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Tales for Fifteen: or, Imagination and Heart

by James Fenimore Cooper (writing under the pseudonym of "Jane Morgan")

August, 2000 [Etext #2282]

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Tales for Fifteen: or, Imagination and Heart. by James Fenimore Cooper (writing under the pseudonym of "Jane Morgan")

{This text has been transcribed and annotated from a facsimile of the original edition (New York: C. Wiley, iv, 223 pp., 1823) by Hugh C. MacDougall, Secretary of the James Fenimore Cooper Society <jfcooper@wpe.com>, who welcomes corrections or emendations. Only a handful of copies of the original edition have survived. The standard Cooper bibliography makes brief mention of an edition published in Guernsey, Maryland (n.d.), but I have never seen any further reference to it. Forty years ago a facsimile of the Wiley edition was published (Delmar, NY: Scholar's Facsimiles and Reprints, 1959, reprinted 1977), with an introduction by James Franklin Beard. At least one microfilm version is also available, but "Tales for Fifteen" remains one of James Fenimore Cooper's least read and least known writings.}

{In 1840, when the Boston publisher George Roberts asked Cooper for a contribution to a new magazine, Cooper responded that he could reprint "Tales for Fifteen" if he could find a copy—Cooper himself didn't have one. Roberts found a copy in New York, and "Imagination" was reprinted in his "Boston Notion" (January 30, 1841), and in his "Roberts' Semi-Monthly Magazine" (Boston, February 1 and 15, 1841). Shortly thereafter, he also reprinted "Heart", in the "Boston Notion" (March 13 and 20, 1841) and in "Roberts' Semi-Monthly Magazine" (April 1 and 15, 1841).}

{George Roberts' reprint of "Imagination" was pirated in England, and included in "Imagination; A Tale for Young Women. With Other Tales by American Authors" which also included "The Block-House", by William Leggett and "The Country Cousin". (London: John Cunningham, 72 pp., 1841 [Series: The Novel Newspaper, 143]) and (London: N. Bruce, 72 pp., 1842 (Series: Standard Novels, 5)). It also appeared by itself as "Imagination: A Tale for Young Women" (London: J. Clements, 31 pp., 1841 [for the Romanticist and Novelist's Library]). There may well exist other pirated periodical versions.}

{Introductory Note: "Tales for Fifteen" was apparently written in 1821, when Cooper became afflicted with writer's block while composing his first best-selling novel, "The Spy". Cooper had envisaged a series of five stories, to be called "American Tales," and which were to deal respectively with "Imagination", "Heart", "Matter", "Manner", and "Matter and Manner". Only "Imagination" was completed; the half-written "Heart" was given a sudden and half-hearted ending; Cooper later asserted that he had allowed Charles Wiley to publish "Tales for Fifteen" to help him out of some financial difficulties. In a letter to George Roberts in 1840, Cooper said of "Imagination" that "this tale was written on rainy day, half asleep and half awake, but I retain rather a favorable impression of it."}

{"Imagination", remains an amusing and cleverly-plotted story of a young girl whose imagination gets the better of her, presumably because of reading romantic novels. This, of course, was a commonplace notion in the 1820s, except that Cooper's heroine, misled by circumstances, comes to

believe that her romantic fantasies are happening. This Don Quixote-like twist is less common, though Jane Austen's famous "Northanger Abbey" and Eaton Stannard Barrett's little-known but very funny "The Heroine; or, Adventures of Cherubina" (1813) fall within the genre. "Heart", a slim (indeed, truncated) account of faithful love, sinks into bathos; it is, perhaps, most interesting for its opening scene of a blase New York City crowd gathering around a fallen man — and doing nothing to help him.}

{Spelling and punctuation are as in the 1823 original, including inconsistent spellings (e.g., gaiety and gayety, Henly and Henley) except that, because of the typographical limitations of the Gutenberg system, the few words italicized in the original are represented by ALL CAPITALS. Annotations by the transcriber are enclosed in {curly brackets}. A very few obvious typographical errors have been marked by {sic}.}

TALES FOR FIFTEEN: OR IMAGINATION AND HEART.

BY JANE MORGAN. =====

NEW-YORK
C. WILEY, 3 WALL STREET
J. Seymour, printer
1823

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"Tales for Fifteen; or Imagination and Heart.
By Jane Morgan."

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PREFACE

WHEN the author of these little tales commenced them, it was her intention to form a short series of such stories as, it was hoped, might not be entirely without moral advantage; but unforeseen circumstances have prevented their completion, and, unwilling to delay the publication any longer, she commits them to the world in their present unfinished state, without any flattering anticipations of their reception. They are intended for the perusal of young women, at that tender age when the feelings of their nature begin to act on them most insidiously, and when their minds are least prepared by reason and experience to contend with their passions.

"Heart" was intended for a much longer tale, and is unavoidably incomplete; but it is unnecessary to point out defects that even the juvenile reader will soon detect. The author only hopes that if they do no good, her tales will, at least, do no harm.

IMAGINATION. —oOo—

I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again:
Mine ear is much enamoured of thy note,
So is mine eye enthralled to thy shape;
And thy fair virtue's force perforce doth move me,
On the first view, to say, to swear, I love thee.
MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

{Shakespeare, "A Midsummer Night's Dream" Act

"DO—write to me often, my dear Anna!" said the weeping Julia Warren, on parting, for the first time since their acquaintance, with the young lady whom she had honoured with the highest place in her affections. "Think how dreadfully solitary and miserable I shall be here, without a single companion, or a soul to converse with, now you are to be removed two hundred miles into the wilderness."

"Oh! trust me, my love, I shall not forget you now or ever," replied her friend, embracing the other slightly, and, perhaps, rather hastily for so tender an adieu; at the same time glancing her eye on the figure of a youth, who stood in silent contemplation of the scene. "And doubt not but I shall soon tire you with my correspondence, especially as I more than suspect it will be subjected to the criticisms of Mr. Charles Weston." As she concluded, the young lady curtsied to the youth in a manner that contradicted, by its flattery, the forced irony of her remark.

"Never, my dear girl!" exclaimed Miss Warren with extreme fervour. "The confidence of our friendship is sacred with me, and nothing, no, nothing, could ever tempt me to violate such a trust. Charles is very kind and very indulgent to all my whims, but he never could obtain such an influence over me as to become the depository of my secrets. Nothing but a friend, like yourself, can do that, my dear Anna."

"Never! Miss Warren," said the youth with a lip that betrayed by its tremulous motion the interest he took in her speech—"never includes a long period of time. But," he added with a smile of good-humoured pleasantry, "if admitted to such a distinction, I should not feel myself competent to the task of commenting on so much innocence and purity, as I know I should find in your correspondence."

"Yes," said Anna, with a little of the energy of her friend's manner, "you may with truth say so, Mr. Weston. The imagination of my Julia is as pure as— as——" but turning her eyes from the countenance of Julia to that of the youth, rather suddenly, the animated pleasure she saw delineated in his expressive, though plain features, drove the remainder of the speech from her recollection.

"As her heart!" cried Charles Weston with emphasis.

"As her heart, Sir," repeated the young lady coldly.

The last adieus were hastily exchanged, and Anna Miller was handed into her father's gig by Charles Weston in profound silence. Miss Emmerson, the maiden aunt of Julia, withdrew from the door, where she had been conversing with Mr. Miller, and the travellers departed. Julia followed the vehicle with her eyes until it was hid by the trees and shrubbery that covered the lawn, and then withdrew to her room to give vent to a sorrow that had sensibly touched her affectionate heart, and in no trifling degree haunted her lively imagination.

As Miss Emmerson by no means held the good qualities of the guest, who had just left them, in so high an estimation as did her niece, she proceeded quietly and with great composure in the exercise of her daily duties; not in the least suspecting the real distress that, from a variety of causes, this sudden separation had caused to her ward.

The only sister of this good lady had died in giving birth to a female infant, and the fever of 1805 had, within a very few years of the death of the mother, deprived the youthful orphan of her remaining parent. Her father was a merchant, just commencing the foundations of what would, in time, have been a large estate; and as both Miss Emmerson and her sister were possessed of genteel independencies, and the aunt had long declared her intention of remaining single, the fortune of Julia, if not brilliant, was thought rather large than otherwise. Miss Emmerson had been educated immediately after the war of the revolution, and at a time when the intellect of the women of this country by no means received that attention it is thought necessary to bestow on the minds of the future mothers of our families at the present hour; and when, indeed, the country itself required too much of the care of her rulers and patriots to admit of the consideration of lesser objects. With the best of hearts and affections devoted to the welfare of her niece, Miss Emmerson had early discovered her own incompetency to the labour of fitting Julia for the world in which she was to live, and shrunk with timid modesty from the arduous task of preparing herself, by application and study, for this sacred duty. The fashions of the day were rapidly running into the attainment of accomplishments among the young of her own sex, and the piano forte was already sending forth its sonorous harmony from one end of the Union to the other, while the glittering usefulness of the tambour-frame was discarded for the pallet and brush. The walls of our mansions were beginning to groan with the sickly green of imaginary fields, that caricatured the beauties of nature; and skies of sunny brightness, that mocked the golden hues of even an American sun. The experience of Miss Emmerson went no further than the simple evolutions of the country dance, or the deliberate and dignified procession of the minuet. No wonder, therefore, that her faculties were bewildered by the complex movements of the cotillion: and, in short, as the good lady

daily contemplated the improvements of the female youth around her, she became each hour more convinced of her own inability to control, or in any manner to superintend, the education of her orphan niece. Julia was, consequently, entrusted to the government of a select boarding-school; and, as even the morals of the day were, in some degree, tinctured with the existing fashions, her mind as well as her manners were absolutely submitted to the discretion of an hireling. Notwithstanding this willing concession of power on the part of Miss Emmerson, there was no deficiency in ability to judge between right and wrong in her character; but the homely nature of her good sense, unassisted by any confidence in her own powers, was unable to compete with the dazzling display of accomplishments which met her in every house where she visited; and if she sometimes thought that she could not always discover much of the useful amid this excess of the agreeable, she rather attributed the deficiency to her own ignorance than to any error in the new system of instruction. From the age of six to that of sixteen, Julia had no other communications with Miss Emmerson than those endearments which neither could suppress, and a constant and assiduous attention on the part of the aunt to the health and attire of her niece.

{fever of 1805 = New York City had suffered a major epidemic of yellow fever in the summer of 1805; tambour-frame = a circular frame used to hold material being embroidered}

Miss Emmerson had a brother residing in the city of New-York, who was a man of eminence at the bar, and who, having been educated fifty years ago, was, from that circumstance, just so much superior to his successors of his own sex by twenty years, as his sisters were the losers from the same cause. The family of Mr. Emmerson was large, and, besides several sons, he had two daughters, one of whom remained still unmarried in the house of her father. Katherine Emmerson was but eighteen months the senior of Julia Warren; but her father had adopted a different course from that which was ordinarily pursued with girls of her expectations. He had married a woman of sense, and now reaped the richest blessing of such a connexion in her ability to superintend the education of her daughter. A mother's care was employed to correct errors that a mother's tenderness could only discover; and in the place of general systems, and comprehensive theories, was substituted the close and rigorous watchfulness which adapted the remedy to the disease; which studied the disposition; and which knew the failings or merits of the pupil, and could best tell when to reward, and how to punish. The consequences were easily to be seen in the manners and character of their daughter. Her accomplishments, even where a master had been employed in their attainment, were naturally displayed, and suited to her powers. Her manners, instead of the artificial movements of prescribed rules, exhibited the chaste and delicate modesty of refinement, mingled with good principles—such as were not worn in order to be in character as a woman and a lady, but were deeply seated, and formed part, not only of her habits, but, if we may use the expression, of her nature also. Miss Emmerson had good sense enough to perceive the value of such an acquaintance for her ward; but, unfortunately for her wish to establish an intimacy between her nieces, Julia had already formed a friendship at school, and did not conceive her heart was large enough to admit two at the same time to its sanctuary. How much Julia was mistaken the sequel of our tale will show.

So long as Anna Miller was the inmate of the school, Julia was satisfied to remain also, but the father of Anna having determined to remove to an estate in the interior of the country, his daughter was taken from school; and while the arrangements were making for the reception of the family on the banks of the Genessee, Anna was permitted to taste, for a short time, the pleasures of the world, at the residence of Miss Emmerson on the banks of the Hudson.

{Genessee = Genesee River, which flows north through central New York State to Lake Ontario—at the time of Cooper's story it was still on the frontier of settlement}

Charles Weston was a distant relative of the good aunt, and was, like Julia, an orphan, who was moderately endowed with the goods of fortune. He was a student in the office of her uncle, and being a great favourite with Miss Emmerson, spent many of his leisure hours, during the heats of the summer, in the retirement of her country residence.

Whatever might be the composure of the maiden aunt, while Julia was weeping in her chamber over the long separation that was now to exist between herself and her friend, young Weston by no means displayed the same philosophic indifference. He paced the hall of the building with rapid steps, cast many a longing glance at the door of his cousin's room, and then rested himself with an apparent intention to read the volume he held in his hands; nor did he in any degree recover his composure until Julia re-appeared on the landing of the stairs, moving slowly towards their bottom, when, taking one long look at her lovely face, which was glowing with youthful beauty, and if possible more charming from the traces of tears in her eyes, he coolly pursued his studies. Julia had recovered her composure, and Charles Weston felt satisfied. Miss Emmerson and her niece took their seats quietly with their work at an open window of the parlour, and order appeared to be restored in some measure to the mansion. After pursuing their several occupations for some minutes with a silence that had lately been a stranger

to them, the aunt observed—

"You appear to have something new in hand, my love. Surely you must abound with trimmings, and yet you are working another already?"

