingham, thoughtfully. "She must have been a child when he left Ireland."

"Must I go into mourning for Mr. Raymond, mamma?"

"You! of course not, he is not related to you; but I suppose I must for the sake of appearance. And was there ever anything so provoking? It was only last week I got those splendid new dresses from Stewart's, and now I cannot wear them. Well, truly, this world is full of trials!"

"And I suppose I must not think of a birth-day ball? How dull we shall be this summer!" and Isabel sighed.

"We must make a pleasant party and take a trip to Canada."

"Oh, mamma! that would be delightful. I am dying to see the British officers. Amy Cameron says they are such fine-looking fellows. Not one of our officers can compare with them."

"Don't believe it, Bel; it's only their scarlet uniform makes them look so well--the red coat makes all the difference."

"Oh no, indeed! Amy says that they have such a military air, they all look like heroes."

"Shame for you American girls to talk so! In spite of all their bravery and fine looks our Yankee soldiers whipped them; no one can deny that," observed the patriotic lady, proudly.

"But the Americans were fighting for their homes, the British soldiers were only mercenaries--so Amy Cameron says, and she knows all about it."

"You are determined to stand up for them, I see! they are brave enough I grant. After the Americans they come first. Bless me how late it is!" continued Mrs. Bingham, as an ivory time-piece struck the hour, "and I have so many things to attend to this morning. Look! if there isn't Ada

in the garden. Do call her, Bel, or she will pull up all the flowers," and with this injunction she hastened from the apartment.

Rising lazily, as if unwilling to be disturbed, Isabel opened a glass door and stepped out upon a verandah. A child about eight years old, beautiful as a Hebe, was carelessly threading her way through the tiny walks of the parterre.

"Ada, come here this moment! who gave you leave to touch those violets?"

"Pa said I might," said the child saucily, provoked by the harsh accents in which she was addressed. "Pa is gone to the city to bring home my cousin, who is come from Ireland, and he said I might pull as many flowers as I liked to make her room look nice, and I mean to do so in spite of you, Miss Bel," and the bright dark eyes looked defiantly at her step-sister. "See! what a beautiful bunch I have got?" she continued, bounding on the verandah and displaying a choice collection of narcissus, violets, lilies of the valley, etc.

"You'll not like your Irish cousin much, I promise you," said Isabel, spitefully. "She is to be your governess, and teach you from morning till night, and make you behave yourself, you naughty child."

A shadow passed over her radiant countenance, and Ada looked down thoughtfully, but the bright expression soon returned. "I will love my cousin, for Pa says she is good; and I will like to learn from her for she will not be cross like you. But I must go and put these flowers in water, or they will all wither," and the next instant she was bounding away with the graceful lightness of a fawn.

## CHAPTER V.

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On arriving in the city, Mr. Bingham went directly to the house of Dr. Carlyle and requested to see his niece. Although some years had elapsed since Grace Raymond saw her uncle, she soon recognized him. His appearance had a salutary effect upon her. When she found herself encircled in his protecting arms, and listened to his words of fond endearment, she felt she was not alone in the world; that there was one who would, in some measure, supply the place of him she had lost; and tears—the first she had shed since her bereavement—flowed freely, relieving the agony of her feelings.

The interview between the uncle and niece was long, for each had much to say. Grace told of the various reverses which her father had experienced, and of the last total failure in business, which had compelled him to seek a home and means of subsistence in a foreign land. And Mr. Bingham spoke of his own affairs, and from his conversation the following particulars might be gathered:

About ten years before he had landed in New York poor and friendless. Contrary to his expectations, it was some

time before he procured employment; but he was at length so fortunate as to get a situation as clerk in a mercer's extensive store in Broadway. One of their most frequent customers was a Mrs. Tracey, a rich widow, whose husband, a man of low origin, had, by speculation, in an incredibly short period, amassed a large fortune, then dying suddenly of apoplexy, had left his wife and only child to enjoy it. Frequently the showy equipage of Mrs. Tracey was seen to stop at this particular establishment in Broadway, while its fashionably-dressed occupant entering the store, would, while making many purchases, generally contrive to monopolize the attendance of a handsome clerk, a late importation from the Emerald Isle—the elegant-looking Bingham. The result was an invitation given and accepted, to call at the gay widow's luxurious home, and finally the penniless young man was induced to make an offer of his hand, feeling confident, from the particular attentions shown him, it would not be rejected. Nor was it—and Bingham thus becoming possessed of affluence, engaged in extensive business, and was now one of the richest merchants in New York.

But Mr. Bingham did not tell his niece that previously to his leaving Ireland he had loved fondly, but in vain, and that it was owing to this disappointment of the heart, he feeling reckless as to his future lot in life, had been easily induced to seize the gilded bait offered him. Neither did he say how bitterly he had since regretted uniting himself to one in every respect his opposite; whose sordid nature and vulgar mind made her so unsuitable a companion for him. But he did warn Grace not to expect much kindness or attention from Mrs. Bingham or, Miss Tracey.

"They have not," he remarked, with a sad smile, "the warm sensibilities of the Irish; but for my sake, dear Grace, bear with anything that may occur to displease you. You know how happy it will make me to have you an inmate of my home—you whom I regard as my own child. But there will be one at least who will give you a warm reception," he added, his countenance brightening. "My darling Ada; she has a loving heart and a generous though impulsive nature, and even now she is anxiously expecting your arrival."

Thus prepared, Grace Raymond did not wonder at the cold though polite reception, she received from Mrs. Bingham. That lady's manner was so different from what her husband feared it would be, that he wondered, though he felt gratified. However, he was soon enlightened on the subject. At the very time of her arrival, even while Grace held the graceful form of her little cousin in a fond embrace, and while the child's chiseled arms clung lovingly around her, Mrs. Bingham said with a bland smile:

"I do so wish you would take that child under your care, Miss Raymond. She is a sad dunce, and will learn nothing from Isabel."

"No! no!" interrupted Mr. Bingham, "Grace must not be troubled with her. She can have a governess."

"Do not say so, dear uncle. Allow me to be Ada's governess, nothing could give me greater pleasure. It will be a solace to me at present, and will help to divert sad thoughts."

"Well, if you wish, I shall be very glad, indeed, to have you train my spoiled darling, and form her mind after the model of your own."

Thus Mrs. Bingham gained her point; and feeling that her husband's niece would be an acquisition to her family, she determined to treat her with civility.

Isabel, who saw Grace only when grief had dimmed her beauty, congratulated herself on her own superior attractions; and not seeing in her a formidable rival, she condescended to be pleasing. Seizing the first opportunity, she inquired particularly about Mr. Carrington. The slightest flush colored the pale cheek of Grace, as she replied, that she had not seen him since the night he rescued her from the fire. He had called to inquire about her health at Dr. Carlyle's, but she could not see him. She believed he had left New York that morning in the steamer for Europe. Isabel's vision of a Southern home suddenly vanished.

CHAPTER VI.

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It was New Year's Day; through the dense population of New York, mirth and festivity reigned triumphantly, not only in the splendid mansions of the wealthy, but in the lowlier dwellings of the poorer classes. But there were some—alas! many—to whom this season of general hilarity brought no enjoyment—those whom the griping hand of poverty had seized with its relentless grasp, compelling them to drag out their wearisome existence, from year to year, with as little to gladden their monotonous lives, as if they lived in a desert. To one of these abodes of misery and want, we will now turn for a few minutes. It is a large ruinous building, whose style of architecture carries you back to the time when the Dutch possessed the city, and called it by a different name. The locality in which it stands is one of the most miserable suburbs of this great metropolis. Ascending a dilapidated stair-case, we find ourselves in a gloomy passage, at the end of which a door stands partly open, through which the fretful cry of a babe falls sadly on the ear. Entering a small room, unbidden and unexpected, what a scene of destitution and vice meets the eye! The

room is almost bare of furniture, and very cold, for the scanty fuel in a small stove throws out little heat. It is true, the bright light of a cloudless sun pours through the antique window, but the wintry rays give no warmth, and seem to render yet more ghastly the wan countenances of the inmates. On a miserable pallet, in one corner of the room, lies the squalid form of a man in the heavy sleep of intoxication. Beside him on the floor—for table there was none—are scattered the broken fragments of one or two drinking glasses, and an empty brandy-flask, the contents of which he had recently drained. At a little distance, shivering over the stove, sits the gaunt figure of a female. She is still young, and had once been beautiful; but the hand of want and woe had robbed each lineament of beauty, touching with premature silver the auburn hair, and giving to the pale face an expression of utter hopelessness, yet patient despair. In her arms she holds a famished-looking baby, whose fretfulness she fondly endeavors to soothe. At her feet sits a little boy, whose curly head rests against his mother's knee, while his upturned eyes are fixed upon her with a piteous and imploring expression. Full of bitter regret are the recollections which this first day of the year brings to the mind of that poor woman. On New Year's Day seven years before, she had stood at God's high altar, the bride of that besotted creature, whose prostrate form lay before her in a state lower than the brutes that perish. At the time of their union, she had heard it whispered that his habits were somewhat dissipated; but, like many others, she had fondly hoped that marriage would effect a complete reformation. Thus launching on the stream of wedded life

in a boat so frail, was it surprising that her hopes of earthly happiness were eventually wrecked? It was now three years since they had arrived in New York, for both were natives of another land. Vernon, for such was the man's name, had easily procured a respectable situation, but his dissipated habits soon caused him to lose it. Finding it now difficult to obtain employment—for his character was beginning to be known—he was led to pause on the brink of the precipice, and feeling that destitution awaited himself and family, if this state of things continued, he was induced to join the Temperance Society. Through the aid of one of its members, he was again placed in a position to earn a comfortable subsistence, and once more hope dawned on his afflicted wife. For more than a year, Vernon struggled manfully with his besetting sin. Total abstinence was his safeguard. As long as he refused to taste the intoxicating cup, he was safe; but, alas! for man's boasted strength, when unsupported by Divine aid! In an evil hour, he was induced to take one exhilarating glass—then another—after that, yielding himself a willing victim to the destroyer, his ruin was complete. In vain did Mrs. Vernon, with tears of agony, urge him to arm himself again for the strife, and battle with his fierce enemy. Full of remorse and despair, he declared himself unequal to the contest; and so, indeed, he was, unaided by strength from above, and this the unhappy man neglected to implore. His downward course was now rapid. Step by step, in the scale of degradation, he descended, ruthlessly dragging his helpless family with him. From the position of a gentleman, he was reduced at last to seek support by performing the services of a menial.

But not finding this capable of affording sufficient means for self-indulgence, he had recourse to crime, and became the companion of a party of burglars. He was now frequently absent from his wretched home, and when he did return, he was always provided with money, procuring with which a supply of his favorite drink, brandy, he would carouse for days. A small portion of this money he generally gave to his wife to purchase the necessaries of life. At first she gladly received it, not knowing how it was obtained; but when the truth dawned on her, horror-struck, she refused to participate in his guilt, by partaking any longer of his ill-gotten spoil. And now how was she to support her children? The youngest was sickly, and required constant nursing. One by one every article of furniture and apparel had already been sold. One thing still was left—her wedding-ring. Must she dispose of that too? Yet why hesitate, when every tie that bound her to her degraded husband, had been severed by the hand of vice—nay, crime? With the few shillings thus procured, she and her children had subsisted for days, or rather they had struggled to live. This morning she had given them their last crust, and again the half-starved children were demanding food. She felt that Providence was now mixing the bitterest drop in her cup of degradation. She must beg the food she could no longer purchase. Severe was the struggle between pride and a mother's love, but the latter triumphed. She could not resist the low wail of her babe, and the silent pleadings of little Harry's hungry eyes. Placing the baby, who now slept, in his cradle, she said fondly kissing his forehead, "Mamma will go and get Harry some bread, and he must

rock his little sister while she is gone, and not let her wake."

The wan countenance brightened. "Oh, mamma! do come back soon, for I am so hungry! oh, so very hungry, mamma!"

"I know it, darling, but have a little patience, and you shall have food." Then wrapping herself in an old cloak and hood, she quietly left the apartment.

The short twilight of a winter's day was deepening into gloom, as Mrs. Vernon passed into the street. The biting frosty air was keenly felt through her thin muffling, and she walked on as briskly as her feeble strength would allow, to keep herself warm. Despair was in her heart; she felt as if Heaven had forsaken her, for even in God's own children faith sometimes fails, when the pressure of affliction has been long continued. In about half an hour she reached — street. She stopped before one of its lordly mansions and timidly pulled the bell. In a voice scarcely audible from emotion, she begged relief for her starving children.

"We never give to street beggars," was the harsh reply, and the door was rudely shut on the wretched suppliant.

Quickly, lest her resolution should give way, she ascended the steps of another modern palace, and repeated her humble demand, but with no better success. Company was expected to dinner, and there was no time to attend to the wants of the famishing poor. She might call next day. "Father in Heaven! who hearest the young ravens when they cry, give me food for my little ones!" and sinking on the door-step, Mrs. Vernon bowed her head on her clasped hands, and poured out her soul in intense supplication. Such pleadings are never heard in vain, they enter the ear

of Him, who, though dwelling in light unapproachable, was Himself once a Man of Sorrows. Even now the hour of deliverance was at hand for this afflicted child of earth, the measure of her sufferings was full; the gem cast into the furnace was sufficiently refined, and at this darkest hour, the sun of happiness was about to arise on her tried spirit—the long night of affliction was ended.

CHAPTER VII.

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The merry sound of sleigh-bells broke cheerfully through the frosty night air, and a handsome equipage, with its prancing horses driving up the street, drew up before the house at whose door-step sat the shivering form of Mrs. Vernon. A gentleman wrapt in furs was its only occupant. Mrs. Vernon rose as he sprang on the pavement, wishing, yet hesitating, to address him.

"Can I do anything to help you?" he asked kindly, on seeing her shrinking figure.

"Who spoke? whose voice was that?" she exclaimed, wildly gazing at him.

The bright light from a lamp near which he stood, flashed full on his face, revealing its benevolent expression.

"Frank Bingham! can it be possible? Oh Lord I thank thee, my children are saved!" and overcome with the sudden revulsion of feeling, she would have fallen, had he not supported her. Pushing back the old hood which shaded her face, he scrutinized her haggard features with painful excitement.

"It cannot be! Surely you are not my cousin Alice?"

he asked in a voice trembling with emotion. And yet that voice! how it thrilled to his heart! its accents he could never forget. It was she indeed!

"You do not recognize me, Frank; and I am not surprised at it," said Mrs. Vernon, sadly, "the sufferings of years have changed me."

"But you look famished, Alice!" and Mr. Bingham shuddered as he gazed upon her meagre face. "Can it be? oh! has it been as bad as that?"

"Alas! yes, I and my children are starving. To procure food, I left them helpless and ——"

"Tell me where you live," interrupted Mr. Bingham, in a husky voice. He could bear no more.

The direction was given, Mrs. Vernon was placed in the luxurious sleigh, its rich robes wrapped carefully around her, and the next minute the spirited horses were dashing down the street. Passing a pastry-cook's, Mr. Bingham alighted, entered the shop, and soon returned, carrying a small basket filled with delicacies. In less than a quarter of an hour the sleigh reached the suburbs in which Alice Vernon's miserable home was situated. What a contrast did it present in the eyes of Mr. Bingham, to his own elegant mansion, which they had just left! A large crowd filled the street before the door, but they soon made way for the prancing horses.

"What is the matter here?" asked Mr. Bingham of one of the bystanders, who was an Irishman.

"Och, it's only catching a thief they are, your honor. He's one of a gang of house-breakers that has been a plague to the city for a long time; but the police has got scent of them at last, and they are jist knabbing one of them in that

ould rickety house forenint us. They say he was a gintleman onet, but the dhrink destroyed him intirely. Look! there he comes," he added, as a party of policemen appeared at the door, surrounding their prisoner—a half-drunken creature, whose bloated countenance was expressive of stupid astonishment; for having been just roused from sleep, he was scarcely conscious of his situation. A convulsive shudder shook the frame of Alice Vernon as she recognized her degraded husband, thus having her worst fears confirmed. Mr. Bingham perceived her agitation. Could it be possible that she was in any way connected with this wretch? and he looked inquiringly at her. She shrank from that look—shrank from acknowledging such an outcast, and bowed her head in deep humiliation. Bingham mentally thanked God that the strong arm of the law had at length delivered her from such companionship. As the policemen, with their prisoner, passed the sleigh, the light from the lanterns which some of them carried, revealed that staggering form pinioned and helpless. Mrs. Vernon instinctively covered her face with her hands to shut out the painful sight, and her frame shivered with the agony of her feelings.

"Where are your children, dear Alice?" asked Mr. Bingham, anxious to divert her thoughts.

Mrs. Vernon started, and for the moment all was forgotten but her helpless little ones. As she ascended the stairs, followed by Mr. Bingham, who had thoughtfully procured a light, the voice of little Harry was heard mingling with the cries of the baby.

"Oh, where is mamma? when will she come home? Oh baby don't cry so! oh what shall I do? what shall I do?" he exclaimed, in piteous accents.

The sound of approaching foot-steps made him look eagerly towards the door. On perceiving his mother he uttered a cry of joy, and sprung into her arms. "O, mamma! I thought you would never come back. I was so frightened. Some men came and took papa away, and they made such a noise that baby woke up, and then she was so cross! Oh don't go away again, mamma!"

"I will not, my darling! thank God! I will not now need to do so," she said, with a deep feeling of gratitude.

"Let me take this little fellow while you attend to the baby, Alice," said Mr. Bingham, approaching.

Harry looked up into the face of the stranger. There was something in its expression which instantly attracted him. He held out his arms with child-like confidence, and the next minute he was seated on his knee, ravenously eating some of the good things with which he had come provided. Tears of deep commiseration for the sufferings of his cousin, filled the eyes of Mr. Bingham, as he surveyed that wretched abode, and looked upon her and her miserably clad children. He could scarcely believe that this gaunt-looking creature was his beautiful cousin. Could a few years have so changed her? How poignant must have been the misery which could have effected such an alteration! His cousin Alice had been the star of Bingham's idolatry from boyhood. They had been brought up together, for she was an orphan, and his love for her had "grown with his growth." She regarded him merely as a brother. He was bitterly aware of this; and naturally of a proud and sensitive nature, he concealed even from its object, the love which he knew was unrequited. Some time after he left

Ireland, he heard of her marriage; then again news came that she and her husband had emigrated to Canada. After that he knew not what had become of them. Little did he think she was living in New York—starving almost at his very door. But she should never want again, henceforth she and her little ones should be his peculiar charge; and he lifted up his heart in thanksgiving to God for their providential meeting. That night Alice Vernon and her children were removed to an inn in a retired part of the city. Poor Alice could hardly realize the happy change in her circumstances—the sudden change from destitution to all the comforts of life. And when little Harry awoke in the morning with a dim recollection of a drive in a handsome sleigh through lighted streets, he thought it was all a dream. He gazed around at the well-furnished room in childish wonder, and eagerly inquired if they were always to live there. At an early hour Mr. Bingham returned, accompanied by Grace Raymond. Though prepared for the change in her cousin, she was much shocked on beholding her. To her inquiries why she had not sought relief from Mr. Bingham in her distress, Alice replied, that she was not aware of his being in New York, for after his marriage she understood he had emigrated to the west. This was the case, but he did not remain long there; as the new country did not please Mrs. Bingham, she persuaded him to return. Grace had come supplied with various articles of clothing, and Alice and her children were soon suitably attired. Harry's admiration of his new style of dress was quite amusing to Grace, and caused a smile to flit across the worn face of his mother. Recollections of her degraded husband

disturbed the mind of Alice; the doom of the convict which awaited him, haunted her thoughts. But her anxiety concerning him was soon painfully terminated. Three days after his arrest, the public papers announced his death from delirium tremens.

Days, weeks, months rolled on. Gradually in the society of her kind relatives, and in the enjoyment of every comfort, Alice recovered her spirits. The agonizing memories of the last few years, which, at first, haunted her like spectres, lost their power to grieve. She struggled against her sorrowful recollections; her mind recovered its tone, and the light of happiness once more beamed from her eyes, restoring much of its former beauty to her countenance. With restored peace came renewed energy, and now a strong desire to engage in some business which would enable her to support her children, took possession of her mind, and she requested Mr. Bingham to furnish her with the means.

"Are you so unwilling to owe me anything, Alice?" he asked, reproachfully. "Why not still allow me the happiness of supporting you? Am I not your nearest relative?"

"You are the kindest and best of cousins, dear Frank," she said, gratefully; "but you know my independent spirit; I wish that my children should owe their support as much as possible to my own exertions."

"And in what business do you wish to engage, Alice? how do you intend to make a fortune?" asked Bingham playfully, for he saw that by gratifying her desire, he would confer happiness, and he was ever willing to yield to her slightest wish.

"I think a fancy store would suit me, I understand something of ornamental work."

A small house and store in a fashionable part of the city were therefore rented, the shop stocked with a choice collection of fancy articles, and the house comfortably furnished. Engaged in her new occupation, Mrs. Vernon's pleasing manners and interesting appearance, drew many customers. The blessing of Providence seemed to rest on her exertions, and the sun of prosperity soon began to gladden her with its beams.

## CHAPTER VIII.

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June, borne on the wings of perfumed zephyrs and redolent of roses, had come, and Grace Raymond, in the shady retirement of her uncle's beautiful villa, was enjoying this most delightful month of the year. Isabel Tracey, weary of the monotony of a country life, had persuaded her indulgent mamma to take a trip to Saratoga. They had recently left home. Mr. Bingham had accompanied them as far as New York. He was to return in the evening boat, and Grace now awaiting his arrival, was standing on the trellised verandah scanning the calm waters of the Hudson, for the steamer which was momentarily expected. The scene was one of quiet beauty. In the western heavens glowed the brilliant Venus, apparently emulating the crescent moon, whose soft light mingled with the summer twilight. No sound broke the stillness, save the occasional dip of an oar, as some small boat, shooting out from the shore, would skim over the broad river. A light step near, and the voice of her little cousin, at length aroused Grace from the reverie in which she was beginning to indulge.

"Why doesn't papa come home? what keeps the boat so late to-night?" she asked fretfully.

"It will soon be here, love, but you ought to be in bed, Ada."

"I cannot go to bed till papa comes. I feel sick, cousin Grace, very sick, and I want to see my papa."

The subdued manner of the child struck Grace as something unusual. Gently leading her into the brilliantly-lighted drawing-room, she anxiously scrutinized her countenance. The flushed face and heavy eyes alarmed her.

"You are ill, darling! let me rock you to sleep in this low chair until papa comes home," she said fondly.

"No, cousin Grace, I would like you better to play and sing for me. See! I can lie down here on this couch near the piano, and listen while you sing the Angels' Whisper. Ah do Gracey! you know I love your Irish songs so much."