"It is for Anna Miller," said Julia with a flush of feeling.

"I was in hopes you would perform your promise to your cousin Katherine, now Miss Miller is gone, and make your portion of the garments for the Orphan Asylum," returned Miss Emerson gravely.

"Oh! cousin Katherine must wait. I promised this trimming to Anna to remember me by, and I would not disappoint the dear girl for the world."

"It is not your cousin Katherine, but the Orphans, who will have to wait; and surely a promise to a relation is as sacred as one to an acquaintance."

"Acquaintance, aunt!" echoed the niece with displeasure. "Do not, I entreat you, call Anna an acquaintance merely. She is my friend—my very best friend, and I love her as such."

"Thank you, my dear," said the aunt dryly.

"Oh! I mean nothing disrespectful to yourself, dear aunt," continued Julia. "You know how much I owe to you, and ought to know that I love you as a mother."

"And would you prefer Miss Miller to a mother, then?"

"Surely not in respect, in gratitude, in obedience; but still I may love her, you know. Indeed, the feelings are so very different, that they do not at all interfere with each other—in my heart at least."

"No!" said Miss Emerson, with a little curiosity—"I wish you would try and explain this difference to me, that I may comprehend the distinctions that you are fond of making."

"Why, nothing is easier, dear aunt!" said Julia with animation. "You I love because you are kind to me, attentive to my wants, considerate for my good; affectionate, and—and—from habit—and you are my aunt, and take care of me."

"Admirable reasons!" exclaimed Charles Weston, who had laid aside his book to listen to this conversation.

"They are forcible ones I must admit," said Miss Emerson, smiling affectionately on her niece; "but now for the other kind of love."

"Why, Anna is my friend, you know," cried Julia, with eyes sparkling with enthusiasm. "I love her, because she has feelings congenial with my own; she has so much wit, is so amusing, so frank, so like a girl of talents—so like—like every thing I admire myself."

"It is a pity that one so highly gifted cannot furnish herself with frocks," said the aunt, with a little more than her ordinary dryness of manner, "and suffer you to work for those who want them more."

"You forget it is in order to remember me," said Julia, in a manner that spoke her own ideas of the value of the gift.

"One would think such a friendship would not require any thing to remind one of its existence," returned the aunt.

"Why! it is not that she will forget me without it, but that she may have something by her to remind her of me——" said Julia rapidly, but pausing as the contradiction struck even herself.

"I understand you perfectly, my child," interrupted the aunt, "merely as an unnecessary security, you mean."

"To make assurance doubly sure," cried Charles Weston with a laugh.

"Oh! you laugh, Mr. Weston," said Julia with a little anger; "but I have often said, you were incapable of friendship."

"Try me!" exclaimed the youth fervently. "Do not condemn me without a trial."

"How can I?" said Julia, laughing in her turn. "You are not a girl."

"Can girls then only feel friendship?" inquired Charles, taking the seat which Miss Emmerson had relinquished.

"I sometimes think so," said Julia, with her own good-humoured smile. "You are too gross—too envious—in short, you never see such friendships between men as exist between women."

"Between girls, I will readily admit," returned the youth. "But let us examine this question after the manner of the courts—"

"Nay, if you talk law I shall quit you," interrupted the young lady gaily.

"Certainly one so learned in the subject need not dread a cross-examination," cried the youth, in her own manner.

"Well, proceed," cried the lady. "I have driven aunt Margaret from the field, and you will fare no better, I can assure you."

"Men, you say, are too gross to feel a pure friendship; in the first place, please to explain yourself on this point."

"Why I mean, that your friendships are generally interested; that it requires services and good offices to support it."

{interested = not pure, having an ulterior motive}

"While that of women depends on—"

"Feeling alone."

"But what excites this feeling?" asked Charles with a smile.

"What? why sympathy—and a knowledge of each other's good qualities."

"Then you think Miss Miller has more good qualities than Katherine Emmerson," said Weston.

"When did I ever say so?" cried Julia in surprise.

"I infer it from your loving her better, merely," returned the young man with a little of Miss Emmerson's dryness.

"It would be difficult to compare them," said Julia after a moment's pause. "Katherine is in the world, and has had an opportunity of showing her merit; that Anna has never enjoyed. Katherine is certainly a most excellent girl, and I like her very much; but there is no reason to think that Anna will not prove as fine a young woman as Katherine, when put to the trial."

"Pray," said the young lawyer with great gravity, "how many of these bosom, these confidential friends can a young woman have at the same time?"

"One, only one—any more than she could have two lovers," cried Julia quickly.

"Why then did you find it necessary to take that one from a set, that was untried in the practice of well-doing, when so excellent a subject as your cousin Katherine offered?"

"But Anna I know, I feel, is every thing that is good and sincere, and our sympathies drew us together. Katherine I loved naturally."

"How naturally?"

"Is it not natural to love your relatives?" said Julia in surprise.

"No," was the brief answer.

"Surely, Charles Weston, you think me a simpleton. Does not every parent love its child by natural instinct?"

"No: no more than you love any of your amusements from instinct. If the parent was present with a child that he did not know to be his own, would instinct, think you, discover their vicinity?"

"Certainly not, if they had never met before; but then, as soon as he knew it to be his, he would love it from nature."

"It is a complicated question, and one that involves a thousand connected feelings," said Charles. "But all love, at least all love of the heart, springs from the causes you mentioned to your aunt—good offices, a dependence on each other, and habit."

"Yes, and nature too," said the young lady rather positively; "and I contend, that natural lore, and love from sympathy, are two distinct things."

"Very different, I allow," said Charles; "only I very much doubt the durability of that affection which has no better foundation than fancy."

"You use such queer terms, Charles, that you do not treat the subject fairly. Calling innate evidence of worth by the name of fancy, is not candid."

"Now, indeed, your own terms puzzle me," said Charles, smiling. "What is innate evidence of worth?"

"Why, a conviction that another possesses all that you esteem yourself, and is discovered by congenial feelings and natural sympathies."

"Upon my word, Julia, you are quite a casuist on this subject. Does love, then, between the sexes depend on this congenial sympathy and innate evidence?"

"Now you talk on a subject that I do not understand," said Julia, blushing; and, catching up the highly prized work, she ran to her own room, leaving the young man in a state of mingled admiration and pity.

CHAPTER II.

AN anxious fortnight was passed by Julia Warren, after this conversation, without bringing any tidings from her friend. She watched, with feverish restlessness, each steam-boat that passed the door on its busy way towards the metropolis, and met the servant each day at the gate of the lawn on his return from the city; but it was only to receive added disappointments. At length Charles Weston good-naturedly offered his own services, laughingly declaring, that his luck was never known to fail. Julia herself had written several long epistles to Anna, and it was now the proper time that some of these should be answered, independently of the thousand promises from her friend of writing regularly from every post-office that she might pass on her route to the Genessee. But the happy moment had arrived when disappointments were to cease.

As usual, Julia was waiting with eager impatience at the gate, her lovely form occasionally gliding from the shrubbery to catch a glimpse of the passengers on the highway, when Charles appeared riding at a full gallop towards the house; his whole manner announced success, and Julia sprang into the middle of the road to take the letter which he extended towards her.

"I knew I should be successful, and it gives me almost as much pleasure as yourself that I have been so," said the youth, dismounting from his horse and opening the gate that his companion might pass.

"Thank you—thank you, dear Charles," said Julia kindly. "I never can forget how good you are to me—how much you love to oblige not only me, but every one around. Excuse me now, I have this dear letter to read another time, I will thank you as I ought."

So saying, Julia ran into the summer-house, and fastening its door, gave herself up to the pleasure of reading a first letter. Notes and short epistles from her aunt, with divers letters from Anna written slyly in the school-room and slipped into her lap, she was already well acquainted with; but of real, genuine letters, stamped by the post-office, ruffled by the mail-bags, consecrated by the steam-boat, this was certainly the first. This, indeed, was a real letter: rivers rolled, and vast tracts of country lay, between herself and its writer, and that writer was a friend selected on the testimony of innate evidence. It was necessary for Julia to pause and breathe before she could open her letter; and by the time this was done, her busy fancy had clothed both epistle and writer with so much excellence, that she was prepared to peruse the contents with a respect bordering on enthusiasm: every word must be true—every idea purity itself. That our readers may know how accurately sixteen and a brilliant fancy had qualified her to judge, we shall give them the letter entire.

"My dearest love,

"Oh, Julia! here I am, and such a place!—no town, no churches, no Broadway, nothing that can make life desirable; and, I may add, no friend—nobody to see and talk with, but papa and mamma, and a house full of brothers and sisters. You can't think how I miss you, every minute more and more; but I am not without hopes of persuading pa to let me spend the winter with your aunt in town. I declare it

makes me sick every time I think of her sweet house in Park-place. If ever I marry, and be sure I will, it shall be a man who lives in the city, and next door to my Julia. Oh! how charming that would be. Each of us to have one of those delightful new houses, with the new-fashioned basement stories; we would run in and out at all hours of the day, and it would be so convenient to lend and borrow each other's things. I do think there is no pleasure under heaven equal to that of wearing things that belong to your friend. Don't you remember how fond I was of wearing your clothes at school, though you were not so fond of changing as myself; but that was no wonder, for pa's stinginess kept me so shabbily dressed, that I was ashamed to let you be seen in them. Oh, Julia! I shall never forget those happy hours; nor you neither. Apropos—I hope you have not forgot the frock you promised to work for me, to remember you by. I long for it dreadfully, and hope you will send it before the river shuts. I suppose you and Charles Weston do nothing but ride round among those beautiful villas on the island, and take comfort. I do envy you your happiness, I can tell you; for I think any beau better than none, though Mr. Weston is not to my taste. I am going to write you six sheets of paper, for there is nothing that I so delight in as communing with a friend at a distance, especially situated as I am without a soul to say a word to, unless it be my own sisters. Adieu, my ever, ever beloved Julia—be to me as I am to you, a friend indeed, one tried and not found wanting. In haste, your

"ANNA.

"Genessee, June 15, 1816.

"P. S. Don't forget to jog aunt Emmerson's memory about asking me to Park-place.

"P. S. June 25th. Not having yet sent my letter, although I am sure you must be dying with anxiety to hear how we get on, I must add, that we have a companion here that would delight you—a Mr. Edward Stanley. What a delightful name! and he is as delightful as his name: his eye, his nose, his whole countenance, are perfect. In short, Julia, he is just such a man as we used to draw in our conversation at school. He is rich, and brave, and sensible, and I do nothing but talk to him of you. He says, he longs to see you; knows you must be handsome; is sure you are sensible; and feels that you are good. Oh! he is worth a dozen Charles Westons. But you may give my compliments to Mr. Weston, though I don't suppose he ever thinks it worth his while to remember such a chick as me. I should like to hear what he says about me, and I will tell you all Edward Stanley says of you. Once more, adieu. Your letters got here safe and in due season. I let Edward take a peep at them."

The first time Julia read this letter she was certainly disappointed. It contained no descriptions of the lovely scenery of the west. The moon had risen and the sun had set on the lakes of the interior, and Anna had said not one word of either. But the third and fourth time of reading began to afford more pleasure, and at the thirteenth perusal she pronounced it charming. There was evidently much to be understood; vacuums that the fancy could easily fill; and, before Julia had left the summer-house, the letter was extended, in her imagination, to the promised six sheets. She walked slowly through the shrubbery towards the house, musing on the contents of her letter, or rather what it might be supposed to contain, and unconsciously repeating to herself in a low tone—

"Young, handsome, rich, and sensible—just as we used to paint in our conversation. Oh, how delightful!"

"Delightful indeed, to possess all those fine qualities; and who is the happy individual that is so blessed?" asked Charles Weston, who had been lingering in the walks with an umbrella to shield her on her return from an approaching shower.

"Oh!" said Julia, starting, "I did not know you were near me. I have been reading Anna's sweet letter," pressing the paper to her bosom as she spoke.

"Doubtless you must be done by this time, Julia, and," pointing to the clouds, "you had better hasten to the house. I knew you would be terrified at the lightning all alone by yourself in that summer-house, so I came to protect you."

"You are very good, Charles, but does it lighten?" said Julia in terror, and hastening her retreat to the dwelling.

"Your letter must have interested you deeply not to have noticed the thunder—you, who are so timid and fearful of the flashes."

"Foolishly fearful, you would say, if you were not afraid of hurting my feelings, I know," said Julia.

"It is a natural dread, and therefore not to be laughed at," answered Charles mildly.

"Then there is natural fear, but no natural love, Mr. Charles; now you are finely caught," cried Julia

exultingly.

"Well, be it so. With me fear is very natural, and I can almost persuade myself love also."

"I hope you are not a coward, Charles Weston. A cowardly man is very despicable. I could never love a cowardly man," said Julia, laughing.

"I don't know whether I am what you call a coward," said Charles gravely; "but when in danger I am always afraid."

The words were hardly uttered before a flash of lightning, followed instantly by a tremendously heavy clap of thunder, nearly stupified them both. The suddenness of the shock had, for a moment, paralyzed the energy of the youth, while Julia was nearly insensible. Soon recovering himself, however, Charles drew her after him into the house, in time to escape a torrent of rain. The storm was soon over, and their natural fear and surprise were a source of mirth for Julia. Women are seldom ashamed of their fears, for their fright is thought to be feminine and attractive; but men are less easy under the imputation of terror, as it is thought to indicate an absence of manly qualities.

"Oh! you will never make a hero, Charles," cried Julia, laughing heartily. "It is well you chose the law instead of the army as a profession."

"I don't know," said the youth, a little nettled, "I think I could muster courage to face a bullet."

"But remember, that you shut your eyes, and bent nearly double at the flash—now you owned all this yourself."