In compliance with the child's wishes, Grace seated herself at the piano, and soon its rich tones were heard mingling with her fine voice, filling the evening air with plaintive melody. Grace was a proficient in music; her voice was one of much power and exquisite sweetness, and she sung the soul-thrilling melodies of her native land with that peculiar pathos of which only the Irish themselves seem capable. The Angels' Whisper, Kate Kearney, and Kathleen Mavourneen, were successively asked for by Ada, who was passionately fond of music, and so engaged was her cousin in gratifying her, that she was unconscious of the approach of two listeners, who, having ascended the path leading from the river, and cautiously approached the house, were now standing near the verandah, themselves unseen, while they commanded a view of the drawing-room and its

fair inmates. The restless eye of Ada at last caught the form of one as he moved a step or two forward.

"O, papa! papa is here!" she exclaimed, joyfully.

Grace turned hastily round, just as Mr. Bingham and an elegant-looking stranger appeared in the door-way. With a slight start of surprise, she recognised Mr. Carrington.

"I suppose you have not forgotten this gentleman, Grace?" said her uncle, as they advanced into the room.

"I owe Mr. Carrington too much ever to forget him," she said, a warm smile of welcome flashing over her beautiful face, as she held out her hand.

A gratified expression appeared in the fine eyes of Carrington at her cordial reception, and in a voice slightly tremulous, he expressed his happiness at seeing her again.

"O, papa! why did you stay so late?" asked Ada, as she threw herself into her father's arms, and rested her aching head on his breast.

"Why bless me, my darling, you are ill!" he exclaimed in alarm, as he felt her small burning hand.

"I am afraid she has some fever," observed Grace, sorrowfully.

"Fever!" reiterated the excited parent. "Quick, Grace! ring the bell and send one of the servants instantly to H—— for a physician."

"I think I can spare you that trouble," said Carrington, approaching and looking attentively at the child. "I am a physician, although I do not now practice my profession. If you will allow me, I will prescribe for your little daughter."

The offer was thankfully accepted. By the direction of

Carrington, Ada was immediately removed to bed, and proper medicines administered. To the eager inquiries of Mr. Bingham, whether there was any danger to be apprehended, he gravely replied, he hoped not, but the disease must take its course. An answer so indefinite filled Mr. Bingham with alarm. Ada never had been seriously ill before, and his anxiety was overwhelming. Through the silent hours of the night, he and Grace never left her couch. She grew hourly worse, and towards morning was delirious. Nothing could exceed the kind attentions of Carrington in the sick room. His deepest sympathies were awakened for his little patient; her extreme beauty called forth his admiration, and the love with which he saw she was regarded, made him tenderly anxious for her recovery. Day after day, and night after night, he kept watch with Grace and the distracted father, beside the sick bed, using every means which his skill could devise, to arrest the disease. But all seemed in vain; and now the fever had reached the crisis when a few hours would terminate the agonizing suspense between life and death.

It was the hour of early morning; the first pale streaks of light were stealing through the partly-opened casement, mingling with the shaded night-lamp, and casting a ghastly hue over the anxious faces of the mourners around the bed, while it gave a more death-like palor to the chiseled features of the little sufferer, who was sleeping--it might be--her last sleep, seeming already enfolded in the shadowy embrace of death. At the foot of the bed, stood Mr. Bingham, like a statue of despair. He had watched Carrington's countenance through the night, and he felt there was no hope. He

was now in inexpressible anguish, waiting the awaking of his child to receive her last adieu. On one side of the bed knelt Grace Raymond, her face buried in her hands, silently supplicating Him to whom alone belong the issues of life and death, to spare their darling, and give her back to them even from the gate of the grave. Opposite to her was seated Carrington, holding his fingers on the child's wrist, and intently watching her countenance. Suddenly the grave sad expression passed from his intellectual face, and was succeeded by a look of hope and joy. At this moment Ada opened her eyes; the light of reason had returned to their dark depths, she recognised those around, and smiled faintly.

"She will live!" exclaimed Carrington in a suppressed voice—"but control yourself, Mr. Bingham," he hastily added, as he was about to rush forward, "excitement would destroy her!"

The delighted father was at that moment incapable of self-control. Giving one look of unutterable fondness at his restored treasure, he turned hastily away, and entering an adjoining apartment, he poured forth his gratitude to that merciful Being who had spared her young life.

At the thrilling words, "She will live!" Grace sprang to her feet, her face radiant with joy, but she was instantly self-possessed as she heard Carrington's concluding remark.

"She will recover now," he said, gladly, "but everything will depend on quiet and good nursing. And you are already worn out with fatigue, Miss Raymond. Could you not trust our little patient to me for a few hours, while you try to get some sleep?"

“ I would not leave her for a moment, not until all danger is over ; and I do not require any rest now, the happiness I feel has given me renewed strength.”

Ada's restoration to health was gradual. As soon as she was convalescent, at her request, she was carried to the drawing-room, where the musical talents of Grace were again employed for her amusement. Grace had also a willing listener in Carrington. He had, like Ada, a passion for music, and he would stand enraptured near the piano, which she played in a brilliant style ; listening now to some exquisite gem from a favorite Opera, again to a life-stirring galop or polka, and frequently to the touching notes of some Scotch or Irish melody.

Carrington had spent the last year in Europe. He had travelled through the British Isles, and he spoke with enthusiastic admiration of the romantic scenery met with in many parts of Great Britain and the Sister Island. On returning to New York, he had called on Dr. Carlyle to make inquiries about Miss Raymond, in whom he felt an interest that could not be subdued. Dr. Carlyle introduced him to Mr. Bingham, and he gladly accepted the pressing invitation that gentleman gave him, to spend a week at his villa on the Hudson. The visit of a week had now been extended to three. Ada had become much attached to her kind physician, and whenever he spoke of leaving, she wept passionately. This agitation retarded her recovery, and her fond father begged Carrington to remain sometime longer, with which request he very willingly complied. But at the end of a month he felt he must bid adieu to this earthly paradise. What constituted it such in his eyes ? Was it

the exquisite display of Nature's varied works, the picturesque scenery, the blue expansive river, the shady walks along its banks, canopied by wide spreading trees, and perfumed with the rich odor of the wild rose, sweet brier and honey-suckle? Or was it not rather the sweet companionship of one of Eve's fairest daughters, whose mental endowments and rare beauty had thrown a fascination around him, which he felt it almost impossible to resist? Yet, this potent spell must be broken, an imperative duty demanded the sacrifice, and he would obey.

"I must leave you to-day, Ada," he said one morning, as he found her on the piazza after breakfast.

The child's countenance changed, and tears filled her eyes.

"Why do you go away?" she asked; "why not stay here always?"

"I must go home, Ada."

"Where is your home?"

"In the sunny South, where we have bright days and beautiful flowers all the year," he gaily replied.

"In the sunny South!" she repeated, thoughtfully.

"That's where the runaway slaves come from. I wouldn't like to live there! do you?"

"Yes, Ada, it is my home, and many of the slaves would not leave if they could; they are happy there, and well provided for."

"Oh, I am so sorry you are going away!" resumed Ada, after a moment's pause. "I am afraid I will never see you again."

"I hope we shall meet at some future time, dear child!" he said, fondly kissing her. "But, Ada, will you not give

me your likeness? this one," he added, eagerly taking up a daguerrean likeness from a rose-wood stand, which was placed near the open window of the breakfast room, outside of which they were standing.

A meaning smile lighted up the child's luminous eyes as she said archly—"then you will have cousin's likeness, too, but I know you want to get it."

The case contained a likeness of Grace Raymond, seated on an ottoman, with Ada standing beside her.

Carrington turned away to hide a smile. "How observant children are!" he said mentally.

An hour afterwards he came to bid Ada adieu. As he approached Grace to say good-bye, his manner was agitated, his voice faltered, and there was an expression of deep tenderness and regret in his gaze, as it rested on her, which haunted her memory, strengthening the hope she had begun to entertain, that he did not regard her with indifference.

## CHAPTER IX.

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Ada was not the only one who regretted Carrington's absence. His manners were very fascinating. They were marked by that chivalrous politeness characteristic of the Southern gentleman; and possessing a refined taste and cultivated mind, his conversation had a peculiar charm. Mr. Bingham often expressed his regret at the loss of such an agreeable companion. The heart of Grace echoed the regret, but she said nothing. The day after he left the villa a small packet arrived from New York, directed to Ada. It contained a gold chain and locket of exquisite workmanship, the latter enclosing a miniature likeness of Carrington.

"He sent me this because I gave him mine," said Ada, delighted with the beautiful gift.

"Did you give him your likeness, Ada?"

"Yes, and yours too, cousin Grace."

"Why did you do so, Ada? did he ask for it?" said Grace, eagerly."

"Yes he did, and he looked very glad when I gave it to him."

This observation suggested a pleasing train of thought to the mind of Grace Raymond.

A few days after Carrington's departure, Mrs. Bingham and Isabel returned home. They had not heard of Ada's illness until she was convalescent. Mr. Bingham had written to inform her mamma of her danger, but she did not receive the letter; for instead of proceeding to Saratoga as she had first intended, she joined a party of friends who were on their way to Newport. At that fashionable summer resort she made the acquaintance of a French Count, who accompanied her home. Count de Montford was a man of pleasing appearance and courtly address. Although in the sunset of life, yet by the skillful aid of the perruquier and dentist, the ravages of time were well concealed. He seemed fascinated by the beauty of Isabel Tracey, and his marked attentions to her ended in an offer of his hand, which was eagerly accepted by the young lady and her mamma. The great disparity in their age was considered a serious obstacle by Mr. Bingham, and he urged his wife to reject the Count's proposal, but in vain. She and Isabel were dazzled by the splendor of rank, and considered an elevated position in society especially a title sufficient to ensure happiness. The preparations for the marriage, therefore, rapidly progressed, for Count de Montford was impatient to return to Europe. The bride's trousseau was the admiration of all her fashionable friends; the veil of rich Brussels lace, and the chaplet of orange-blossoms, had been imported for the occasion. The bridegroom's presents were duly received and admired. The happy day at length arrived; the young bride in her girlish beauty, and in the

sumptuous array of white satin, rich lace and glittering jewels, was led to the Hymeneal altar by her aged admirer, there to utter vows in which her heart took no part, yet deeming it a sufficient recompense for this self-sacrifice at the shrine of ambition, to hear herself addressed, when the solemn ceremony was ended, by the imposing title of Countess—the very name was music to her ear.

Mrs. Bingham was to accompany her daughter to her new home. She wished to enjoy the triumph of seeing her moving in her exalted sphere. She doubted not but that she would shine as a star of the first magnitude in the galaxy of fashion at the Parisian capital. She was also desirous that Ada should accompany her, but this Mr. Bingham would not permit. Ada, although grieved to part from her mamma, preferred remaining at home. Her father she loved with a fervent attachment; her heart clung to him, and she would not be separated.

The wedding was over; the bridal *cortege*, after partaking of a *dejeuner a la fourchette*, served in a sumptuous style, had taken their leave; the Count and Countess de Montford, accompanied by Mrs. Bingham, had departed for New York on their way to Europe, and Grace Raymond and her uncle, wearied of festivity, were once more left to the quiet seclusion of their country residence.