"At least he was candid, and acknowledged his infirmities," said Miss Emerson, who had been listening.

"I think most men would have done as I did, at so heavy and so sudden a clap of thunder, and so very near too," said Charles, striving to conceal the uneasiness he felt.

"When apprehension for Julia must have increased your terror," said the aunt kindly.

"Why, no—I rather believe I thought only of myself at the moment," returned Charles; "but then, Julia, you must do me the justice to say, that instantly I thought of the danger of your taking cold and drew you into the house."

"Oh! you ran from another clap," said Julia, laughing till her dark eyes flashed with pleasure, and shaking her head until her glossy hair fell in ringlets over her shoulders; "you will never make a hero, Charles."

"Do you know any one who would have behaved better, Miss Warren?" said the young man angrily.

"Yes—why—I don't know. Yes, I have heard of one, I think," answered Julia, slightly colouring; "but, dear Charles, excuse my laughter," she continued, holding out her hand; "if you are not a hero, you are very, very, good."

But Charles Weston, at the moment, would rather be thought a hero than very, very, good; he, therefore, rose, and affecting a smile, endeavoured to say something trifling as he retired.

"You have mortified Charles," said Miss Emerson, so soon as he was out of hearing.

"I am sure I hope not," said Julia, with a good deal of anxiety; "he is the last person I would wish to offend, he is so very kind."

"No young man of twenty is pleased with being thought no hero," returned the aunt.

"And yet all are not so," said Julia, "I hardly know what you mean by a hero; if you mean such men as Washington, Greene, or Warren, all are surely not so. These were heroes in deeds, but others may be equally brave."

{Greene = Nathanael Greene (1742-1786),
Revolutionary General; Warren = Joseph Warren
(1741-1775), Revolutionary war hero, killed at the
Battle of Bunker Hill}

"I mean by a hero, a man whose character is unstained by any low or degenerate vices, or even feelings," said Julia, with a little more than her ordinary enthusiasm; "whose courage is as natural as it is daring; who is above fear, except of doing wrong; whose person is an index of his mind, and whose

mind is filled with images of glory; that's what I call a hero, aunt."

"Then he must be handsome as well as valiant," said Miss Emerson, with a smile that was hardly perceptible.

"Why that is—is—not absolutely material," replied Julia, blushing; "but one would wish to have him handsome too."

"Oh! by all means; it would render his virtues more striking. But I think you intimated that you knew such a being," returned Miss Emerson, fixing her mild eyes on Julia in a manner that denoted great interest.

"Did I," said Julia, colouring scarlet; "I am sure—I have forgotten—it must be a mistake, surely, dear aunt."

"Very possibly I misunderstood you, my dear," said Miss Emerson, rising and withdrawing from the room, in apparent indifference to the subject.

Julia continued musing on the dialogue which had passed, and soon had recourse to the letter of her friend, the postscript of which was all, however, that she thought necessary to read: on this she dwelt until the periods were lengthened into paragraphs, each syllable into words, and each letter into syllables. Anna Miller had furnished the outlines of a picture, that the imagination of Julia had completed. The name of Edward Stanley was repeated internally so often that she thought it the sweetest name she had ever heard. His eyes, his nose, his countenance, were avowed to be handsome; and her fancy soon gave a colour and form to each. He was sensible; how sensible, her friend had not expressly stated; but then the powers of Anna, great as they undoubtedly were, could not compass the mighty extent of so gigantic a mind. Brave, too, Anna had called him. This she must have learnt from acts of desperate courage that he had performed in the war which had so recently terminated; or perhaps he might have even distinguished himself in the presence of Anna, by some exploit of cool and determined daring. Her heart burned to know all the particulars, but how was she to inquire them. Anna, dear, indiscreet girl, had already shown her letters, and her delicacy shrunk from the exposure of her curiosity to its object. After a multitude of expedients had been adopted and rejected as impracticable, Julia resorted to the course of committing her inquiries to paper, most solemnly enjoining her friend never to expose her weakness to Mr. Stanley. This, thought Julia, she never could do; it would be unjust to me, and indelicate in her. So Julia wrote as follows, first seeking her own apartment, and carefully locking the door, that she might devote her whole attention to friendship, and her letter.

"Dearest Anna,

"Your kind letter reach'd me after many an anxious hour spent in expectation, and repays me ten-fold for all my uneasiness. Surely, Anna, there is no one that can write half so agreeably as yourself. I know there must be a long—long—epistle for me on the road, containing those descriptions and incidents you promised to favour me with: how I long to read them, and to show them to my aunt Margaret, who, I believe, does not suspect you to be capable of doing that which I know, or rather feel, you can. Knowing from any thing but feeling and the innate evidence of our sympathies, seems to me something like heresy in friendship. Oh, Anna! how could you be so cruel as to show my letters to any one, and that to a gentleman and a stranger? I never would have served you so, not even to good Charles Weston, whom I esteem so highly, and who really wants neither judgment nor good nature, though he is dreadfully deficient in fancy. Yet Charles is a most excellent young man, and I gave him the compliments you desired; he was so much flattered by your notice that he could make no reply, though I doubt not he prized the honour as he ought. We are all very happy here, only for the absence of my Anna; but so long as miles of weary roads and endless rivers run between us, perfect happiness can never reign in the breast of your Julia. Anna, I conjure you by all the sacred delicacy that consecrates our friendship, never to show this letter, unless you would break my heart: you never will, I am certain, and therefore I will write to my Anna in the unreserved manner in which we conversed, when fate, less cruel than at present, suffered us to live in the sunshine of each other's smiles. You speak of a certain person in your letter, whom, for obvious reasons, I will in future call ANTONIO. You describe him with the partiality of a friend; but how can I doubt his being worthy of all that you say, and more—sensible, brave, rich, and handsome. From his name, I suppose, of course, he is well connected. What a constellation of attractions to centre in one man! But you have not told me all—his age, his family, his profession; though I presume he has borne arms in the service of his country, and that his manly breast is already covered with the scars of honour. Ah! Anna, "he jests at scars who never felt a wound." But, my dear creature, you say that he talks of me: what under the sun can you find to say of such a poor girl as myself? Though I suppose you have, in the fondness of affection, described my person to him already. I wonder if he likes black eyes and fair complexion. You can't conceive what a bloom the country has given me; I really begin to look more like a milk-maid than a lady. Dear, good aunt Margaret has been

quite sick since you left us, and for two days I was hardly out of her room; this has put me back a little in colour, or I should be as ruddy as the morn. But nothing ought ever to tempt me to neglect my aunt, and I hope nothing ever will. Be assured that I shall beg her to write you to spend the winter with us, for I feel already that without you life is a perfect blank. You indeed must have something to enliven it with a little in your new companions, but here is nobody, just now, but Charles Weston. Yet he is an excellent companion, and does every thing he can to make us all happy and comfortable. Heigho! how I do wish I could see you, my Anna, and spend one sweet half hour in the dear confidence of mutual sympathy. But lie quiet, my throbbing heart, the day approaches when I shall meet my friend again, and more than receive a reward for all our griefs. Ah! Anna, never betray your Julia, and write to me FULLY, CONFIDINGLY, and often.

"Yours, with all the tenderness of friendship that is founded on mutual sympathy, congenial souls, and innate evidence of worth. JULIA."

"P.S. I should like to know whether Antonio has any scars in his face, and what battles he was in. Only think, my dear, poor Charles Weston was frightened by a clap of thunder—but Charles has an excellent heart."

This letter was written and read, sealed and kissed, when Miss Emmerson tapped gently at the door of her niece and begged admission. Julia flew to open it, and received her aunt with the guileless pleasure her presence ever gave her. A few words of introductory matter were exchanged, when, being both seated at their needles again, Miss Emmerson asked—

"To whom have you been writing, my love?"

"To my Anna."

"Do you recollect, my child, that in writing to Miss Miller, you are writing to one out of your own family, and whose interests are different from yours?"

"I do not understand you, aunt," cried Julia in surprise.

"I mean that you should be guarded in your correspondence—tell no secrets out"—

"Tell no secrets to my Anna!" exclaimed the niece in a species of horror. "That would be a death-blow to our friendship indeed."

"Then let it die," said Miss Emmerson, coolly; "the affection that cannot survive the loss of such an excitement, had better be suffered to expire as soon as possible, or it may raise false expectations."

"Why, dear aunt, in destroying confidence of this nature, you destroy the great object of friendship. Who ever heard of a friendship without secrets?"

"I never had a secret in my life," said Miss Emmerson simply, "and yet I have had many a friend."

"Well," said Julia, "yours must have been queer friends; pray, dear aunt, name one or two of them."

"Your mother was my friend," said Miss Emmerson, with strong emotion, "and I hope her daughter also is one."

"Me, my beloved aunt!" cried Julia, throwing herself into the arms of Miss Emmerson and bursting into tears; "I am more than a friend, I am your child— your daughter."

"Whatever be the name you give it, Julia, you are very near and dear to me," said the aunt, tenderly kissing her charge: "but tell me, my love, did you ever feel such emotion in your intercourse with Miss Miller?"

It was some time before Julia could reply; when, having suppressed the burst of her feelings, she answered with a smile—

"Oh! that question is not fair. You have brought me up; nursed me in sickness; are kind and good to me; and the idea that you should suppose I did not love you, was dreadful—But you know I do."

"I firmly believe so, my child; it is you that I would have know what it is that you love: I am satisfied for myself. I repeat, did Anna Miller ever excite such emotions?"

"Certainly not: my love to you is natural; but my friendship for Anna rests on sympathy, and a perfect knowledge of her character."

"I am glad, however, that you know her so well, since you are so intimate. What testimony have you of

all this excellence?"

"Innate evidence. I see it—I feel it—Yes, that is the best testimony—I feel her good qualities. Yes, my friendship for Anna forms the spring of my existence; while any accident or evil to you would afflict me the same as if done to myself—this is pure nature, you know."

"I know it is pleasing to learn it, come from what it will," said the aunt, smiling, and rising to withdraw.

CHAPTER III.

SEVERAL days passed after this conversation, in the ordinary quiet of a well regulated family. Notwithstanding the house of Miss Emerson stood in the midst of the numberless villas that adorn Manhattan Island, the habits of its mistress were retiring and domestic. Julia was not of an age to mingle much in society, and Anna had furnished her with a theme for her meditations, that rather rendered her averse from the confusion of company. Her mind was constantly employed in canvassing the qualities of the unseen Antonio. Her friend had furnished her with a catalogue of his perfections in gross, which her active thoughts were busily arranging into form and substance. But little practised in the world or its disappointments {sic}, the visionary girl had already figured to herself a person to suit these qualities, and the animal was no less pleasing, than the moral being of her fancy. What principally delighted Julia in these contemplations on the acquaintance of Anna, was the strong inclination he had expressed to know herself. This flattered her tendency to believe in the strength of mutual sympathy, and the efficacy of innate evidence of merit. In the midst of this pleasing employment of her fancy, she received a second letter from her friend, in answer to the one we have already given to our readers; it was couched in the following words:

"My own dear Julia, my Friend,

"I received your letter with the pleasure I shall always hear from you, and am truly obliged to you for your kind offer to make interest with your aunt to have me spend the next winter in town. To be with you, is the greatest pleasure I have on earth; besides, as I know I can write to you as freely as I think, one can readily tell what a tiresome place this must be to pass a winter in. There are, absolutely, but three young men in the whole county who can be thought in any manner as proper matches for us; and one has no chance here of forming such an association as to give a girl an opportunity of meeting with her congenial spirit, so that I hope and trust your desire to see me will continue as strong as mine will ever be to see my Julia. You say that I have forgotten to give you the description of our journey and of the lakes that I promised to send you. No, my Julia, I have not forgotten the promise, nor you; but the thought of enjoying such happiness without your dear company, has been too painful to dwell upon. Of this you may judge for yourself. Our first journey was made in the steam-boat to Albany; she is a moving world. The vessel ploughs through the billowy waters in onward progress, and the soul is left in silent harmony to enjoy the change. The passage of the Highlands is most delightful. Figure to yourself, my Julia, the rushing waters, lessening from their expanded width to the degeneracy of the stagnant pool—rocks rise on rocks in overhanging mountains, until the weary eye, refusing its natural office, yields to the fancy what its feeble powers can never conquer. Clouds impend over their summits, and the thoughts pierce the vast abyss. Ah! Julia, these are moments of awful romance; how the soul longs for the consolations of friendship. Albany is one of the most picturesque places in the world; situated most delightfully on the banks of the Hudson, which here meanders in sylvan beauty through meadows of ever-green and desert islands. Words are wanting to paint the melancholy beauties of the ride to Schenectady, through gloomy forests, where the silvery pine waves in solemn grandeur to the sighings of Eolus, while Boreas threatens in vain their firm-rooted trunks. But the lakes! Ah! Julia—the lakes! The most beautiful is the Seneca, named after a Grecian king. The limpid water, ne'er ruffled by the rude breathings of the wind, shines with golden tints to the homage of the rising sun, while the light bark gallantly lashes the surge, rocking before the propelling gale, and forcibly brings to the appalled mind the fleeting hours of time. But I must pause— my pen refuses to do justice to the subject, and the remainder will furnish us hours of conversation during the tedious moments of the delightful visit to Park-Place. You speak of Antonio—dear girl, with me the secret is hallowed. He is yet here; his whole thoughts are of Julia—from my description only, he has drawn your picture, which is the most striking in the world; and nothing can tear the dear emblem from his keeping. He called here yesterday in his phaeton, and insisted on my riding a few short miles in his company: I assented, for I knew it was to talk of my friend. He already feels your worth, and handed me the following verses, which he begged me to offer as the sincere homage of his heart. He intends accompanying my father and me to town next winter—provided I go.