Time passed on. Letters arrived from France conveying unlooked-for intelligence. Mrs. Bingham's glowing expectations had not been realized. The fabric of worldly grandeur, reared by the hand of pride, which had seemed so stately in perspective, was, on a nearer view, found to be crumbling into ruins. Count de Montford's affairs were

much embarrassed. Isabel's large fortune was chiefly employed to redeem his family estate, which had been mortgaged to pay debts of honor; and instead of making her debut at the Court of Versailles, the disappointed Countess was compelled to retire with her husband to an old chateau in the south of France, where, secluded from the world, she mourned over her ruined hopes, and lamented her self-sacrifice with all the bitterness of unavailing regret. Furious at her disappointment, after quarrelling with her noble son-in-law, and telling him, in no measured terms, her opinion of his dishonorable conduct, Mrs. Bingham bade adieu to her unhappy daughter, and prepared to return home. At an hotel in Havre, where she was to take the steamer for America, news reached her which overwhelmed her with despair. It was a season of great depression in the commercial world. Several mercantile houses in New York had failed, and among the number of bankrupt merchants, Mrs. Bingham read her husband's name. The grief she had previously suffered, and the frenzied excitement which this unexpected intelligence produced, brought on brain fever, which proved fatal. The Countess de Montford was written for when danger was apprehended, but did not arrive till all was over. Thus at an hotel among strangers in a foreign land, attended only by a domestic, whom she had brought with her from America, Mrs. Bingham closed her eyes upon a world which had bounded all her hopes of happiness, for she had lived for time not for eternity—considering earthly enjoyments as alone worthy of her regard. Alas for the fate of those who make Mammon their trust! who bow to this world's idol! How dreadful to them seems death! for

they have no hope beyond the grave, and when trampled beneath the feet of the pale horse and his rider, they feel in their fierce despair that they have lived for naught, and that now their sun is going down in eternal darkness.

The information which the American papers conveyed to Mrs. Bingham, was unfortunately correct. Mr. Bingham had failed, partly owing to the extravagant expenditure of his wife, but chiefly to the failure of others. All his property he honorably gave up to his creditors; his town house and villa were sold, and he himself was again compelled to seek employment as a clerk. His high character among his fellow-merchants, soon procured him the situation as book-keeper in a mercantile house. He bore his reverse of fortune nobly. The wealth which he had possessed for a few years, and which "had made itself wings and flown away," had never conferred happiness on him. Comparatively a young man, still he knew that he could, by his own exertions, earn a comfortable subsistence. For the present, therefore, he felt contented and happy while Hope's syren voice whispered that he might yet attain that felicity, which, in youth, had been his day-dream, and was now the cherished hope of his existence. Alice Vernon's house received her relatives in their hour of adversity, and it was determined that for the present they should share the same home. At the time of her uncle's failure in business, Grace, feeling unwilling to be any longer dependent on him for support, advertised for a situation as governess. After some delay one was procured in a planter's family in Florida, and she made preparations for her departure. Mr. Bingham strongly opposed her intention of leaving him; he felt angry at her

proposing it, but she gently overruled all his objections. Ada would not feel her loss, as Alice Vernon would supply her place. She must fulfil the engagement she had entered into. She wished to visit the South—that land of sunshine and of luxuriant vegetation. Next summer she would return. Grace did not acknowledge even to herself that it was the hope of seeing one whose image haunted the inner chamber of memory, which made her so anxious to visit Florida. That was Carrington's native state; might she not see him there? their meeting was not improbable. This thought cheered the hour of parting, and gave a rainbow brightness to the future.

Once more on the bosom of the great deep, moving over its trackless waters in a St. Augustine steamer, Grace Raymond found herself rapidly approaching her Southern home. It was late in the afternoon when the boat reached St. Augustine. Grace viewed with interest this ancient town, the oldest in the United States, placed in its bold situation on the shores of the Atlantic. Her new home was some miles in the interior. A stage-coach was to convey her and some other passengers as far as —, which was in its vicinity. The road lay partly through a magnificent forest, where the magnolia was seen raising its superb head above the less stately but beautiful catalpa tree, the pride of China, the live-oak and the majestic cedar, whose ancient trunks were wreathed with the fragrant South Carolina jessamine, and other luxuriant vines, while festoons of dark grey moss draped their spreading boughs. The different climate in which she found herself, struck Grace forcibly. The warm air of a November night was strange to one accustomed to the chilliness of a northern autumn. Indeed, everything she saw had the gloss of novelty, and made her feel sensibly that she was in a strange land. Thoughts of home—of the dear ones she had left—obtruded themselves painfully on her mind, and tears frequently filled her eyes, as the coach moved heavily along the rough forest road. The lumbering vehicle at length stopped, and the driver alighting opened the door.

“You are to get out here, ma'am,” he said, respectfully offering his hand.

Grace alighted and looked around her in astonishment. There was no house to be seen—no sign of a habitation

near. Two tall negroes were standing beneath a tree on the road-side, their stalwart forms and ebony faces distinctly seen in the glaring light of the pine torches they carried.

"Mrs. Mowbray lives a few miles farther on, in another direction," observed the driver; "these are her servants sent to conduct you to the house."

The look of blank dismay with which Grace regarded her sable guides, brought a smile to the face of the driver.

"There is no cause for fear, ma'am," he said kindly, lowering his voice, "these black fellows will take good care of you, and the distance is short." He then led the pony which had been brought for her accommodation towards her, and assisted her to mount.

"Here you Zambo, take this bridle and lead the pony quickly along. Hear!"

"Yes, massa, I bring him home 'rectly. Misses been 'specting us dis two hour. Tink de coach nebber come."

Thus assured, Grace committed herself to the guidance of her black escort, one of whom loaded himself with her luggage, and continued her journey. They had proceeded about three miles, when suddenly a burst of wild melody broke upon the stillness of the night, and the next minute a turning in the road displayed to the eyes of Grace a sable group of men and women, young and old, seated around a blazing wood-fire. A few sweet female voices were singing the pleasing ballad, "My old Kentucky Home," while the powerful voices of the men joined in the chorus, filling the forest depths with rude harmony. The group had a rather picturesque appearance; the bright light from the blazing pine threw a ruddy glow on their dark faces, glowing with

the happiness of the present hour, their hands and feet keeping time to the music, and every care for the moment forgotten ; while it disclosed the gigantic outline of the surrounding trees, bringing out in fantastic shapes their huge branches.

"Dem hab great fun dere," said Zambo, stopping the pony to allow Grace to look on the novel scene. "Dey hab lots of sweet taters roastin' in de hot ashes, and dem's gwine to hab fine supper. Wish I's dere too," he added, looking wistfully towards them.

"Can these be some of the unhappy slaves whose lot is represented as so deplorable?" thought Grace. "I never beheld a gayer party—each dusky visage is lighted up with pleasure. But I must not form too hasty a judgment," she added, as she moved thoughtfully on ; "there are, I suppose, lights as well as dark shadows in their existence."

The road now began gradually to ascend, the forest here seemed to terminate, and they emerged into a more open country. A little farther on, a woody eminence loomed up in the darkness. Carefully Zambo led the pony up the steep ascent.

"Dere's de house at las', missis," he exclaimed, as an old-fashioned building was seen crowning the height. It appeared to be an irregularly-built mansion, surrounded by verandahs, shaded by tall shrubs and canopied by a few lofty trees.

In a richly-furnished apartment three of the inmates were assembled. An elderly lady—the mistress of the mansion—habited in mourning, was reclining in an easy chair, her fingers busily employed knitting, while her mind was occu-

pied with her own thoughts. She was a creole, a native of Cuba, and her dark complexion and black eyes denoted her Spanish origin. Her appearance was dignified, but her countenance was not pleasing. There was a cold stern expression about the mouth, and the flash of her dark eye indicated a passionate and haughty temper. At a table at the other end of the room a gentleman sat, reading aloud to a young lady, who was occupied with some elegant fancy-work. As Grace and her escort approached the house, they were saluted by the loud baying of the watchdogs, which were soon quieted by the well-known voice of Zambo. The noise attracted the gentleman's attention.

"Some one approaches!" he observed, laying down his book.

"It is only our new governess," observed Mrs. Mowbray. "Ernest, will you be so kind as to step into the hall and usher her into this room?"

"I did not know you were expecting a stranger," he observed, as he rose to comply with her request.

"We have been expecting a young lady from New York, to take charge of Maud's education, but I forgot to mention it to you since your arrival."

Grace was dismounting as the gentleman reached the steps of the hall-door. The light from the pine torches revealed her face, and a sensation of delight thrilled to his heart.

"Miss Raymond! is it possible?" he exclaimed, advancing towards her, his countenance eloquently expressing the happiness caused by this unexpected meeting.

The surprise of Grace at seeing Carrington was equal to

his own, and the quickened pulsation of her heart and bright smile that irradiated her face, showed also that the pleasure was mutual. A few hurried inquiries about Mr. Bingham and Ada, and then Carrington led her into the room where Mrs. Mowbray and her eldest daughter were sitting.

Mrs. Mowbray received Grace with stately politeness. Miss Mowbray's reception was very pleasing. She possessed much suavity of manner, which was peculiarly charming to one like Grace, in a dependant situation and a stranger. Marcella Mowbray was a beautiful girl, about the same age as Grace. She inherited from her mother the graceful stateliness characteristic of the Spanish ladies, as well as the olive complexion and black lustrous eyes; but the pale olive of her complexion was relieved by a tinge of carmine, which dyed her cheeks and lips, and although her eyes did at times glow with haughty or passionate emotion, yet her kind disposition, in a great measure, atoned for these defects of temper.

Carrington took no part in the conversation, as the two girls conversed familiarly, but stood apart silent and thoughtful. The flush of happiness had faded from his countenance, and he looked pale and sad. The change in his manner was a cause of painful surprise to Grace. What occasioned it? Was it the change in her circumstances? As this thought obtruded itself, the crimson of resentment rose to her cheek. Then she remembered his evident delight at their unexpected meeting. Her mind was filled with anxiety and conjecture, and pleading fatigue, she soon retired to her apartment to think over this interesting subject. The chamber allot-

ted Grace was in a wing of the building; it was commodious and handsomely furnished, opening into a smaller apartment, which was to be her school room. Her trunks had already been removed there, and she busied herself unpacking part of their contents. While thus occupied, a tap at the door was heard. On opening it, an elderly colored woman entered with some delicious fruit, and other refreshments.

"Miss Marcelly send you dis," she said, placing the salver on a stand, and attentively regarding the new governess.

"Miss Mowbry is very kind," observed Grace, gladly accepting the offered refreshment.

"Miss Marcelly's kind to ebery one. Her say when you want any more ting, you pull dis ar bell, and I come 'rectly. I's maum Tamar, Miss Maud's nurse."

"Who is Miss Maud? my young pupil, I suppose?"

"Yes, missis, one leetle chile for you to 'struct. P'raps you like to see her, she sleep in de nex' room."

"Alone?"

"Oh no! I sleep on de floor near de bed. I's her mauma you know."

Grace declined intruding on the child at that late hour.

"Miss Maud bery sweet chile," resumed the talkative mauma. "Her hab fair hair, eyes blue like de sky, and skin white as yer own. Her not bit like ole missis. Her like Marse Mowbray. Him good massa—ebery nigger cry when he gwine to die. Dem lose dere bes' friend. Ole missis bery cross, her whip for leetle ting."

This was said in a whisper, and Tamar rolled her large orbs round the room, as if fearful of being overheard.

"Marse Carrington like him uncle—bery good to poor slave. Dey all be glad him come back 'gain, him been gone long time, he come now to marry Miss Marcelly."

"Maum Tamar! mauma!" pronounced by a sweet childish voice, in an adjoining room, now interrupted the nurse's garrulity.

"I's coming honey! mauma's coming 'rectly!" she said, in fond accents, then making a rapid courtesy, she bade a kind good-night, and Grace was once more left alone.

CHAPTER X.

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Carrington going to marry Marcella Mowbray! With what oppressive weight did these few words sink into the heart of Grace! This, then, accounted for his altered manner. The day-dream of the last few months was suddenly broken—her sun-gilded visions of the future were rudely dispelled—found to be a chimera, sweet, indeed, but vain. The intense regret which this information caused her, tore away the veil from her heart, disclosing what she had tried to conceal—that Carrington's image was enshrined in its inner recesses. She felt angry with herself for such weakness, and proudly determined to conquer a love which was unrequited. Notwithstanding the fatigue of the journey, it was late when Grace slept. The events of the day haunted her dreams, and she awoke unrefreshed, and with a feeling of depression. She tried to banish sad thoughts, by employing herself in the duties of the school-room. Her pupil Maud, was a fair child, about ten years old, of delicate health and gentle disposition. She had much leisure time, which she spent in her own room, or in wandering about the grounds with Maud and her mauma. She joined the

family only at meals, or when her society was particularly sought for by Miss Mowbray.

Carrington's manner towards Grace was marked by a studied politeness, but his absorbing interest in her betrayed itself continually, in many nameless attentions. In her presence he was reserved, occupying himself with a book, while she and Marcella worked together, and chatted pleasantly. But although apparently engaged reading, he was listening eagerly to their conversation, while he stole frequent glances of passionate admiration towards Grace from beneath the hand that shaded his face. Owing to the powerful attraction of the human eye, she found herself often involuntarily returning the look that was bent upon her, and whenever their eyes met, his were instantly averted in confusion. His conduct surprised Grace; she could not mistake the language of his eloquent eyes, they spoke as forcibly as words could do, and again hope was busy in her heart, filling it with sunshine. Marcella sometimes chid Grace for being so unsociable. Glad of the society of a young girl of her own age, she wished for her constant companionship. One evening she was standing on the verandah, as Grace passed with Maud, attended by maum Tamar.

"Whither so fast, fair lady?" she asked, playfully—"on another botanical excursion? Wait a moment for me, and I will lead you to a particular spot, where you can gather as many rare plants as will fill your herbarium."

"And will you not both accept of my escort?" asked Carrington, coming forward from the end of the piazza, where he had been seated reading.

"I can answer for myself, dear coz, but not for Miss Raymond; she seems to shun your society."

The eyes of Grace sank beneath the gaze of Carrington.

"You should visit our Southern forests and gardens in the spring and summer, Miss Raymond," he observed, as they moved onward, "then you might include in your botanical collection the superb fragrant flower of the magnolia, the ivory-white monotropa or Indian pipe, the scarlet blossoms of the bignonia and pomegranate, the cape jessamine, with its rich white petals and dark green leaves, the sweetscented orange blossom, the catalpa, its white corolla streaked with purple, and the singular passion-flower climbing the tallest trees, beside a variety of other beautiful flowers."

"What a learned description!" said Marcella, laughing. "You must have been reading Elliott's botany this morning, Ernest. But this pleasure for Miss Raymond is yet to come. She will, I hope, remain with us next year."

"I think I shall return home in the summer," remarked Grace.

"What! so soon? why so anxious to go North? there is, doubtless, some attraction there," and Marcella smiled archly.

Again Grace met the eyes of Carrington. He seemed to hang upon her answer.

"My uncle was unwilling I should leave him," she replied, "and I promised to return in a few months."

"I have never been North," said Marcella. "I should not like such a frigid region."

"The climate and soil differ from our sunny land," observed Carrington; "but the North has its advantages too,

and although its flowers do not equal ours in size, or perhaps in richness of coloring, yet in delicacy of tint and fragrance, they cannot be excelled."

"There is one superiority which, as far as I can judge, the North possesses," observed Grace—"grand romantic scenery."

They had now reached the highest point of the eminence on which Mrs. Mowbray's dwelling was situated. Below them spread out for miles the unbroken majestic forest, while bounding the horizon eastward, a blue line marked the distant ocean.

"Such a scene as this is rather tame and unvaried," observed Carrington; "but to judge of our Southern scenery, Miss Raymond, you must travel in the up-country or hilly region of Georgia and South Carolina; there, as one ascends, a sublime display of mountain scenery opens on the view."

Grace smiled. "I perceive I have only exposed my ignorance in the opinion I expressed," she said.

"How delightfully cool the air is here!" exclaimed Marcella. "I propose we remain in this elevated spot and look at the scene before us."

This was a favorite resort of the family, and an octagon temple, its sides trellised with the crimson cypress vine and starry ipomea, had been erected for their accommodation.

"Your proposal is not bad," replied Carrington, "for the sun's rays are still too hot to be pleasant. But could you not get your people to furnish a table here in the wilderness?" he gaily added.

"That is a good idea! Then, maum Tamar! you must

go back to the house and tell Mungo and Sam and Hagar, and half a dozen others, to hurry here with a supply of everything eatable and drinkable. Hear!"

"Yes, Miss Marcelly, I make dem bring ebery ting good."

"And listen, mauma! tell Celeste to bring my guitar."

The mauma's countenance changed. "I's bery sorry, but Celes' ——"

"Is in durance vile, I suppose," quickly interrupted Marcella. "That poor girl is continually in ma's bad graces. What is the offence now, Tamar?"

"I dunno, but s'pose her no 'tend her work—her spend too much time sparkin' Zambo."

Marcella laughed. "And for this heinous offence she must be punished and put in solitary confinement. Well, maum Tamar, you must bring the guitar yourself. Suppose you hang it round your ebony neck, it will be easy to carry, and you will look so interesting."

"Lor, Miss Marcelly, you allers poke fun at ole mauma," and Tamar turned away laughing. "Tink I look bery fine wid such a big banjo round my black neck."

In a short time a table was spread with various delicacies. The evening passed pleasantly. Carrington, for the time, threw off his reserve, and entertained his fair companions with his brilliant conversation. Music formed a delightful interlude. Miss Mowbray played the guitar well, and sung with much taste and sweetness. Grace mingled her melodious voice with hers, and on the still pure air floated the rich harmony. Suddenly an appalling shriek rose up from the woods below. At the base of the height which here rose perpendicularly, several negro huts were scattered

among the trees. In one set apart from the rest, a scene of cruelty was acting. Celeste, a pretty mulatto girl, was writhing under the lash, and her cries of shame and agony were rending the air. Grace Raymond started and turned pale. Carrington's face flushed, and an expression of anger clouded his brow.

"Well, mamma is really too cruel!" exclaimed Marcella, the crimson of indignation rushing to her face. "Poor Celeste! what has she done to merit such a punishment? Mamma rules over our people with a rod of iron, and I cannot prevent it, for she will not listen when I plead for them. But when I am mistress here, things shall be managed differently. The lash shall never be used unless when unavoidable. And yet," she added, sadly, "my protection cannot extend to all our servants. Some belong to mamma, and Heaven help them, for I cannot!"

Carrington looked at Grace as these expressions burst from the indignant Marcella. She looked surprised and pained. She was evidently grieved to hear a daughter's animadversions on her mother's conduct, although she knew that her mother deserved such reprehension. This incident interrupted the happiness of the evening, and the little party soon returned home.

## CHAPTER XI

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"I suppose you think we live like heathens in this part of the world, Miss Raymond?" said Marcella, one Sunday morning, as they rose from the breakfast table. "You have now been here a month, and we have not yet shown you the inside of a church."

"Maud told me there is one in the neighborhood, but that the minister is absent," said Grace, smiling.

"Was absent, but he has returned, and to-day we will attend Divine Worship, if you have no objection. As the road is only a bridle-path, we shall ride escorted by Ernest."

At the appointed hour, the young ladies, equipped for riding, appeared at the hall-door. Carrington was waiting, and two grooms were leading the horses about the lawn.

"If you are a good horsewoman, Miss Raymond, mount this spirited creature," said Miss Mowbray, as Zambo led a beautiful Arabian towards her. "If you are not, I would recommend that gentle animal."

"I am not much accustomed to riding, and would prefer a quiet horse," said Grace.

"Then I will keep Diana myself!" and placing her deli-

cate foot in Zambo's broad palm, Marcella sprung gracefully into her saddle.

Carrington now assisted Grace to mount, then vaulting on his own horse, the party rode slowly down the steep declivity. The church was a small unpretending structure; the congregation was composed of a few planters' families and servants. The minister—an unworldly-minded old man—preached an excellent sermon. Grace listened with devout attention, glad to enjoy once more the public ordinances of religion. Carrington's deportment was very serious, although his eyes did frequently wander towards Grace Raymond. He thought he had never seen her look so lovely, for the pure devotion which burned on the altar of her heart, gave an angelic beauty of expression to her countenance. Miss Mowbray was less devoted than her companions. There was a stranger in church—a handsome young man of distinguished appearance, and as a stranger in that secluded region, was a *rara avis*, Marcella's lustrous eyes often glanced in his direction.

"Who is that gentleman who sat in the Herberts' pew to-day, Ernest?" she asked eagerly, as they rode homeward.

"His name is Tremaine, he is from Charleston, here on a visit to young Herbert."

"What a handsome fellow! I think he has the finest face I ever saw."

"The admiration is mutual, I fancy," observed Carrington, smiling, "for I noticed that his eyes were more frequently riveted on you than on his prayer book."

A bright smile broke over Marcella's features. She knew the observation was correct, for she had often felt the mes-

meric influence of the stranger's eyes, and on raising hers, was sure to encounter his admiring gaze.

"What do you think of the handsome stranger, Miss Raymond?" she asked, abruptly addressing Grace.

"I do not know which gentleman you mean, they were all strangers to me."

"But did you not observe one with a certain *air distingue*, an Apollo-like figure, and handsome as Adonis himself?"

"Miss Raymond's eyes were not guilty of the sin of wandering during Divine worship," observed Carrington, pointedly.

"Nonsense! do you think she is such a saint as not even to glance around her in church; or, perhaps," continued Marcella, with a mischievous laugh, "you have the vanity to imagine that our own pew contained her magnet of attraction, and that dazzled by the brilliancy of your intellectual eyes, she cared not to regard the lesser orbs around her."

Carrington colored at this remark, and stole a glance at Grace, to observe how she received it. She looked embarrassed, for conscience whispered that Marcella's observation was correct. The downcast eye and the rich blood which mantled her whole face, revealed her confusion, sending a thrill of delight to the heart of Carrington, which gleamed in his quickly-averted eye.

"I shall ride over to Mr. Herbert's to-morrow and call on Tremaine," he said, after a short silence.

"I wish you would," said Marcella, eagerly. "It would be so very pleasant to have him for an acquaintance, and you know we want some one to enliven our solitude."

As Marcella made this remark, Grace looked at Carrington. There was a smile of peculiar meaning on his face, but no expression of anger or jealousy, although his young *fiancee* had expressed such admiration for another. From this circumstance and others, Grace felt assured that Carrington's attachment to his cousin was wanting in that devotion which generally marks the lover, for where there is no jealousy in such cases, there is little love.