"Oh! charming image of an artless fair,

"Whose eyes, with lightning, fire the very soul;
"Whose face portrays the mind, and ebon hair
"Gives grace and harmony unto the whole.

"In vain I gaze entranc'd, in vain deplore
"The leagues that roll between the maid and me;
"Lonely I wander on the desert shore,
"And Julia's lovely form can never see.

"But fly, ye fleeting hours, I beg ye fly,
"And bring the time when Anna seeks her friend;
"Haste—Oh haste, or Edward sure must die.
"Arrive—and quickly Edward's sorrows end."

I know you will think with me, that these lines are beautiful, and merely a faint image of his manly heart. In the course of our ride, during which he did nothing but converse on your beauty and merit, he gave me a detailed narrative of his life. It was long, but I can do no less than favour you with an abridgment of it. Edward Stanley was early left an orphan: no father's guardian eye directed his footsteps; no mother's fostering care cherished his infancy. His estate was princely, and his family noble, being a wronged branch of an English potentate. During his early youth he had to contend against the machinations of a malignant uncle, who would have robbed him of his large possessions, and left him in black despair, to have eaten the bread of penury. His courage and understanding, however, conquered this difficulty, and at the age of fourteen he was quietly admitted to an university. Here he continued peacefully to wander amid the academic bowers, until the blast of war rung in his ears, and called him to the field of honour. Edward was ever foremost in the hour of danger. It was his fate to meet the enemy often, and as often did "he pluck honour from the pale- fac'd moon." He fought at Chippewa—bled at the side of the gallant Lawrence-and nearly laid down his life on the ensanguined plains of Marengo. But it would be a fruitless task to include all the scenes of his danger and his glory. Thanks to the kind fates which shield the lives of the brave, he yet lives to adore my Julia. That you may be as happy as you deserve, and happier than your heart- stricken friend, is the constant prayer of your ANNA."

"P. S. Write me soon, and make my very best respects to your excellent aunt. It was laughable enough that Charles Weston should be afraid of a flash of lightning. I mentioned it to Antonio, who cried, while manly indignation clouded his brow, 'chill penury repressed his noble rage, and froze the genial current of the soul.' However, say nothing to Charles about it, I charge you."

{Highlands = the Hudson Highlands, a mountainous region in Putnam and Dutchess Counties, through which the Hudson River passes in a deep and picturesque gorge; Eolus = God of the winds; Boreas = God of the North wind; Seneca = one of the Finger Lakes in central New York State; Grecian king = both the Senecas of antiquity, the rhetorician (54 BC-39 AD) and his son the philosopher/statesman (4 BC-65 AD), were, of course, Romans—in any case, Lake Seneca is named after the Seneca nation of the Iroquois Indians; Park-Place = already in 1816 a fashionable street in lower Manhattan; Chippewa = an American army defeated the British at Chippewa, in Canada near Niagara Falls, on July 5, 1814; Lawrence = Captain James ("Don't give up the ship!") Lawrence (1781-1813) of the U.S. Frigate Chesapeake was killed on June 1, 1813, as his ship was captured by H.M.S. Shannon outside Boston harbor; Marengo = battle won by Napoleon against the Austrians on June 14, 1800—"Antonio's" military career was truly an amazing one!; pluck honor.... = slightly misquoted from Shakespeare, "King Henry IV, Part I," Act I, Scene 3, line 202; chill penury.... = slightly misquoted from Thomas Gray, "Elegy in a Country Churchyard" verse 13}

Julia fairly gasped for breath as she read this epistle: her very soul was entranced by the song. Whatever of seeming contradiction there might be in the letter of her friend, her active mind soon reconciled. She was now really beloved, and in a manner most grateful to her heart—by the sole power of sympathy and congenial feelings. Whatever might be the adoration of Edward Stanley, it was more than equalled by the admiration of this amiable girl. Her very soul seemed to her to be devoted to his worship; she thought of him constantly, and pictured out his various distresses and dangers; she wept at his sufferings, and rejoiced in his prosperity—and all this in the short space of one hour. Julia was yet in the midst of this tumult of feeling, when another letter was placed in her hands, and on opening it she read as follows:

"Dear Julia,

"I should have remembered my promise, and come out and spent a week with you, had not one of Mary's little boys been quite sick; of course I went to her until he recovered. But if you will ask aunt Margaret to send for me, I will come tomorrow with great pleasure, for I am sure you must find it solitary, now Miss Miller has left you. Tell aunt to send by the servant a list of such books as she wants

from Goodrich's, and I will get them for her, or indeed any thing else that I can do for her or you. Give my love to aunt, and tell her that, knowing her eyes are beginning to fail, I have worked her a cap, which I shall bring with me. Mamma desires her love to you both, and believe me to be affectionately your cousin, KATHERINE EMMERSON."

This was well enough; but as it was merely a letter of business, one perusal, and that a somewhat hasty one, was sufficient. Julia loved its writer more than she suspected herself, but there was nothing in her manner or character that seemed calculated to excite strong emotion. In short, all her excellences were so evident that nothing was left dependent on innate evidence; and our heroine seldom dwelt with pleasure on any character that did not give a scope to her imagination. In whatever light she viewed the conduct or disposition of her cousin, she was met by obstinate facts that admitted of no cavil nor of any exaggeration.

Turning quickly, therefore, from this barren contemplation to one better suited to her inclinations, Julia's thoughts resumed the agreeable reverie from which she had been awakened. She also could paint, and after twenty trials she at length sketched an outline of the figure of a man that answered to Anna's description, and satisfied her own eye. Without being conscious of the theft, she had copied from a print of the Apollo, and clothed it in the uniform which Bonaparte is said to have worn. A small scar was traced on the cheek in such a manner that although it might be fancied as the ravages of a bullet, it admirably answered all the purposes of a dimple. Two epaulettes graced the shoulders of the hero; and before the picture was done, although it was somewhat at variance with republican principles, an aristocratical star glittered on its breast. Had he his birth-right, thought Julia, it would be there in reality; and this idea amply justified the innovation. To this image, which it took several days to complete, certain verses were addressed also, but they were never submitted to the confidence of her friend. The whole subject was now beginning to be too sacred even for such a communication; and as the mind of Julia every hour became more entranced with its new master, her delicacy shrunk from an exposure of her weakness: it was getting too serious for the light compositions of epistolary correspondence.

We furnish a copy of the lines, as they are not only indicative of her feelings, but may give the reader some idea of the powers of her imagination.

"Beloved image of a god-like mind,
"In sacred privacy thy power I feel;
"What bright perfection in thy form's combin'd!
"How sure to injure, and how kind to heal.

"Thine eagle eye bedazzles e'en the brain,
"Thy gallant brow bespeaks the front of Jove;
"While smiles enchant me, tears in torrents rain,
"And each seductive charm impels to love.

"Ah! hapless maid, why daring dost thou prove
"The hidden dangers of the urchin's dart;
"Why fix thine eye on this, the god of love,
"And heedless think thee to retain thy heart!"

This was but one of fifty similar effusions, in which Julia poured forth her soul. The flame was kept alive by frequent letters from her friend, in all of which she dwelt with rapture on the moment of their re-union, and never failed to mention Antonio in a manner that added new fuel to the fire that already began to consume Julia, and, in some degree, to undermine her health, at least she thought so.

In the mean time Katherine Emerson paid her promised visit to her friends, and our heroine was in some degree drawn from her musings on love and friendship. The manners of this young lady were conspicuously natural; she had a confirmed habit of calling things by their right names, and never dwelt in the least in superlatives. Her affections seemed centered in the members of her own family; nor had she ever given Julia the least reason to believe she preferred her to her own sister, notwithstanding that sister was married, and beyond the years of romance. Yet Julia loved her cousin, and was hardly ever melancholy or out of spirits when in her company. The cheerful and affectionate good humour of Katherine was catching, and all were pleased with her, although but few discovered the reason. Charles Weston soon forgot his displeasure, and with the exception of Julia's hidden uneasiness, the house was one quiet scene of peaceful content. The party were sitting at their work the day after the arrival of Katherine, when Julia thought it a good opportunity to intimate her wish to have the society of her friend during the ensuing winter.

"Why did Mr. Miller give up his house in town, I wonder?" said Julia; "I am sure it was inconsiderate to his family."

"Rather say, my child, that it was in consideration to his children that he did so," observed Miss Emmerson; "his finances would not bear the expense, and suffer him to provide for his family after his death."

"I am sure a little money might be spent now, to indulge his children in society, and they would be satisfied with less hereafter," continued Julia. "Mr. Miller must be rich; and think, aunt, he has seven grown up daughters that he has dragged with him into the wilderness; only think, Katherine, how solitary they must be."

"Had I six sisters I could be solitary no where," said Katherine, simply; "besides, I understand that the country where Mr. Miller resides is beautiful and populous."

"Oh! there are men and women enough, I dare say," cried Julia; "and the family is large—eleven in the whole; but they must feel the want of friends in such a retired place."

"What, with six sisters!" said Katherine, laughing and shaking her head.

"There is a difference between a sister and a friend, you know," said Julia, a little surprised.

"I—indeed I have yet to learn that," exclaimed the other, in a little more astonishment.

"Why you feel affection for your sisters from nature and habit; but friendship is voluntary, spontaneous, and a much stronger feeling—friendship is a sentiment."

"And cannot one feel this sentiment, as you call it, for a sister?" asked Katherine, smiling.

"I should think not," returned Julia, musing; "I never had a sister; but it appears to me that the very familiarity of sisters would be destructive to friendship."

"Why I thought it was the confidence—the familiarity—the secrets—which form the very essence of friendship," cried Katherine; "at least so I have always heard."

"True," said Julia, eagerly, "you speak true—the confidence and the secrets—but not the—the—I am not sure that I express myself well—but the intimate knowledge that one has of one's own sister—that I should think would be destructive to the delicacy of friendship."

"Julia means that a prophet has never honour in his own country," cried Charles with a laugh—"a somewhat doubtful compliment to your sex, ladies, under her application of it."

"But what becomes of your innate evidence of worth in friendship," asked Miss Emmerson; "I thought that was the most infallible of all kinds of testimony: surely that must bring you intimately acquainted with each other's secret foibles too."

"Oh! no—that is a species of sentimental knowledge," returned Julia; "it only dwells on the loftier parts of the character, and never descends to the minute knowledge which makes us suffer so much in each other's estimation: it leaves all these to be filled by the—by the—by the—what shall I call it?"

"Imagination," said Katherine, dryly.

"Well, by the imagination then: but it is an imagination that is purified by sentiment, and"—

"Already rendered partial by the innate evidence of worth," interrupted Charles.

Julia had lost herself in the mazes of her own ideas, and changed the subject under a secret suspicion that her companions were amusing themselves at her expense; she, therefore, proceeded directly to urge the request of Anna Miller.

"Oh! aunt, now we are on the subject of friends, I wish to request you would authorize me to invite my Anna to pass the next winter with us in Park- Place."

"I confess, my love," said Miss Emmerson, glancing her eye at Katherine, "that I had different views for ourselves next winter: has not Miss Miller a married sister living in town?"

"Yes, but she has positively refused to ask the dear girl, I know," said Julia. "Anna is not a favourite with her sister."

"Very odd that," said the aunt gravely; "there must be a reason for her dislike then: what can be the cause of this unusual distaste for each other?"

"Oh!" cried Julia, "it is all the fault of Mrs. Welton; they quarrelled about something, I don't know what, but Anna assures me Mrs. Welton is entirely in fault."

"Indeed!—and you are perfectly sure that Mrs. Welton is in fault—perhaps Anna has, however, laid too strong a stress upon the error of her sister," observed the aunt.

"Oh! not at all, dear aunt. I can assure you, on my own knowledge," continued Julia, "Anna was anxious for a reconciliation, and offered to come and spend the winter with her sister, but Mrs. Welton declared positively that she would not have so selfish a creature round her children: now this Anna told me herself one day, and wept nearly to break her heart at the time."

"Perhaps Mrs. Welton was right then," said Miss Emerson, "and prudence, if not some other reason, justified her refusal."

"How can you say so, dear aunt?" interrupted Julia, with a little impatience, "when I tell you that Anna herself—my Anna, told me with her own lips, here in this very house, that Mrs. Welton was entirely to blame, and that she had never done any thing in her life to justify the treatment or the remark—now Anna told me this with her own mouth."

As Julia spoke, the ardour of her feelings brought the colour to her cheeks and an animation to her eyes that rendered her doubly handsome; and Charles Weston, who had watched her varying countenance with delight, sighed as she concluded, and rising, left the room.

"I understand that your father intends spending his winter in Carolina, for his health," said Miss Emerson to Katherine.

"Yes," returned the other in a low tone, and bending over her work to conceal her feelings; "mother has persuaded him to avoid our winter."

"And you are to be left behind?"

"I am afraid so," was the modest reply.

"And your brother and sister go to Washington together?"

"That is the arrangement, I believe."

Miss Emerson said no more, but she turned an expressive look on her ward, which Julia was too much occupied with her thoughts to notice. The illness of her father, and the prospect of a long separation from her sister, were too much for the fortitude of Katherine at any time, and hastily gathering her work in her hand, she left the room just in time to prevent the tears which streamed down her cheeks from meeting the eyes of her companions.

"We ought to ask Katherine to make one of our family, in the absence of her mother and sister," said Miss Emerson, as soon as the door was closed.

"Ah! yes," cried Julia, fervently, "by all means: poor Katherine, how solitary she would be any where else—I will go this instant and ask her."

"But—stop a moment, my love; you will remember that we have not room for more than one guest. If Katherine is asked, Miss Miller cannot be invited. Let us look at what we are about, and leave nothing to repent of hereafter."

"Ah! it is true," said Julia, re-seating herself in great disappointment; "where will poor Katherine stay then?"

"I know my brother expects that I will take her under my charge; and, indeed, I think he has right to ask it of me."

"But she has no such right as my Anna, who is my bosom friend, you know. Katherine has a right here, it is true, but it is only such a right"—

"As your own," interrupted the aunt gravely; "you are the daughter of my sister, and Katherine is the daughter of my brother."

"True—true—if it be right, lawful right, that is to decide it, then Katherine must come, I suppose," said Julia, a little piqued.

"Let us proceed with caution, my love," said Miss Emerson, kissing her niece—"Do you postpone your invitation until September, when, if you continue of the same mind, we will give Anna the desired invitation: in the mean while prepare yourself for what I know will be a most agreeable surprise."

CHAPTER IV.

ALTHOUGH Julia spent most of her time with her aunt and cousin, opportunities for meditation were not wanting: in the retirement of her closet she perused and re-perused the frequent letters of her friend. The modesty of Julia, or rather shame, would have prevented her from making Anna acquainted with all her feelings, but it would have been treason to her friendship not to have poured out a little of her soul at the feet of Miss Miller. Accordingly, in her letters, Julia did not avoid the name of Antonio. She mentioned it often, but with womanly delicacy, if not with discretion. The seeds of constant association had, unknown to herself, taken deep root, and it was not in the power of Anna Miller to eradicate impressions which had been fastened by the example of the aunt, and cherished by the society of her cousin. Although deluded, weak, and even indiscreet, Julia was not indelicate. Yet enough escaped her to have given any experienced eye an insight into the condition of her mind, had Anna chosen to have exposed her letters to any one. The danger of such a correspondence should alone deter any prudent female from its indulgence. Society has branded the man with scorn who dares abuse the confidence of a woman in this manner; and the dread of the indignation of his associates makes it an offence which is rarely committed by the other sex: but there is no such obligation imposed on women, and that frequently passes for a joke which harrows every feeling that is dear to the female breast, and violates all that is delicate and sensitive in our nature. Surely, where it is necessary from any adventitious circumstances to lay the heart open in this manner, it should only be done to those whose characters are connected with our own, and who feel ridicule inflicted on us, as disgrace heaped on themselves. A peculiar evil of these confidential friendships is, that they are most liable to occur, when, from their youth, their victims are the least guarded; and, at the same time, from inconstancy, the most liable to change. Happily, however, for Julia's peace of mind, she foresaw no such dangers from her intimacy with Anna, and letter and answer passed between them, at short intervals, during the remainder of the summer. We shall give but one more specimen of each, as they have strong resemblance to one another—we select two that were written late in August.

"My own and beloved Julia,

"Your letters are the only consolation that my anxious heart can know in the dreary solitude of this place. Oh! my friend, how would your tender heart bleed did you but know the least of my sufferings; but they are all requited by the delightful anticipations of Park-Place. I hope your dear aunt has not found it necessary to lay down her carriage in the change of the times: write me in your next about it. Antonio has been here again, and he solicited an audience with me in private—of course I granted it, for friendship hallows all that is done under its mantle. It was a moonlight night— mild Luna shedding a balmy light on surrounding objects, and, if possible, rendering my heart more sensitive than ever. One solitary glimmering star showed by its paly quiverings the impress of evening, while not a cloud obscured the vast firmament of heaven. On such an evening Antonio could do nothing but converse of my absent friend; he dwelt on the indescribable grace of your person, the lustre of your eye, and the vermilion of your lips, until exhausted language could furnish no more epithets of rapture: then the transition to your mind was natural and easy; and it was while listening to his honied accents that I thought my Julia herself was talking.

"Soft as the dews from heaven descend, his gentle accents fell."

Ah, Julia! nothing but a strong pre-possession, and my friendship for you, could remove the danger of such a scene. Yes! friend of my heart, I must acknowledge my weakness. There is a youth in New-York, who has long been master of my too sensitive heart, and without him life will be a burthen. Cruel fate divides us now, but when invited by your aunt to Park-Place, Oh, rapture unutterable! I shall be near my Regulus. This, surely, is all that can be wanting to stimulate my Julia to get the invitation from her aunt. Antonio says that if I go to the city this fall, he will hover near me on the road to guard the friend of Julia; and that he will eagerly avail himself of my presence to seek her society. I am called from my delightful occupation by one of my troublesome sisters, who wishes me to assist her in some trifle or other. Make my most profound respects to your dear, good aunt, and believe me your own true friend,

ANNA."

{Regulus = prince}

At length Julia thought she had made the discovery of Anna's reason for her evident desire to spend the winter in town—like herself, her friend had become the victim of the soft passion, and from that moment Julia determined that Katherine Emmerson must seek another residence, in order that Anna might breathe love's atmosphere. How much a desire to see Antonio governed this decision, we cannot say, but we are certain that, if in the least, Julia was herself ignorant of the power. With her, it seemed to be the result of pure, disinterested, and confiding friendship. In answer, our heroine wrote as follows:

"My beloved Anna,

"Your kind, consolatory letters are certainly the solace of my life. Ah! Anna, I have long thought that some important secret lay heavy at your heart. The incoherency of your letters, and certain things too trifling to mention, had made me suspect that some unusual calamity had befallen you. You do not mention who Regulus is. I am burning with curiosity to know, although I doubt not but he is every way worthy of your choice.

"I have in vain run over in my mind every young man that we know, but not one of them that I can find has any of the qualities of a hero. Do relieve my curiosity in your next, and I may have it in my power to write you something of his movements. Oh! Anna, why will you dwell on the name of Antonio—I am sure I ought not to listen as I do to what he says—and when we meet, I am afraid that he will not find all the attractions which your too partial friendship has portrayed. If he should be thus disappointed, Oh! Anna—Anna—what would become of your friend—But I will not dwell on the horrid idea. Charles Weston is yet here, and Katherine Emerson too; so that but for the thoughts of my absent Anna, and perhaps a little uneasiness on the subject of Antonio, I might be perfectly happy. You know how good and friendly Katherine is, and really Charles does all in his power to please. If he were only a little more heroic, he would be a charming young man: for although he is not very handsome, I don't think you notice it in the least when you are intimate with him. Poor Charles, he was terribly mortified about the flash of lightning—but then all are not brave alike. Adieu, my Anna—and if you do converse more with a certain person about, you know whom, let it be with discretion, or you may raise expectations she will not equal. Your own JULIA."

"P. S. I had almost forgotten to say that aunt has promised me that I can ask you to stay with us, if, after the 20th September, I wish it, as you may be sure that I will. Aunt keeps her carriage yet, and I hope will never want it in her old age."

About the time this letter was written, Miss Emerson made both of her nieces acquainted with the promised project that was to give them the agreeable surprise:—she had long contemplated going to see "the Falls," and she now intended putting her plan into execution. Katherine was herself pressed to make one of the party, but the young lady, at the same time she owned her wish to see this far-famed cataract, declined the offer firmly, but gratefully, on account of her desire to spend the remaining time with her father and mother, before they went to the south. Charles Weston looked from Katherine to Julia during this dialogue, and for an instant was at a loss to know which he thought the handsomest of the cousins. But Julia entered into the feelings of the others so quickly, and so gracefully offered to give up the journey, in order that Miss Emerson might continue with her brother, that, aided by her superior beauty, she triumphed. It was evident, that consideration for her niece was a strong inducement with the aunt for making the journey, and the contest became as disinterested as it was pleasing to the auditors. But the authority of Miss Emerson prevailed, and Charles was instantly enlisted as their escort for the journey. Julia never looked more beautiful or amiable than during this short controversy. It had been mentioned by the aunt that she should take the house of Mr. Miller in her road, and the information excited an emotion that brought all her lustre to her eyes, and bloom to her cheeks. Charles thought it was a burst of generous friendship, and admired the self-denial with which she urged her aunt to relinquish the idea. But Julia was constitutionally generous, and it was the excess of the quality that made her enthusiastic and visionary. If she did not deserve all of Charles's admiration, she was entitled to no small share of it. As soon as the question was determined in favour of going, Miss Emerson and Katherine withdrew, leaving Charles alone with the heroine of our tale. Under the age of five-and- twenty, men commonly act at the instigation of sudden impulse, and young Weston was not yet twenty-one. He had long admired Julia for her beauty and good feelings; he did not see one half of her folly, and he knew all of her worth; her enthusiastic friendship for Miss Miller was forgotten; even her mirth at his own want of heroism had at the moment escaped his memory— and the power of the young lady over him was never greater.

"How admirable in you, Julia," he said, seating himself by her side, "to urge what was against your own wishes, in order to oblige your aunt!"

"Do you think so, Charles?" said the other simply; "but you see I urged it feebly, for I did not prevail."

"No, for you mistook your aunt's wishes, it seems: she desires to go—but then all the loveliness of the act was yours."

At the word loveliness, Julia raised her eyes to his face with a slight blush—it was new language for Charles Weston to use, and it was just suited to her feelings. After a moment's pause. however, she replied—

"You use strong language, cousin Charles, such as is unusual for you."

"Julia, although I may not often have expressed it, I have long thought you to be very lovely!" exclaimed the young man, borne away with his ardour at the moment.

"Upon my word, Charles, you improve," said Julia, blushing yet more deeply, and, if possible, looking still handsomer than before.

"Julia—Miss Warren—you tear my secret from me before its time—I love you, Julia, and would wish to make you my wife."

This was certainly very plain English, nor did Julia misunderstand a syllable of what he said—but it was entirely new and unexpected to her; she had lived with Charles Weston with the confidence of a kinswoman, but had never dreamt of him as a lover. Indeed, she saw nothing in him that looked like a being to excite or to entertain such a passion; and although from the moment of his declaration she began insensibly to think differently of him, nothing was farther from her mind than to return his offered affection. But then the opportunity of making a sacrifice to her secret love was glorious, and her frankness forbade her to conceal the truth. Indeed, what better way was there to destroy the unhappy passion of Charles, than to convince him of its hopelessness? These thoughts flashed through her mind with the rapidity of lightning—and trembling with the agitation and novelty of her situation, she answered in a low voice—

"That, Charles, can never be."

"Why never, Julia?" cried the youth, giving way at once to his long-suppressed feelings—"why never? Try me, prove me! there is nothing I will not do to gain your love."

Oh! how seductive to a female ear is the first declaration of an attachment, especially when urged by youth and merit!—it assails her heart in the most vulnerable part, and if it be not fortified unusually well, seldom fails of success. Happily for Julia, the image of Antonio presented itself to save her from infidelity to her old attachment, and she replied—

"You are kind and good, Charles, and I esteem you highly—but ask no more, I beg of you."

"Why, if you grant me this, why forbid me to hope for more?" said the youth eagerly, and looking really handsome.

Julia hesitated a moment, and let her dark eyes fall before his ardent gaze, at a loss what to say—but the face of Apollo in the imperial uniform interposed to save her.

"I owe it to your candour, Mr. Weston, to own my weakness—" she said, and hesitated.

"Go on, Julia—my Julia," said Charles, in an unusually soft voice; "kill me at once, or bid me live!"

Again Julia paused, and again she looked on her companion with kinder eyes than usual—when she felt the picture which lay next her heart, and proceeded—

"Yes, Mr. Weston, this heart, this foolish, weak heart is no longer my own."

"How!" exclaimed Charles, in astonishment, "and have I then a rival, and a successful one too?"

"You have," said Julia, burying her face in her hands to conceal her blushes.—"But, Mr. Weston, on your generosity I depend for secrecy—be as generous as myself."

"Yes—yes—I will conceal my misery from others," cried Charles, springing on his feet and rushing from the room; "would to God I could conceal it from myself!"

Julia was sensibly touched with his distress, and for an instant there was some regret mingled with self-satisfaction at her own candour—but then the delightful reflection soon presented itself of the gratitude of Antonio when he learnt her generous conduct, and her self-denial in favour of a man whom she had as yet never seen.—At the same time she was resolutely determined never to mention the occurrence herself—not even to her Anna.

Miss Emmerson was enabled to discover some secret uneasiness between Charles and Julia, although she was by no means able to penetrate the secret. The good aunt had long anxiously wished for just such a declaration as had been made to her niece, and it was one of the last of her apprehensions that it would not have been favourably received. Of simple and plain habits herself, Miss Emmerson was but little versed in the human heart; she thought that Julia was evidently happy and pleased with her young kinsman, and she considered him in every respect a most eligible connexion for her charge: their joint fortunes would make an ample estate, and they were alike affectionate and good-tempered—what more could be wanting? Nothing however passed in the future intercourse of the young couple to betray their

secrets, and Miss Emerson soon forgot her surmises. Charles was much hurt at Julia's avowal, and had in vain puzzled his brains to discover who his rival could be. No young man that was in the least (so he thought) suitable to his mistress, visited her, and he gave up his conjectures in despair of discovering this unknown lover, until accident or design should draw him into notice. Little did he suspect the truth. On the other hand, Julia spent her secret hours in the delightful consciousness of having now done something that rendered her worthy of Antonio, with occasional regret that she was compelled by delicacy and love to refuse Charles so hastily as she had done.