Tremaine was not slow in returning Carrington's call, and now he became a constant visitor at Mrs. Mowbray's. Marcella was his star of attraction. He had fallen in love with her—as the phrase is—at first sight, and his passionate attachment formed a striking contrast to Carrington's quiet affection. This little *affaire du coeur* had progressed considerably before Mrs. Mowbray's suspicions were aroused, then with her characteristic determination, she resolved to check it at once. She was sitting in the drawing-room one afternoon when Tremaine was seen approaching the house. Marcella was standing at a window admiring his elegant figure, which appeared to advantage, mounted on a spirited horse, as he gracefully curvetted along the gravelled walk. Hastily ringing the bell, Mrs. Mowbray desired the servant to say, "Not at home," to Mr. Tremaine. As he had caught sight of Marcella's quickly-retreating figure, he considered this denial a studied insult, and with a look of deep mortification, he rode hastily away.

"In Heaven's name, why did you do that, mamma?" asked Marcella, her face darkened by the passion that swept over it.

"I do not think it necessary to give a reason for my con-

duct," said Mrs. Mowbray, haughtily. "I presume I am mistress here."

An angry retort rose to Marcella's lips, but she repressed it.

"Mr. Tremaine is a gentleman, and should be treated with courtesy," she observed, with forced calmness. "As he saw me at the window, he knew I was at home."

"I am sorry to see Miss Mowbray pay so little regard to propriety, as to encourage the marked attentions of this young man, when she knows she is the affianced bride of another. A young lady who does this, is sadly deficient in principle."

"But you must be aware, mamma, that neither Ernest nor I feel for each other that warm affection which is so necessary to secure happiness in married life. We were engaged when very young, and ——"

"But your engagement has been since solemnly renewed at the death-bed of your father," quickly interrupted Mrs. Mowbray.

"Yes, but that was to please papa, who loved Ernest as a son. Still, when we both feel that this marriage will not contribute to our happiness, I think it should not be entered into. Ernest is too honorable to break his engagement, therefore it is my duty to do so, and not render him and myself unhappy."

"You have come to this conclusion only since your acquaintance with Tremaine," observed her mother, with a provoking smile.

"I do not deny it," said Marcella, as the bright blood rose to her cheek. "Since then I have learned to know my own heart."

A short silence ensued. It was broken by Mrs. Mowbray.

"Do you know that this young man is penniless, while Ernest possesses a fortune equal to your own."

"I know it, but my fortune is large enough. I do not need to marry for wealth."

"And you are determined to persevere in this folly." Mrs. Mowbray spoke in a voice of suppressed passion.

"I am determined to accept Mr. Tremaine, if he should offer me his hand," Marcella replied, resolutely.

"And I am determined you shall marry your cousin Ernest, and not this poor adventurer, who presumes to raise his eyes to a Southern heiress," and Mrs. Mowbray's eyes glared with uncontrollable rage. "Do you consider the mandate of a parent nothing? Has not God commanded children to obey their parents? therefore, if you refuse to obey me, you reject His authority."

"It is also a Divine injunction that parents should not provoke their children to anger," said Marcella, trembling with excited feeling. "When a mother would render a child unhappy, I think her authority should cease."

Mrs. Mowbray laughed scornfully.

"Unhappy! by wedding you to Ernest Carrington—the noblest of human beings! Silly girl! it is you who would throw away happiness by rejecting him."

"I esteem Ernest and love him as a brother, but nothing more, and I again repeat ——"

"Is Ernest aware of your altered feelings?" interrupted Mrs. Mowbray, with an impatient gesture.

"My feelings towards Ernest are not altered. I regard

him still with the same affection I ever did, but that is only a sister's love."

"Is he aware of your sudden fancy for Tremaine?"

"I have not made him a confidant," was Marcella's somewhat haughty reply.

"Does Tremaine love you?"

"I suspect he does, but after the insult of this morning, he may not seek to renew our acquaintance," said Miss Mowbray, bitterly.

"I hope not, that is precisely what I wish—and now enough of this conversation. We understand each other. You will bear in mind that you shall never wed Tremaine with my consent—nay," she added, her eyes glowing with intense wrath, "should you do so, a mother's curse will be your wedding dowry." She then turned coldly away, and with her usual stately motion, left the room.

## CHAPTER XII

Chafing with her angry feelings, like some wild but beautiful animal, Marcella sought the apartment of Grace Raymond. Flinging herself into a chair, and resting her head on her beautifully-moulded arms, she indulged in a paroxysm of weeping. This soon quieted the storm of passionate emotion. Lifting her head, and smiling through her tears, she said, addressing Grace, who was regarding her with surprise and commiseration :

“I suppose you are surprised to see me weep; you thought, perhaps, that an heiress has no cause for sorrow; but listen to my grievances, and judge for yourself. You will be my confidant, will you not? My heart yearns for your sympathy.”

Marcella then related the conversation with her mother, and ended by declaring she would never marry any one but Tremaine.

“Why do you suspect that Mr. Carrington is unwilling to fulfil his engagement?” asked Grace.

“Because he does not love me. I know he loves another

—even yourself, Miss Raymond," she added, looking archly at her.

Grace colored and looked embarrassed. "Did he tell you so?"

"No, but he wears your likeness, and that is proof positive, you will allow."

"My likeness!" exclaimed Grace, a sudden joy flashing over her face. "How do you know that, Miss Mowbray?"

"I discovered it accidentally. One morning, entering the library, I found Ernest reclining on a couch fast asleep. Escaping from its usual place next his heart, a miniature suspended from a gold chain, was protruding through his open vest. It instantly caught my eye, and possessing as much curiosity as Eve herself, I gently approached and examined it. It was a striking likeness of you, except that the face wanted that look of eager curiosity, that radiant expression which I now see in your countenance. It was well I did not make this discovery some weeks since," she continued, laughing, "or I might have been furiously jealous at finding the image of another possessing the place which mine ought to occupy. But as it was, I felt glad at discovering that Ernest's repugnance to our marriage must be as great as my own. Since our engagement, we have both learned to love—but not each other."

The arrival of visitors now interrupted their conversation, for Miss Mowbray was summoned to the drawing-room.

Days passed on. Tremaine did not again call at Mrs. Mowbray's, but Marcella met him at the houses of some neighboring planters, and he soon perceived, by her manner, that her feelings towards him were not changed. A gloom

seemed to hang over Mrs. Mowbray's household. She found herself mistaken in supposing that Marcella would quietly yield to her wishes relative to her marriage. Her daughter possessed a will as indomitable as her own. The opposition Mrs. Mowbray met with served to increase her habitual ill-temper. which made itself felt by her dependents; her helpless slaves groaned beneath her cruel tyranny.

"Ole missis so drestful cross! nebber saw de like!" said maum Tamar, one day entering Grace's room, weeping bitterly. "Dere now her's gwine to send Celes' right away to St. 'Gustine, an' sell her to Luzianna trader, him tote poor girl far away, an' we nebber see her more."

"What has she done now to offend your mistress, Tamar?"

"Her han't dun much, dat's a fac', but her kinder lazy, no like work, her an't used to it no how while Marse Mowbray lib, her kind ob fav'rite wid massa 'cause her mudder nurse Miss Marcella. But ole missis nebber hab fav'rite. Den Zambo's a'mose craze for Celes' gwine away. He lub her bes' ebery ting in de worl'. On him knees he pray missis for no sell Celes', but she hab heart like de rock, her nebber mind what him say, her kinder larf at poor critter. Den Zambo lose him sense, an' speak sarey-like, den her get drestful mad, her eyes shine like lightnin' at him, she tell de oberseer to gib him fifty lash 'rectly, an' turn him into de field to work like common nigger. Poor Zambo nebber be de same 'gain. Oh dat de good Lor' would take ole missis to kingdom come. Dat's my pray'r night an' mornin'.

Grace could not repress a smile. "But, mauma, you break one of God's commandments by saying that prayer."

"What 'mandment me break?" asked Tamar, sharply. "De parson allays say we mus' pray de Lor' to deliber us from one great en'my, an' missis be jus' dat, her like de bery debil hesel—her is! Her whip, whip, for leas' ting. I's allays say de Lor' deliber us from ole missis—I will!"

"But, Tamar," persisted Grace, anxious to enlighten the poor slave, "you know the sixth commandment says: 'You must do no murder.' Now, to wish in your heart for the death of another, is murder in the sight of God."

"I can't b'lieve it, Miss Raymon', can't b'lieve it no how! I's not wantin' to murder missis, dat's sartin, but if de Lor' would take her to de oder side ob Jordon, I'd be mighty glad—I wud! But it's no use wishin' or prayin', her'll lib long yet I'm 'feard. Her's jus' one big cross de Lor' send us poor nigger, but it's only to 'fine us like brass an' pr'pare us for de Promis' Land. I dunno what I'd do if it wan't for dat ar' hope, dat's de bressed trufe."

"I am glad to see you look upon affliction in that light, mauma. God sends it to all his creatures."

"Yes, Miss Raymon', but Him send de worse 'ffliction for de poor slave, him hab de curse of Ham on him black pate—sartin! But s'pose de Lor' make all right at de Judgment day—dat be drefful day for cruel mas'rs, den de slave drop him chain an' go right in to de goodly land," and Tamar rolled up her eyes in pious ecstasy.

The entrance of Maud now put an end to their conversation.

"Here is an invitation to a ball at the Herberts', Miss Raymond! you will go, I hope!" said Marcella, as she one

morning entered the school-room, where Grace was engaged with her pupil.

"Am I included in the invitation?"

"Of course you are! Do you not know that George Herbert admires you exceedingly. This ball is given in honor of his coming of age. It will be a pleasant affair."

"I do not think I shall go. I am a stranger, and would not enjoy it."

"Oh, you must go by all means, if only to oblige me?"

"I really have no dress suitable for such an occasion. As I did not intend to remain long in the South, and did not expect to mix in gay society, I only brought part of my wardrobe."

"Do not trouble yourself on that account," said Marcella, kindly. "As you go to this ball to gratify me, you must allow me to make the necessary arrangements for your toilet."

On the evening of the ball, maum Tamar entered Miss Raymond's apartment, bringing, as she said, a lubly presen' from Miss Marcella. It was a dress of delicate texture, worn over white silk, and tastefully trimmed.

"How becomingly your hair is arranged, Miss Raymond!" said Marcella, entering Grace's room as she was just finishing her toilet. "But you wear no ornament. Allow me to place this splendid Camelia among those luxuriant tresses; its dark green leaves and beautiful corolla will contrast well with their raven hue. How delicately fair your complexion is!" she continued, admiringly; "the snowy whiteness of your graceful shoulders, really rivals your white dress. Beside you, I stand eclipsed!"

"You do but jest, Miss Mowbray," said Grace, who was gazing with admiration at her brilliant beauty, shown to advantage by the splendor of her attire. It was crimson tissue, embroidered with gold, its bright hue contrasting well with her pale olive complexion. Through her glossy curls, costly pearls were wreathed, while her slender throat and delicate wrists were encircled with jewels.