Very soon after this embarrassing explanation, Julia received a letter from her friend that was in no way distinguishable from the rest, except that it contained the real name of Regulus, which she declared to be Henry Frederick St. Albans. If Charles was at a loss to discover Julia's hidden love, Julia herself was equally uncertain how to know who this Mr. St. Albans was. After a vast deal of musing, she remembered that Anna was absent from school without leave one evening, and had returned alone with a young man who was unknown to the mistress. This incident was said, by some, to have completed her education rather within the usual time. Julia had herself thought her friend indiscreet, but on the whole, hardly treated—and they left the school together. This must have been St. Albans, and Anna stood fully exculpated in her eyes. The letter also announced the flattering fact, that Antonio had already left the country, ordering his servants and horses home, and that he had gone to New-York with the intention of hovering around Julia, in a mask, that she could not possibly remove, during the dangers of their expected journey. Anna acknowledged that she had betrayed Antonio's secret, but pleaded her duty to her friend in justification. She did not think that Julia would be able to penetrate his disguise, as he had declared his intentions so to conceal himself, by paint and artifice, as to be able to escape detection. Here was a new source of pleasure to our heroine: Antonio was already on the wing for the city, perhaps arrived—nay, might have seen her, might even now be within a short distance of the summer-house where she was sitting at the time, and watching her movements. As this idea suggested itself, Julia started, and unconsciously arranging her hair, by bringing forward a neglected curl, moved with trembling steps towards the dwelling. At each turn of the walk our heroine threw a timid eye around in quest of an unknown figure, and more than once fancied she saw the face of the god of music peering at her from the friendly covert of her aunt's shrubbery—and twice she mistook the light green of a neighbouring cornfield, waving in the wind, for the coat of Antonio. Julia had so long associated the idea of her hero with the image in her bosom, that she had given it perfect identity; but, on more mature reflection, she was convinced of her error: he would come disguised, Anna had told her, and had ordered his servants home; where that home was, Julia was left in ignorance—but she fervently hoped, not far removed from her beloved aunt. The idea of a separation from this affectionate relative, who had proved a mother to her in her infancy, gave great pain to her best feelings; and Julia again internally prayed that the residence of Antonio might not be far distant.—What the disguise of her lover would be, Julia could not imagine—probably, that of a wandering harper: but then she remembered that there were no harpers in America, and the very singularity might betray his secret. Music is the "food of love," and Julia fancied for a moment that Antonio might appear as an itinerant organist—but it was only for a moment; for as soon as she figured to herself the Apollo form, bending under the awkward load of a music-grinder, she turned in disgust from the picture. His taste, thought Julia will protect me from such a sight—she might have added, his convenience too. Various disguises presented themselves to our heroine, until, on a view of the whole subject, she concluded that Antonio would not appear as a musician at all, but in some capacity in which he might continue unsuspected, near her person, and execute his project of shielding her from the dangers of travelling. It was then only as a servant that he could appear, and, after mature reflection, Julia confidently expected to see him in the character of a coachman.

Willing to spare her own horses, Miss Emerson had already sent to the city for the keeper of a livery-stable, to come out and contract with her for a travelling carriage, to convey her to the Falls of Niagara. The man came, and it is no wonder that Julia, under her impressions, chose to be present at the conversation.

"Well then," said Miss Emerson to the man, "I will pay you your price, but you must furnish me with good horses to meet me at Albany—remember that I take all the useless expense between the two cities, that I may know whom it is I deal with."

"Miss Emerson ought to know me pretty well by this time," said the man; "I have driven her enough, I think."

"And a driver," continued the lady, musing, "who am I to have for a driver?" Here Julia became all attention, trembling and blushing with apprehension.

"Oh, a driver!" cried the horse-dealer; "I have got you an excellent driver, one of the first chop in the city."

{first chop = first rank, highest quality}

Although these were not the terms that our heroine would have used herself in speaking of this personage, yet she thought they plainly indicated his superiority, and she waited in feverish suspense to hear more.

"He must be steady, and civil, and sober, and expert, and tender-hearted," said Miss Emmerson, who thought of any thing but a hero in disguise.

"Yes—yes—yes—yes—yes," replied the stable-keeper, nodding his head and speaking at each requisite, "he is all that, I can engage to Miss Emmerson."

"And his eyesight must be good," continued the lady, deeply intent on providing well for her journey; "we may ride late in the evening, and it is particularly requisite that he have good eyes."

"Yes—yes, ma'am," said the man, in a little embarrassment that did not escape Julia; "he has as good an eye as any man in America."

"Of what age is he?" asked Miss Emmerson.

"About fifty," replied the man, thinking years would be a recommendation.

"Fifty!" exclaimed Julia, in a tone of disappointment.

"'Tis too old," said Miss Emmerson; "he should be able to undergo fatigue."

"Well, I may be mistaken—Oh, he can't be more than forty, or thirty," continued the man, watching the countenance of Julia; "he is a man that looks much older than he is."

"Is he strong and active?"

"I guess he is—he's as strong as an ox, and active as a cat," said the other, determined he should pass.

"Well, then," said the aunt, in her satisfied way, "let every thing be ready for us in Albany by next Tuesday. We shall leave home on Monday."

The man withdrew.

Julia had heard enough—for ox she had substituted Hercules, and for cat, she read the feathered Mercury.

CHAPTER V.

THE long expected Monday at length arrived, and Miss Emmerson and Julia, taking an affectionate leave of their relatives in the city, went on board the steam-boat under the protection of Charles Weston. Here a new scene indeed opened on our heroine; for some time she even forgot to look around her in the throng in quest of Antonio. As the boat glided along the stream, she stood leaning on one arm of Charles, while Miss Emmerson held the other, in delighted gaze at the objects, which they had scarcely distinguished before they were passed.

"See, dear Charles," cried Julia, in a burst of what she would call natural feeling—"there is our house—here the summerhouse, and there the little arbour where you read to us last week Scott's new novel—how delightful! every thing now seems and feels like home."

"Would it were a home for us all," said Charles, gently pressing her arm in his own, and speaking only to be heard by Julia, "then should I be happy indeed."

Julia thought no more of Antonio; but while her delighted eye rested on the well known scenes around their house, and {as} she stood in the world, for the first time, leaning on Charles, she thought him even nearer than their intimacy and consanguinity made them. But the boat was famous for her speed, and the house, garden, and every thing Julia knew, were soon out of sight, and she, by accident, touching the picture which she had encased in an old gold setting of her mother's, and lodged in her bosom, was immediately restored to her former sense of things. Then her eye glanced rapidly round the boat, but discovering no face which in the least resembled disguise, she abandoned the expectation of meeting her lover before they reached Albany. Her beauty drew many an eye on her, however, and catching the steady and admiring gaze of one or two of the gentlemen, Julia's heart beat, and her face

was covered with blushes.

She was by no means sure that Antonio would appear as a coachman—this was merely a suggestion of her own; and the idea that he might possibly be one of the gazers, covered her with confusion: her blushes drew still more attention and admiration upon her; and we cannot say what might have been the result of her fascinations, had not Charles at this instant approached them, and pointing to a sloop they were passing at the time, exclaimed—

"See, madam—see, Julia—there is our travelling equipage on board that sloop, going up to meet us in Albany."

Our heroine looked as directed, and saw a vessel moving with tolerable rapidity up the river, within a short distance from them. On its deck were a travelling carriage and a pair of horses, and by the latter stood a man who, by the whip in his hand, was evidently the driver. His stature was tall and athletic; his complexion dark to near blackness; his face was buried in whiskers; and his employer had spoken the truth when he said he had as good an eye as any men in America—it was large, black, and might be piercing. But then he had but one—at least the place where the other ought to be, was covered by an enormous patch of green silk. This then was Antonio. It is true, he did not resemble Apollo, but his disguise altered him so that it was difficult to determine. As they moved slowly by the vessel, the driver recognised Charles, having had an interview with him the day before, and saluted him with a low bow—his salutation was noticed by the young man, who slightly touched his hat, and gave him a familiar nod in return—Julia, unconsciously, bent her body, and felt her cheeks glow with confusion as she rose again. She could not muster resolution to raise her eyes towards the sloop, but by a kind of instinctive coquetry dragged her companion to the other side of the boat. As soon as she was able to recover her composure, Julia revolved in her mind the scene which had just occurred. She had seen Antonio—every thing about him equalled her expectations—even at the distance, she had easily discerned the noble dignity of his manners—his eye gave assurance of his conscious worth—his very attitude was that of a gentleman. Not to know him for a man of birth, of education and of fortune, Julia felt to her would be impossible; and she trembled lest others, as discerning as herself, should discover his disguise, and she in consequence be covered with confusion. She earnestly hoped his incog. would ever remain unknown, for her delicacy shrunk at the publicity and notoriety which would then attend his attachment. It was certainly delightful to be loved, and so loved—to be attended, and so attended; but the heart of Julia was too unpractised to relish the laugh and observations of a malignant world. "No, my Antonio," she breathed internally, "hover around me, shield me from impending dangers, delight me with your presence, and enchant me with your eye; but claim me in the guise of a gentleman and a hero, that no envious tongue may probe the secrets of our love, nor any profane scoffer ridicule those sensitive pleasures that he is too unsentimental to enjoy." With these, and similar thoughts, did Julia occupy herself, until Charles pointed out to her the majestic entrance to the Highlands. Our heroine, who was truly alive to all the charms of nature, gazed with rapture as the boat plunged between the mountains on either hand, and turned a wistful gaze down the river, in the vain hope that Antonio might, at the same moment, be enjoying the scene—but the sluggish sloop was now far behind, and the eye of Antonio, bright as it was, could not pierce the distance. Julia felt rather relieved than otherwise, when the vessel which contained her hero was hid from view by a mountain that they doubled. Her feelings were much like those of a girl who had long anxiously waited the declaration of a favourite youth, had received it, and acknowledged her own partiality. She felt all the assurance of her conquest, and would gladly, for a time, avoid the shame of her own acknowledgment. The passage up the Hudson furnishes in itself so much to charm the eye of a novice, that none but one under the extraordinary circumstances of our heroine, could have beheld the beauties of the river unmoved. If Julia did not experience quite as much rapture in the journey as she had anticipated, she attributed it to the remarkably delicate situation she was in with her lover, and possibly to a dread of his being detected. An officer of his rank and reputation must be well known, thought she, and he may meet with acquaintances every where. However, by the attention of Charles, she passed the day with a very tolerable proportion of pleasure. Their arrival at Albany was undistinguished by any remarkable event, though Julia looked in vain through the darkness of the night, in quest of the fertile meadows and desert islands which Anna had mentioned in her letter. Even the river seemed straight and uninteresting. But Julia was tired—it was night—and Antonio was absent.

The following morning Miss Emmerson and her niece, attended by Charles, took a walk to examine the beauties of Albany. It did not strike our heroine as being so picturesque as it had her friend; still it had novelty, and that lent it many charms it might have wanted on a more intimate acquaintance. Their forenoon, however, exhausted the beauties of this charming town, and they had returned to the inn, and the ladies were sitting in rather a listless state when Charles entered the room with a look of pleasure, and cried "he is here."

"Who!" exclaimed Julia, starting, and trembling like an aspen.

"He!—Tony," said Charles, in reply.

Julia was unable to say any more; but her aunt, without noticing her agitation, asked mildly, "And who is Tony?"

"Why Anthony, the driver—he is here and wishes to see you."

"Show him up, Charles, and let us learn when he will be ready to go on."

This was an awful moment to Julia—she was on the eve of being confronted, in a room, for the first time, with the man on whom she felt that her happiness or misery must depend. Although she knew the vast importance to her of good looks at such a moment, she looked unusually ill—she was pale from apprehension, and awkward and ungraceful from her agitation. She would have given the world to have got out of the room, but this was impossible—there was but one door, and through that he must come. She had just concluded that it was better to remain in her chair than incur the risk of fainting in the passage, when he entered, preceded by Charles. His upper, and part of his lower lip, were clean shaved; a small part of one cheek and his nose were to be seen; all the rest of his face was covered with hair, or hid under the patch. An enormous coloured handkerchief was tied, in a particular manner, round his neck; and his coat, made of plain materials, and somewhat tarnished with service, was buttoned as close to his throat as the handkerchief would allow. In short, his whole attire was that of a common driver of a hack carriage; and no one who had not previously received an intimation that his character was different from his appearance, would at all have suspected the deception.

"Your name is Anthony?" said Miss Emmerson, as he bowed to her with due deference.

"Yes, ma'am, Anthony—Tony Sandford," was the reply—it was uttered in a vulgar nasal tone, that Julia instantly perceived was counterfeited: but Miss Emmerson, with perfect innocence, proceeded in her inquiries.

"Are your horses gentle and good, Tony?" adopting the familiar nomenclature that seemed most to his fancy.

"As gentle as e'er a lady in the land," said Tony, turning his large black eye round the room, and letting it dwell a moment on the beautiful face of Julia—her heart throbbed with tumultuous emotion at the first sound of his voice, and she was highly amused at the ingenuity he had displayed, in paying a characteristic compliment to her gentleness, in this clandestine manner—if he preserves his incognito so ingeniously he will never be detected, thought Julia, and all will be well.

"And the carriage," continued Miss Emmerson, "is it fit to carry us?"

"I can't say how fit it may be to carry sich ladies as you be, but it is as good a carriage as runs out of York."

Here was another delicate compliment, thought Julia, and so artfully concealed under brutal indifference that it nearly deceived even herself.

"When will you be ready to start?" asked Miss Emmerson.

"This moment," was the prompt reply—"we can easily reach Schenectady by sundown."

Here Julia saw the decision and promptitude of a soldier used to marches and movements, besides an eager desire to remove her from the bustle of a large town and thoroughfare, to a retirement where she would be more particularly under his protection. Miss Emmerson, on the other hand, saw nothing but the anxiety of a careful hireling, willing to promote the interest of his master, who was to be paid for his conveyance by the job—so differently do sixty and sixteen judge the same actions! At all events, the offer was accepted, and the man ordered to secure the baggage, and prepare for their immediate departure.