At the residence of Mr. Herbert, a gay crowd was assembled, for several persons had come from St. Augustine to attend the ball. The house was brilliantly lighted, and seen from a distance through the forest, these lights gleamed like stars. Through spacious rooms, fitted up by the hand of luxury, and tastefully decorated, beautiful females might be seen promenading, or moving through the graceful quadrille, or inspiring galop. They were richly dressed, —for wealth presided at their toilet—but there was one among the glittering throng on whose brow flashed no oriental gem; yet her rare beauty attracted every eye, and Grace Raymond was tacitly acknowledged to be the meteor of the ball-room. Carrington's eyes spoke the admiration his lips did not utter. As her queenly form moved through the dance, or promenaded the room, his gaze followed her every movement, as if unmindful of the presence of any save this one beloved object. Among the many admirers of Grace, was George Herbert. He seemed captivated by her beauty. An expression of jealous feeling darkened the face of Carrington, as he watched his particular attentions. Grace observed his clouded brow, she guessed the cause, and a smile of pleasure added a brighter beauty to her countenance, for she perceived the power she possessed over

his happiness, while, with a little of the coquetry of her sex, she listened with apparent satisfaction to the animated conversation of her young admirer.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

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The hours of the night sped on too swiftly, for many young hearts were unwilling to break the enchanting spell which pleasure had thrown around them. The gay scene was new to Grace, but she was one for whom the crowded ball-room had few fascinations. Her chief attraction during the evening was a large conservatory, where, among a choice collection of rare plants and beautiful exotics, which made the air heavy with their rich fragrance, the Cactus grandiflorus or night-blooming cereus, was displaying its splendid flower to the guests' admiring gaze. Its magnificent white corolla, nearly a foot in diameter, had just bloomed, but its short lived beauty was soon to fade, and before another sunrise it would close its petals never to expand again. Beside this exquisite production of nature, was placed another species of cactus equally beautiful, its flowers like crimson velvet, forming a striking contrast to the pure white cereus.

It was half an hour after midnight. Grace had been led from the supper-room by George Herbert, and having accepted his hand for another dance, was with him entering

the ball-room, when she was met near the door by Carrington.

"When did you last see Marcella?" he asked in a somewhat anxious manner.

"Not since before supper," answered Grace, surprised at the question. "The crowd in the supper-room prevented my observing whether she was there."

"She was not. I missed her then, but supposed she had lingered in some other apartment, but I have sought her in all the reception-rooms in vain. Mr. Tremaine is also missing," continued Carrington, with a peculiar smile, "and as he was her shadow during the evening, I suppose he is her companion still."

Herbert's curiosity was now excited. He drew Carrington aside, and after a whispered conversation, both young men descended to the hall to make inquiries among the servants. It was as they suspected. Miss Mowbray had eloped with Tremaine. They had been seen to go off in a hired carriage an hour before. The elopement of the heiress created quite a sensation among the guests at Mr. Herbert's, and one or two particular friends, who knew of Carrington's engagement to her, ventured to offer their condolence.

"Marcella was of age to-day and her own mistress," he coldly replied.

Those who expected to see a display of jealousy or mortification, were disappointed. To an observant eye, it was evident that Marcella's elopement was a source of joy which he tried to conceal, but which was frequently seen flashing in his dark eyes.

As they were driving home, Grace was silent, her thoughts being occupied by the recent unexpected event. She almost dreaded to meet Mrs. Mowbray; bearing such tidings, she knew her rage would be extreme. Carrington was also silent for some time, and Grace supposed his mind was occupied with the same thoughts. At length he broke the silence by inquiring if Miss Raymond was aware of his engagement to Marcella.

She replied in the affirmative, wondering what would come next.

“That engagement was entered into chiefly at the earnest wish of Mr. Mowbray. Marcella and I were both young. We thought we loved each other well enough to ensure happiness in the married life. The dissimilarity in our tastes and sentiments did not strike me then so forcibly as it has since done. My judgment was not sufficiently matured to decide in the matter. After my uncle’s death I went North, travelling through the interior of the Southern and Middle States, until I reached New York.” Here Carrington paused for a few minutes, then proceeded in a voice trembling with emotion.

“There I saw one whom I intuitively felt would be the cynosure of my existence. It was not the singular beauty of her face which so strongly attracted me—it was the rare loveliness of expression in her countenance, denoting a nature but little marred by the Fall, and still akin to the Angels. It was then I first saw you, Miss Raymond,—then I learned to love. I went to Europe, and tried in the excitement of travel to banish your image, but in vain. In the daily stir of the crowded city, in the romantic solitude

of nature, through the busy hours of the day, and the silent watches of the night, ever rose up before my mental eye, that loved form once seen never to be forgotten. I returned to New York, unable to subdue the earnest wish to see you again. I accepted Mr. Bingham's invitation, and spent a month in your society,—the happiest of my life. But I was obliged to tear myself away. The imperative voice of honor called me to return to Florida, and fulfil my engagement with Marcella. For some time I have perceived her reluctance to our marriage. I have watched—oh! with what joy—her growing attachment to Tremaine. I observed Mrs. Mowbray's dislike to him, but I knew Marcella's strong will would not be controlled. Still I kept silence, watching the issue of events, and now Marcella's own hand has broken the tie that bound us. This act of hers has set me free; it allows me to offer my hand to her who has long possessed my devoted affection. Miss Raymond! Grace dearest," he added in a voice of impassioned tenderness, "tell me have I any reason to hope?"

The darkness of the night hid the blushes and trembling confusion of Grace, and her reply was given in such low tones, that only Carrington could catch its meaning: but it was doubtless favorable, for during the remainder of the drive, his arm fondly encircled her waist, while her head drooped on his shoulder. The voice of Carlo, the black coachman, at length broke the elysian happiness of the hour.

"Please Mas'r Ernes' when do de moon rise dis ar' night?"

"Really I cannot say. Why do you ask, Carlo?"

"'Cause dere be bright light ober dere, Sar, and I think p'raps be de moon."

"Bright light in what direction?" asked Carrington, eagerly putting his head out of the carriage window.

"In dat 'rection, Sar."

"Directly north! It cannot be the moon! it must be a fire, and merciful Heaven!" he added in alarm, "it is—it must be Mrs. Mowbray's residence! Drive furiously, Carlo! we are near home."

Rapidly over the rough road the carriage rattled, endangering the safety of its occupants, and at the imminent risk of being upset. In a short time they reached the foot of the eminence on which Mrs. Mowbray lived. On one side it sloped towards the plain below, still the ascent was difficult. Carlo was therefore obliged to drive slowly, and allow the horses gradually to ascend the steep road. The height was at length gained. Then Carrington and Grace perceived that the middle part of the dwelling was in flames, and with a feeling of horror they remembered that Mrs. Mowbray's room was in that part of the house. It was now some hours after midnight, and a profound silence reigned around the dwelling, while within, the inmates were buried in deep repose, unconscious that devouring flames were silently threatening their destruction. Suddenly the harsh sonorous sound of a gong broke upon the still night air, re-echoing from the silent depths of the adjacent forest. It was usually employed to summon the slaves to their daily toil, but was now used by Carrington to rouse the sleeping inhabitants of the burning structure, as well as the negroes in their "quarters."

In a few minutes the startled inmates were seen rushing from the house, and congregating on the lawn in fear and surprise. All except one—Mrs. Mowbray was missing.

## CHAPTER XIV.

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Quickly Carrington entered the house, and ascending the stairs opened the door of his aunt's apartment. He was instantly obliged to shut it—driven back by the fierce element which was rapidly consuming every object within the chamber. Mrs. Mowbray must have perished when asleep, and now a fire-shroud enveloped her stately form, as she lay in the arms of the King of Terrors. There was fortunately a fire engine of considerable power upon the grounds, and this Carrington immediately employed to extinguish the flames; and after some time the fearful element was completely subdued. The cause of the fire was not known. The sleeping servants knew nothing of it until roused by the loud clangor of the alarm gong. Mrs. Mowbray was the only victim, for the fire was confined to her room; and how it had originated was a mystery. Horror at the dreadful fate of Mrs. Mowbray filled the mind of Carrington and Grace, but in the dusky faces of the slaves might be seen suppressed joy. Their cruel mistress had gone to stand before the tribunal of God to answer for her many cruelties. Her soul had passed into an unseen world, followed

by the imprecations of her tortured slaves. A happy feeling of relief was experienced by them all—their oppressor was no more. The apartment of Grace was situated in a wing of the building removed from the fire. Thither she repaired, accompanied by Maud Mowbray, whose grief for the sudden death of her mother she vainly tried to soothe. This incident forcibly brought to the mind of Grace her own sad bereavement nearly two years before, and at the remembrance of this melancholy event, she mingled her tears with those of her young pupil. The agony of Maud's feelings at length exhausted itself in a violent paroxysm of weeping. She sunk into a kind of stupor, and in this state was removed to bed by her mauma, whose heart deeply sympathized in the grief of her young charge. The thrilling events of the night completely banished sleep from the eyes of Grace Raymond, and taking off her ball costume, she wrapped a dressing robe around her, and sat down to think over all the events of the last few hours. Her reverie was soon disturbed by maum Tamar.

"For de Lor' sakes, Miss Raymon', let me stay here till de daylight shine," she said, imploringly. "I jus' lef' Miss Maud; her cry hersel' asleep at las', poor child; her take on so 'bout her ma's orful death. Do let me stay till de day come, I'm so 'fraid of de ghose—ole missis ghose."

"Your old mistress cannot hurt you now, Tamar: she will never trouble you more."

"I'se no sure of dat. Her jus' come back to airth to frighten poor nigger. Her nebber find rest for de sole of her foot in de oder worl', no how. She too wicked."

"Can you imagine what caused the fire in her room?"

inquired Grace. "Was she accustomed to read after retiring to bed?"

"Her nebber read, I b'lieve. Dat's not de way de fire 'riginate no how. I've my s'picien 'bout dat ar' fire," and Tamar looked very mysterious. "I know a heap more dan oder folke—sartin! De Evil One heself come for her an' bring fi'ry char'ot dat pass trou' de roof and set de room on fire."

Grace looked incredulous.

"It's de bressed trufe, missis. I see him wid my own eyes!"

"Saw whom, mauma? not his Satanic Majesty, surely!" said Grace, faintly smiling at the ridiculous suggestion.

"You may smile missis, but it's de trufe. I see de debil heself in de passage out dere. I jus' wake up, no tell what time ob de night, but de stars shine up in de sky. I tink I hear a step outside de room. I get up to see who dere, s'pose it be you or Miss Marcelly done come back from de ball. When I open de door, I make no noise les' I wake Miss Maud, who's fas' asleep. A light from de hall below shine up in de long passage, and I saw gwine along bery fas', a black figure tall as de roof. He stop at missis door an' open it. Den I crep' back to my bed in orful fright, kivered up my head, an' lie tremblin' I dunno how long, when de big gong sound de 'larm, make me jump up bery quick, den I see de great blaze an' hear de niggers cry fire!"

This strange story of Tamar's threw a new light on this mysterious affair, and Grace doubted not but that a foul deed had been perpetrated, and that Mrs. Mowbray's

tyranny had at length incited some wretched slave to this atrocious act. Such, too, was the opinion of Carrington and the neighboring planters. An investigation was immediately entered into. The slaves were carefully examined, but when Zambo was called, it was found that he had disappeared. Suspicion immediately rested on him, and it now became known that he had been heard to mutter threats of vengeance against Mrs. Mowbray, when she had inflicted on him unmerited disgrace and punishment, and rendered him wretched and indifferent to life, by depriving him of her whose love and presence alone made life tolerable. It was supposed that he had entered the chamber of Mrs. Mowbray in the silence of the night, first murdered her,—probably while she slept,—and then set fire to the room, hoping to escape detection. In this manner was perpetrated "*The Slave's Revenge.*"

As soon as the flight of Zambo was known, the bloodhounds were put on the scent, and gentlemen and negroes joined in the chase. The former felt exasperated at the atrocious deed, and determined to inflict summary punishment on the murderer. The hunt for human life was soon over. In a part of the forest which the luxuriant foliage rendered almost impervious to the light of day, the wretched criminal was found. He had anticipated the doom that he knew awaited him, and his lifeless body was discovered hanging from the bough of a lofty tree.