"Why don't you help Antonio on with the baggage, Charles?" said Julia, as she stood looking at the driver tottering under the weight of the trunks. Charles stared a moment with surprise—the name created no astonishment, but the request did. Julia had a habit of softening names, that were rather harsh in themselves, to which he was accustomed. Peter she called Pierre; Robert was Rubert {sic}; and her aunt's black footman Timothy, she had designated as Timotheus: but it was not usual for ladies to request gentlemen to perform menial offices—until, recollecting that Julia had expressed unusual solicitude concerning a dressing-box that contained Anna's letters, he at once supposed it was to that she wished him to attend. Charles left the room, and superintended the whole arrangements, when once enlisted. Julia now felt that every doubt of the identity of her lover with this coachman was

removed. He had ingeniously adopted the name of Anthony, as resembling in sound the one she herself had given him in her letters. This he undoubtedly had learnt from Anna— and then Sandford was very much like Stanley—his patch, his dress, his air—every thing about him united to confirm her impressions; and Julia, at the same time she resolved to conduct herself towards him in their journey with a proper feminine reserve, thought she could do no less to a man who submitted to so much to serve her, than to suffer him to perceive that she was not entirely insensible to the obligation.

Our heroine could not but admire the knowing manner with which Antonio took his seat on the carriage, and the dexterity he discovered in the management of his horses—this was infallible evidence of his acquaintance with the animal, and a sure sign that he was the master of many, and had long been accustomed to their service. Perhaps, thought Julia, he has been an officer of cavalry.

In the constant excitement produced by her situation, Julia could not enter into all the feelings described by her friend, during the ride to Schenectady. Its beauties might be melancholy, but could she be melancholy, and Antonio so near? The pines might be silvery and lofty, but the proud stature of majestic man, eclipsed in her eyes all their beauties. Not so Charles. He early began to lavish his abuse on the sterile grounds they passed, and gave any thing but encomiums on the smoothness of the road they were travelling. In the latter particular, even the quiet spirit of Miss Emmerson joined him, and Julia herself was occasionally made sensible that she was not reposing "on a bed of roses."

{sterile grounds = the sandy "pine barrens" between Albany and Schenectady were notorious for their lack of scenic beauty}

"Do I drive too fast for the ladies?" asked Antonio, on hearing a slight complaint and a faint scream in the soft voice of Julia. Oh, how considerate he is! thought our heroine—how tender!—without his care I certainly should have been killed in this rude place. It was expected that as she had complained, she would answer; and after a moment employed in rallying her senses for the undertaking, she replied in a voice of breathing melody—

"Oh! no, Antonio, you are very considerate."

For a world Julia could not have said more; and Miss Emmerson thought that she had said quite as much as the occasion required; but Miss Emmerson, it will be remembered, supposed their driver to be Anthony Sandford. The hero, himself, on hearing such a gentle voice so softly replying to his question, could not refrain from turning his face into the carriage, and Julia felt her own eyes lower before his earnest gaze, while her cheeks burned with the blushes that suffused them. But the look spoke volumes—he understands my "Antonio," thought Julia, and perceives that, to me, he is no longer unknown. That expressive glance has opened between us a communication that will cease but with our lives. Julia now enjoyed, for the remainder of their journey to Mr. Miller's, one of the greatest pleasures of love—unsuspected by others, she could hold communion with him who had her heart, by the eyes, and a thousand tender and nameless little offices which give interest to affection, and zest to passion.

They had now got half way between the two cities, and Charles took a seat by the side of the driver, with the intention, as he expressed himself, of stretching his legs: the carriage was open and light, so that all of the figures of the two young men could be seen by the ladies, as well as their conversation heard. Charles never appeared to less advantage in his person, thought Julia, than now, seated by the side of the manly and noble Antonio. The figure of Charles was light, and by no means without grace; yet it did not strike the fancy of our heroine as so fit to shield and support her through life, as the more robust person of his companion. Julia herself was, in form, the counterpart of her mind—she was light, airy, and beautifully softened in all her outlines. It was impossible to mistake her for any thing but a lady, and one of the gentlest passions and sentiments. She felt her own weakness, and would repose it on the manly strength of Antonio.

"Which do you call the best of your horses?" asked Charles, so soon as he had got himself comfortably seated.

"The off—but both are true as steel," was the laconic reply. The comparison was new to Julia, and it evidently denoted a mind accustomed to the contemplation of arms.

"How long have you followed the business of a driver, Tony?" said Charles, in the careless manner of a gentleman when he wishes to introduce familiarity with an inferior, by seeming to take an interest in the other's affairs. Julia felt indignant at the freedom of his manner, and particularly at the epithet of "Tony"—yet her lover did not in the least regard either—or rather his manner exhibited no symptoms of displeasure—he has made up his mind, thought Julia, to support his disguise, and it is best for us both that he should.

"Ever since I was sixteen I have been used to horses," was the reply of Antonio to the question of

Charles—Julia smiled at the ambiguity of the answer, and was confirmed in her impression that he had left college at that age to serve in the cavalry.

"You must understand them well by this time," continued Charles, glancing his eye at his companion as if to judge of his years—"You must be forty"—Julia fidgeted a little at this guess of Charles, but soon satisfied herself with the reflection that his disguise contributed to the error.

"My age is very deceiving," said the man; "I have seen great hardships in my time, both of body and mind."

Here Julia could scarcely breathe through anxiety. Every syllable that he uttered was devoured with eager curiosity by the enamoured girl—he knew that she was a listener, and that she understood his disguise; and doubtless meant, in that indirect manner, to acquaint her with the incidents of his life. It was clear that he indicated his age to be less than what his appearance would have led her to believe—his sufferings, his cruel sufferings had changed him.

"The life of a coachman is not hard," said Charles.

"No, sir, far from it—but I have not been a coachman all my life."

Nothing could be plainer than this—it was a direct assertion of his degradation by the business in which he was then engaged.

"In what manner did you lose your eye, Tony," said Charles, in a tone of sympathy that Julia blessed him for in her heart, although she knew that the member was uninjured, and only hidden to favour his disguise. Antonio hesitated a little in his answer, and stammered while giving it—"It was in the wars," at length he got out, and Julia admired the noble magnanimity which would not allow him, even in imagination, to suffer in a less glorious manner—notwithstanding his eye is safe and as beautiful as the other, he has suffered in the wars, thought our heroine, and it is pardonable for him to use the deception, situated as he is—it is nothing more than an equivoque. But this was touching Charles on a favourite chord. Little of a hero as Julia fancied him to be, he delighted in conversing about the war with those men, who, having acted in subordinate stations, would give a different view of the subject from the official accounts, in which he was deeply read. It was no wonder, therefore, that he eagerly seized on the present opportunity to relieve the tedium of a ride between Albany and Schenectady.

{equivoque = double meaning, a pun}

"In what battle," asked Charles, quickly; "by sea or by land?"

"By sea," said Antonio, speaking to his horses, with an evident unwillingness to say any more on the subject.

Ah! the deception, and the idea of his friend Lawrence, are too much for his sensibility, thought Julia; and to relieve him she addressed Charles herself.

"How far are we from Schenectady, cousin Charles?"

Antonio, certainly, was not her cousin Charles; but as if he thought the answering such questions to be his peculiar province, he replied immediately—

"Four miles, ma'am; there's the stone."

There was nothing in the answer itself, or the manner of its delivery, to attract notice in an unsuspecting listener; but by Julia it was well understood—it was the first time he had ever spoken directly to herself—it was a new era in their lives—and his body turned half round toward her as he spoke, showed his manly form to great advantage; but the impressive and dignified manner in which he dropped his whip towards the mile-stone, Julia felt that she never could forget—it was intended to mark the spot where he had first addressed her. He had chosen it with taste. The stone stood under the shade of a solitary oak, and might easily be fancied to be a monument erected to commemorate some important event in the lives of our lovers. Julia ran over in her mind the time when she should pay an annual visit to that hallowed place, and leaning on the arm of her majestic husband, murmur in his ear, "Here, on this loved spot, did Antonio first address his happy, thrice happy Julia."

"Well, Tony," said the mild voice of Miss Emmerson, "the sun is near setting, let us go the four miles as fast as you please."

"I'm sure, ma'am," said Antonio, with profound respect, "you don't want to get in more than I do, for I

had no sleep all last night; I'll not keep you out one minute after night"—so saying, he urged his horses to a fast trot, and was quite as good as his word. How delicate in his attentions, and yet how artfully has he concealed his anxiety on my account under a feigned desire for sleep, thought Julia.

If any thing had been wanting either to convince Julia of the truth of her conjecture, or to secure the conquest of Antonio, our heroine felt that this short ride had abundantly supplied it.

CHAPTER VI.

THE following day our travellers were on the road before the sun, and busily pursued their route through the delightful valley of the Mohawk. It was now that Julia, in some measure accustomed to her proximity to her hero, began to enjoy the beauties of the scenery; her eye dwelt with rapture on each opening glimpse that they caught of the river, and took in its gaze meadows of never-failing verdure, which were beautifully interspersed with elms that seemed coeval with the country itself. Occasionally she would draw the attention of her aunt to some view of particular interest; and if her eager voice caught the attention of Antonio, and he turned to gaze, to ponder, and to admire—then Julia felt happy indeed, for then it was that she felt the indescribable bliss of sharing our pleasures with those we love. What heart of sensibility has stood and coldly gazed on a scene over which the eye, that it loves to admire, is roving with delight? Who is there that has yet to learn, that if the strongest bond to love is propinquity, so is its tenderest tie, sympathy? In this manner did our lovely heroine pass a day of hitherto untasted bliss. Antonio would frequently stop his horses on the summit of a hill, and Julia understood the motive; turning her looks in the direction in which she saw the eye of her lover bent, she would sit in silent and secret communion with his feelings. In vain Charles endeavoured to catch her attention—his remarks were unnoticed, and his simple efforts to please disregarded. At length, as they advanced towards the close of their day's ride, Charles, observing a mountain obtruding itself directly across their path, and meeting the river, which swept with great velocity around its base, cried aloud with a laugh—

"Anthony, I wish you would remove your nose!"

"Charles!" exclaimed Julia, shocked at his rude familiarities with a man of Antonio's elevated character.

"Poh!" said the young man, in an under tone, conceiving her surprise to be occasioned by his lowering himself to joke with an inferior, "he is a good, honest fellow, and don't mind a joke at all, I assure you."

Charles was right, for Antonio, moving his face, with a laugh cried in his turn—"There, sir, my nose is moved, but you can't see no better, after all."

Julia was amused with his condescension, which she thought augured perfect good-nature and affability. After all, thought Julia, if noble and commanding qualities are necessary to excite admiration or to command respect, familiar virtues induce us to love more tenderly, and good temper is absolutely necessary to contribute to our comfort. On the whole, she was rather pleased than otherwise, that Antonio could receive and return what was evidently intended for a witticism, although as yet she did not comprehend it. But Charles did not leave her long in doubt. On the north side of the Mohawk, and at about fifty miles from its mouth, is a mountain which, as we have already said, juts, in a nearly perpendicular promontory, into the bed of the river; its inclination is sufficient to admit of its receiving the name of a nose. Without the least intention of alluding to our hero, the early settlers had affixed the name of St. Anthony, who appears to have been a kind of Dutch deity in this state, and to have monopolized all the natural noses within her boundaries to himself. The vulgar idiom made the pronunciation an-**TONY**'s nose—and all this Charles briefly explained to Miss Emmerson and her niece by way of giving point to his own wit. He had hardly made them comprehend the full brilliancy and beauty of his application of the mountain to their driver, when they reached the pass itself. The road was barely sufficient to suffer two carriages to move by each other without touching, being from necessity dug out of the base of the mountain; a precipice of many feet led to the river, which was high and turbulent at the time; there was no railing nor any protection on the side next the water—and in endeavouring to avoid the unprotected side of the road, two wagons had met a short time before, and one of them lost a wheel in the encounter—its owner had gone to a distance for assistance, leaving the vehicle where it had fallen. The horses of Antonio, unaccustomed to such a sight, were with some difficulty driven by the loaded wagon, and when nearly past the object, took a sudden fright at its top, which was flapping in the wind. All the skill and exertions of Antonio to prevent their backing was useless, and carriage and horses would inevitably have gone off the bank together, had not Charles, with admirable presence of mind, opened a door, and springing out, placed a billet of wood, which had been used as a base for a lever in lifting the broken wagon, under one of the wheels. This checked the

horses until Antonio had time to rally them, and, by using the whip with energy, bring them into the road again. He certainly showed great dexterity as a coachman. But, unhappily, the movement of Charles had been misunderstood by Julia, and, throwing open the door, with the blindness of fear, she sprang from the carriage also: it was on the side next the water, and her first leap was over the bank; the hill was not perpendicular, but too steep for Julia to recover her balance—and partly running, and partly falling, the unfortunate girl was plunged into the rapid river. Charles heard the screams of Miss Emmerson, and caught a glimpse of the dress of Julia as she sprang from the carriage. He ran to the bank just in time to see her fall into the water.

{St. Anthony's Nose = this incident probably occurred at a place on the Mohawk River called today The Noses, between Fonda and Palatine Bridge; there is another St. Anthony's Nose on the Hudson River}

"Oh, God!" he cried, "Julia!—my Julia!"—and, without seeming to touch the earth, he flew down the bank, and threw himself headlong into the stream. His great exertions and nervous arms soon brought him alongside of Julia, and, happily for them both, an eddy in the waters drew them to the land. With some difficulty Charles was enabled to reach the shore with his burthen.