At the pressing invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert, Miss Raymond and Maud became their guests until Mrs. Tremaine returned home.

"I shall miss you much, dearest Grace," said Carrington,

as he led her to the carriage which was to convey her to Mr. Herbert's. "I have so long been accustomed to your beloved society, I shall feel miserable during our separation. Do not let George Herbert cause you to forget me," he added with a sad smile.

Grace made no reply, but there was the light of love in her luminous eyes as they met his, which assured him he had nothing to fear.

Marcella heard of her mother's fearful death through the papers, after she reached Charleston. She was much shocked, and this event cast a dark shadow over the first few weeks of her married life. At the end of a month—the house having been repaired—she returned home, accompanied by her husband.

When deprived of the society of Grace, Carrington paid a visit to his own home—a large plantation situated in the eastern part of Florida—near the Mexican gulf. In the spring Mrs. Tremaine removed to a cotton plantation she possessed in the northern part of Georgia, and there Grace spent the summer and part of the autumn amid highly romantic scenery, enjoying the delightful climate of that hilly region of the South.

In the beginning of the following winter, Grace received a letter from Mr. Bingham, conveying the pleasing intelligence that the merchant in whose counting-house he had performed the duties of book-keeper, had taken him into partnership, and that wealth was again pouring a golden sunshine over his affairs. He begged Grace to return to New York immediately, telling her that Ada had drooped during her absence. As soon, therefore,

as another governess was procured for Maud Mowbray, Grace bade adieu to her kind Southern friends. Carrington accompanied his betrothed to New York, intending to remain there until the period of mourning for his aunt was ended, when he hoped to bear her to his own home in Florida. Ada's happiness at seeing Grace and Carrington again, was increased by the information he communicated that he, too, would soon be her cousin. Grace rejoiced in the happy change she perceived in her uncle. It was only now he seemed to enjoy life; his face wore a radiant look; he had won from Alice Vernon the promise that she would soon become mistress of his home, and the bright hope of former years was going to be realized. In the countenance of Alice, Grace, too, observed a bright expression, indicating the happiness that reigned within. Her gratitude to Bingham had gradually ripened into a warmer feeling. Now loving and being loved, rejoicing in the consciousness of being the centre round which were gathered the dearest hopes and affections of one fond heart, all her former misery was forgotten. For the human heart is capable of again enjoying felicity, although it may have long lain crushed beneath the weight of affliction; yet, as each sorrowful recollection is touched by the healing hand of time, it springs as it were into new life susceptible of happy emotions. This is a merciful appointment: were it otherwise, life would be bereft of all enjoyment. It is a blessed thing to be able to forget!

Our story has now reached its conclusion. A few weeks passed on, and before the end of the winter, Grace Ray-

mond again visited the sunny South—the happy bride of Ernest Carrington.

THE END.

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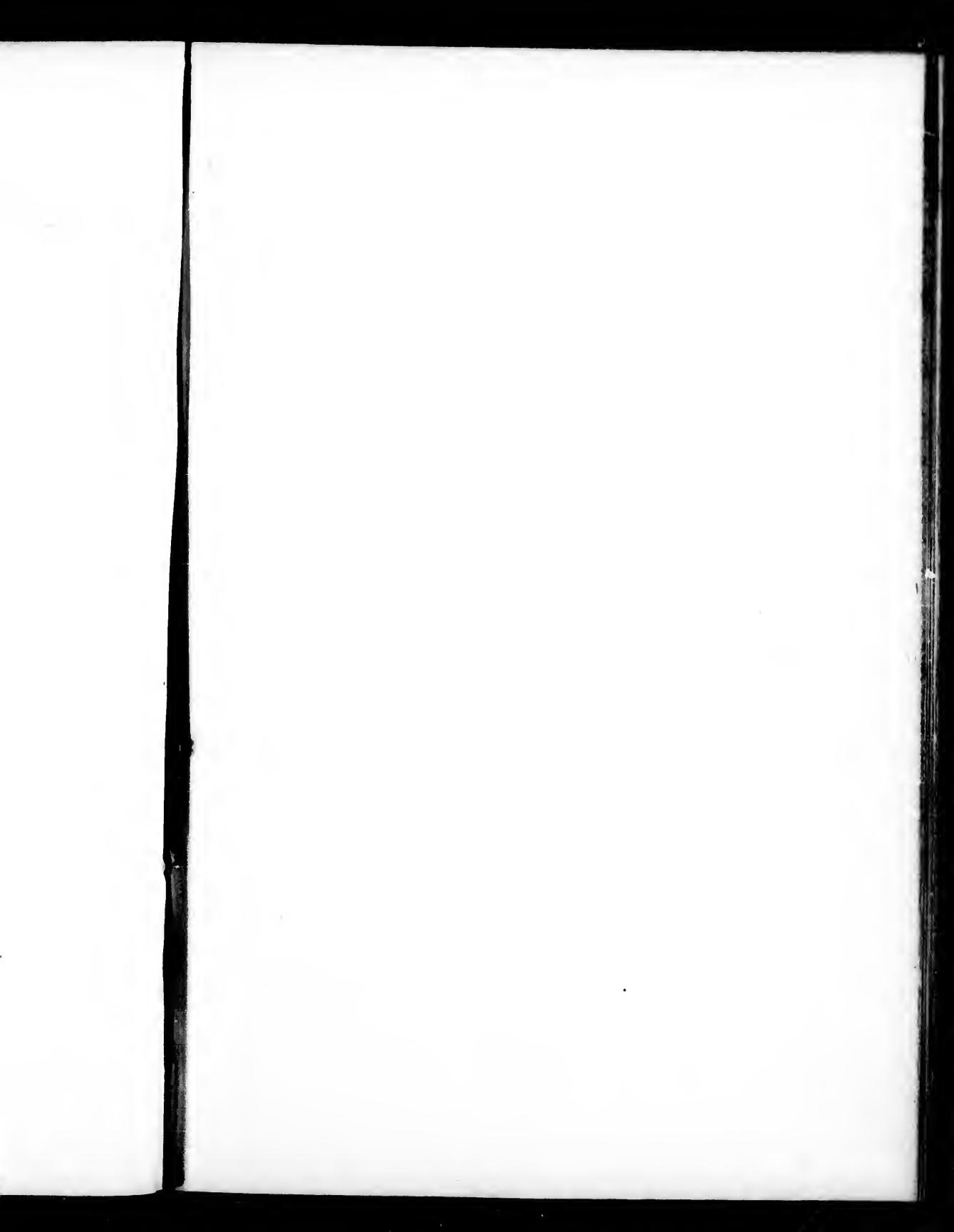
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# MOONLIGHT THOUGHTS,

—BY—

## ELLEN NOEL.

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'Tis night!—hushed is the noisy city. The streets that a few hours before were crowded with people, are now nearly deserted. A calm has succeeded the busy day, and the moon, in her quiet beauty, looks down on the silent earth, seeming to say—all is peace! Yet, many are the scenes of woe on which she shines. Let us glance at some of them!

Over the short white curtains of that low window let us peep. Is that pale young mother at rest, as hour after hour, with a breaking heart, she listens for her husband's footsteps? although she dreads to hear them, for she knows, alas! too well, that when he does come, it will be from the

haunts of vice. He has broken every vow which he made not two years ago at God's altar, when she stood by his side a happy trusting bride. There is no peace for her except in the grave; and as she presses her baby closer to her breast, she prays that they may soon rest there. We turn away from the sad sight, but oh! how many like her!

The shutters of one of the windows of yon elegant mansion are open. Through the rich crimson curtains the moon sheds her bright light. Surely all are at rest in that abode of wealth. We will give one look into the splendid apartment. Who is that pacing the room with an expression of agonizing sorrow imprinted on his face? It is the master of that proud dwelling; but what are riches to him now? Has he not that day buried out of his sight in the silent tomb, the one that made life bright—his fair loved wife? In vain he calls on her name—no voice in loving accents answers. She was his idol—and she was taken from him. He approaches the window—the calm beauty of the night distresses him more. Quickly he draws the curtains to shut out the light, he cannot bear it. All must be dark like his sorrowing heart. He is but one of those in this sad world who are mourning for their dead.

Through the curtainless window of a miserable garret we are now gazing. On a bed of straw, with the moonlight shining on his ghastly features, lies an old man. He is dead—and in the grasp of the King of Terrors, he tightly clutches a bag of gold—his idol, for which he has lost his soul! There is no expression of peace on his face. It betrays the agony of his last hour—his utter hopelessness

when his soul returned to Him who gave it. Wretched man—his was the fearful end of a miser!

At the window of a large farm-house, shadowed by stately trees, stands one from whose cheek the hue of health has faded. It is the first night of his return home—for long was he a wanderer. Many a time, when far distant, had he longed to gaze on the familiar scenes that are now before him! How often sighed to see once more the loved faces of those who are now sleeping near him! He looks towards the fields, where, when a boy, he played—the old church spire is distinctly visible in the moon beams. He will again enter the church where years ago, Sunday after Sunday, he worshipped. The grave yard is close by, but thank God! none of his family have been laid there in his absence. He is again in his childhood's home; his native air may restore his health, and if not, he will pass peacefully away, for dear ones will be near him at the last sad hour.

We will now peep into one of the vine-wreathed lattices of that pretty white cottage. In a small neat chamber kneels a young girl. Gently the moonbeams fall around her, casting their soft light on her lovely countenance. Her head rests on her hands, her dark hair escaping from the comb intended to confine it, has fallen in rich masses on her fair shoulders. Her heart is too full, she cannot sleep, for tomorrow she will leave her humble home the bride of one of Earth's proudest sons. And though she loves him, yet she is sorrowful—for must she not leave her beloved parents—her fond brother, her affectionate sister, and all the cherished friends of her youth? Oh how the thought of this parting saddens her. She looks around her little room. She re-

members the joyous hours she had spent there—to-morrow she will be far away! But then she loves him for whose sake she leaves all, and she wipes away her tears, for he is worthy of the sacrifice.

Through one of the small grated windows of that gloomy prison, the moon is also glancing. There sits one, who, in an evil hour, listened to the Tempter's voice, and committed the crime of forgery. "The Empress of the Night" casts her soft spells around his spirit. Memories of the past steal over him—thoughts of the home he has disgraced—of his sorrowing wife and helpless little ones, press how heavily on his heart! Two years more and then he may leave those walls, but he dreads to meet the world's scorn. Then he thinks of a home in a distant land, where, with his children and his wife, he may be happy, for he knows that through sorrow and disgrace she clings more tenderly to him than in their brightest days. This hope will cheer him through the remainder of his wearisome imprisonment. Will it ever be realized?

One more scene and I have done! There is walking the deck of a noble vessel, which is ploughing its way through the waves of the wide Atlantic, a tall handsome young man. Sadness is on his brow, for every moment he is borne farther from his home, and all the dear ones he has left behind. He glances up at the beautiful heavens, his gaze rests on the moon's familiar face. Perhaps some loved one is gazing on it too. The thought that there is at least one object which both, though apart, can view, cheers him. He thinks of a little room far away, through the glass door the moonlight may now be streaming. There he has passed

with the beloved of his heart, the happiest hours of his life. Will they again meet there? Hope whispers yes—you will return happy and prosperous, but his spirits droop as he thinks of the long weary years that must pass before then—if that time should ever come.

**ERRATA.**—On page 17, for Chapter iv, read Chapter III,  
and on page 25 for Chapter v, read Chapter iv.

read Chapter III,  
Chapter IV.