Julia was not insensible, nor in the least injured. Her aunt was soon by her side, and folding her in her arms, poured out her feelings in a torrent of tears. Charles would not, however, suffer any delay, or expressions of gratitude—but, forcing both aunt and niece into the carriage, bid Anthony drive rapidly to a tavern known to be at no great distance.—

On their arrival, both Julia and Charles immediately clad themselves in dry clothes—when Miss Emmerson commanded the presence of the young man in her own room. On entering, Charles found Julia sitting by a fire, a thousand times handsomer, if possible, than ever. Her eyes were beaming with gratitude, and her countenance was glowing with the excitement produced by the danger that she had encountered.

"Ah! Charles, my dear cousin," cried Julia, rising and meeting him with both hands extended, "I owe my life to your bravery and presence of mind."

"And mine too, Charles." said Miss Emmerson; "but for you, we should have all gone off the hill together."

"Yes, if Anthony had not managed the horses admirably, you might have gone indeed," said Charles, with a modest wish to get rid of their praise. But this was an unlucky speech for Charles: he had, unconsciously presented the image of a rival, at the moment that he hoped he filled all the thoughts of Julia.

"Ah, Antonio!" she cried, "poor Antonio!—and where is he?—Why do you not send for him, dear aunt?"

"What, my love, into my bed-chamber!" said Miss Emmerson, in surprise; "fear has made the girl crazy!—But, Charles, where is Anthony?"

"In the stable, with the horses, I believe," said the youth—"no, here he is, under the window, leading them to the pump."

"Give him this money," said Miss Emmerson, "and tell him it is for his admirable skill in saving my life."

Julia saw the danger of an exposure if she interfered, yet she had the curiosity to go to the window, and see how Antonio would conduct in the mortifying dilemma.

"Here, Anthony," said Charles, "Miss Emmerson has sent you ten dollars, for driving so well, and saving the carriage."

"Ah! sir, it is no matter—I can ask nothing for that, I'm sure."

But Charles, accustomed to the backwardness of the common Americans to receive more than the price stipulated, still extended his hand towards the man. Julia saw his embarrassment, and knowing of no other expedient by which to relieve him, said, in a voice of persuasion—

"Take it for my sake, Antonio—if it be unworthy of you, still, take it, to oblige me."

The man no longer hesitated, but took the money, and gave Julia a look and a bow that sunk deep into the tablet of her memory—while Charles thought him extremely well paid for what he had done, but

made due allowances for the excited state of his cousin's feelings.

"You perceive," said Miss Emmerson, with a smile, as Julia withdrew from the window, "if Charles be a little afraid of lightning, he has no dread of the water."

"Ah! I retract my error," cried Julia; "Charles must be brave, or he never could have acted so coolly, and so well."

"Very true, my love," said Miss Emmerson, excessively gratified to hear her niece praise the youth; "it is the surest test of courage when men behave with presence of mind in novel situations. Those accustomed to particular dangers easily discharge their duties, because they know, as it were instinctively, what is to be done. Thus with Tony—he did well, but, I doubt not, he was horribly frightened—and for the world he could not have done what Charles did."

"Not Antonio!" echoed Julia, thrown a little off her guard—"I would pledge my life, aunt, that Antonio would have done as much, if not more, than Charles!"

"Why did he not, then?—It was his place to stop the carriage—why did he not?"

"It was his place," said Julia, "to manage the horses, and you acknowledge that he did it well. Duties incurred, no matter how unworthy of us, must be discharged; and although we may be conscious that our merit or our birth entitles us to a different station from the one we fill, yet a noble mind will not cease to perform its duty, even in poverty and disgrace."

Miss Emmerson listened in surprise; but as her niece often talked in a manner that she did not comprehend, she attributed it to the improvements in education, and was satisfied. But Julia had furnished herself with a clue to what had occasioned her some uneasiness. At one time she thought Antonio ought to have left carriage, horses, every thing, and flown to her rescue, as Charles had done; but now she saw that the probity of his soul forbade it. He had, doubtless, by secret means, induced the owner of the horses to entrust them to his keeping—and could he, a soldier, one used to trust and responsibility, forget his duty in the moment of need? Sooner would the sentinel quit his post unrelieved—sooner the gallant soldier turn his back on his enemy—or sooner would Antonio forget his Julia!

With this view of the propriety of his conduct, Julia was filled with the desire to let him know that she approved of what he had done. Surely, if any thing can be mortifying to a lover, thought our heroine, it must be to see a rival save the life of his mistress, while imperious duty chains him to another task.

Young as Julia was, she had already learnt, that it is not enough for our happiness that we have the consciousness of doing right, but it is necessary that others should think we have done so too.

Accordingly, early the following morning she arose, and wandered around the house, in hopes that chance would throw her lover in her way, and give her an opportunity of relieving his mind from the load of mortification under which she knew he must be labouring. It was seldom that our heroine had been in the public bar-room of a tavern—but, in gliding by the door, she caught a glimpse of Antonio in the bar; and, impelled by her feelings, she was near him before she had time to collect her scattered senses. To be with Antonio, and alone, Julia felt was dangerous; for his passion might bring on a declaration, and betray them both to the public and vulgar notice.—Anxious, therefore, to effect her object at once, she gently laid her hand on his arm—Antonio started and turned, while the glass in his hands fell, with its contents, untasted, on the floor.

"Rest easy, Antonio," said Julia, in the gentlest possible tones; "to me your conduct is satisfactory, and your secret will never be exposed." So saying, she turned quickly, and glided from the room.

"As I hope to be saved," said Antonio, "I meant nothing wrong—but should have paid the landlord the moment he came in"—but Julia heard him not. Her errand was happily executed, and she was already by the side of her aunt. On entering the carriage, Julia noticed the eye of Antonio fixed on her with peculiar meaning, and she felt that her conduct had been appreciated.—From this time until the day of their arrival at the house of Mr. Miller, nothing material occurred. Antonio rose every hour in the estimation of Julia, and the young lady noticed a marked difference in her lover's conduct towards her. A few miles before they reached the dwelling, Miss Emmerson observed

"To-morrow will be the twentieth of September; when I am to know who will be my companion for the winter, Miss Miller or Katherine."

"Ah! aunt, you may know that now, if I am to decide," said Julia, "it will be Anna, my Anna, surely."

Her manner was enthusiastic, and her voice a little louder than usual. Antonio turned his head, and

their eyes met. Julia read in that glance the approbation of her generous friendship. Miss Emmerson was a good deal hurt at this decision of her niece, who, she thought, knowing her sentiments, would be induced to have been satisfied with the visit to Anna, and taken Katherine for the winter. It was with reluctance that the aunt abandoned this wish, and, after a pause, she continued—

"Remember, Julia, that you have not my permission to ask your friend until the twentieth—we can stay but one night at Mr. Miller's, but if Anna is to spend the winter in Park Place, we will return this way from the Falls, and take her with us to the city."

"Thank you, dear aunt," cried Julia, kissing her with an affection that almost reconciled Miss Emmerson to the choice—while Charles Weston whistled "Hail, Columbia! happy land!"

Julia saw that Antonio pitied her impatience—for the moment he arrived in sight of Mr. Miller's house, he put his horses to their speed, and dashed into the court-yard in the space of a few minutes. For a little while all was confusion and joy. Anna seemed delighted to see her friend, and Julia was in raptures—they flew into each other's arms—and if their parting embrace was embalmed in tears, their meeting was enlivened with smiles. With arms interlocked, they went about the house, the very pictures of joy.—Even Antonio, at the moment, was forgotten, and all devoted to friendship. Nay, as if sensible of the impropriety of his appearance at that critical instant, he withdrew himself from observation—and his delicacy was not lost on Julia. Happy are they who can act in consonance with their own delicate sentiments, and rest satisfied with the knowledge that their motives are understood by those whom it is their greatest desire to please!—Such, too fortunate Antonio, was thy lot—for no emotion of thy sensitive mind, no act of thy scrupulously honourable life, passed unheeded by thy Julia!—so thought the maiden.

It has been already mentioned that the family of Mr. Miller was large; and amid the tumult and confusion of receiving their guests, no opportunity was afforded to the friends for conversation in private. The evening passed swiftly, and the hour for bed arrived without any other communication between Julia and Anna than whisperings and pressures of the hands, together with a thousand glances of peculiar meaning with the eyes. But Julia did not regret this so much as if Antonio had been unknown—she had been in his company for four days, and knew, or thought she knew, already, as much of his history as Anna herself.—But one thought distressed her, and that was, that his residence might be far from the house of her aunt. This reflection gave the tender-hearted girl real pain, and her principal wish to converse with Anna in private was to ascertain her future lot on this distressing point. No opportunity, however, offered that night, and Julia saw that in the morning her time would be limited, for Miss Emmerson desired Mr. Miller to order her carriage to be in readiness to start so soon as they had breakfasted.

"When, dear aunt, am I to give Anna the invitation," said Julia, when they were left alone, "if you start so early in the morning?"

"The proper time will be, my child, immediately before we get into the carriage," said Miss Emmerson, with a sigh of regret at the determination of her niece; "it will then be more pointed, and call for an immediate answer."

This satisfied Julia, who knew that it would be accepted by her friend, and she soon fell asleep, to dream a little of Anna, and a great deal of Antonio.

The following morning Julia arose with the sun, and her first employment was to seek her friend. Anna had also risen, and was waiting impatiently for the other's appearance, in the vacant parlour.

"Ah! dear Julia," said she, catching her arm and dragging her to a window, "I thought you would never come.—Well, are we to spend the winter together—have you spoken to your dear, dear aunt, about it?"

"You shall know in good time, my Anna," said Julia, mindful of the wishes of her aunt, and speaking with a smile that gave Anna an assurance of her success.

"Oh! what a delightful winter we will have!" cried Anna, in rapture.

"I am tongue-tied at present," said Julia, laughing; "but not on every subject," she continued, blushing to the eyes; "do tell me of St. Albans—of Regulus— who is he?"

"Who is he?" echoed Anna—"why, nobody!—one must have something to write about, you know, to a friend."

Julia felt sick and faint—her colour left her cheeks as she forced a smile, and uttered, in a low voice—

"But Antonio—Stanley?"

"A man of straw," cried Anna, with unfeeling levity; "no such creature in the world, I do assure you!"

Julia made a mighty effort to conquer her emotion, and wildly seizing Anna by the arm, she pointed to her aunt's coachman, who was at work on his carriage at no great distance, and uttered—"For God's sake, who is HE?"

"He!" cried Anna, in surprise, "why, your driver—and an ugly wretch he is!—don't you know your own driver yet?"

Julia burst from her treacherous friend—rushed into the room of her aunt—and throwing herself into the arms of Miss Emerson, wept for an hour as if her heart would break. Miss Emerson saw that something had hurt her feelings excessively, and that it was something she would not reveal. Believing that it was a quarrel with her friend, and hoping at all events that it would interrupt their intercourse, Miss Emerson, instead of trying to discover her niece's secret, employed herself in persuading her to appear before the family with composure, and to take leave of them with decency and respect. In this she succeeded, and the happy moment arrived. Anna in vain pressed near her friend to receive the invitation—and her mother more than once hinted at the thousand pities it was to separate two that loved one another so fondly. No invitation was given—and although Anna spent half a day in searching for a letter, that she insisted must be left in some romantic place, none was ever found, nor did any ever arrive.

While resting with her foot on the step of the carriage, about to enter it, Julia, whose looks were depressed from shame, saw a fluid that was discoloured with tobacco fall on her shoe and soil her stocking. Raising her eyes with disgust, she perceived that the wind had wafted it from the mouth of Antonio, as he held open the door—and the same blast throwing aside his screen of silk, discovered a face that was deformed with disease, and wanting of an eye!

Our travellers returned to the city by the way of Montreal and Lake Champlain; nor was it until Julia had been the happy wife of Charles Weston for more than a year, that she could summon resolution to own that she had once been in love, like thousands of her sex, "with a man of straw!"

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HEART. —oOo—

"Some live in airy fantasies,
And in the clouds do move,
And some do burn with inward flames—
But few know how to love."

ANON. BALLAD

CHAPTER I.

ON one of those clear, cold days of December, which so frequently occur in our climate, two very young women were walking on the fashionable promenade of New-York. In the person of the elder of these females there was exhibited nothing more than the usual indications of youth and health; but there were a delicacy and an expression of exquisite feeling in the countenance of her companion, that caused many a plodding or idle passenger to turn and renew the gaze, which had been attracted by so lovely a person. Her figure was light, and possessed rather a character of aerial grace, than the usual rounded lines of earthly beauty; and her face was beaming more with the sentiments of the soul within, than with the ordinary charms of complexion and features. It was precisely that kind of youthful loveliness that a childless husband would pause to contemplate as the reality of the visions which his thoughts had often portrayed, and which his nature coveted as the only treasure wanting to complete the sum of his earthly bliss. It truly looked a being to be loved without the usual alloy of our passions; and there was a modest ingenuousness which shone in her air, that gently impelled the hearts of others to regard its possessor with a species of holy affection. Amongst the gay throng, however, that thoughtlessly glided along the Broadway, even this image of female perfection was suffered to move unnoticed by hundreds; and it was owing to the obstruction offered to the passage of the ladies, by a small crowd that had gathered on the side-walk, that a gentleman of uncommon personal endowments enjoyed an opportunity of examining it with more than ordinary attention. The eldest of the females drew her companion away from this impediment to their passage, by moving towards the opposite side of the street, and observing, as they crossed, with an indifference in her manner—

"It is nothing, Charlotte, but a drunken man; if people will drink, they must abide the consequences."

"He does not seem intoxicated, Maria," replied the other, in a voice whose tones corresponded with her appearance; "it is some sudden illness."

"One that, I dare say, he is accustomed to," said Maria, without having even taken such a look at the sufferer as would enable her to identify his colour; "he will be well enough after he has slept."

"But is the pavement a place for him to sleep on?" rejoined her companion, still gazing towards the miserable object; "and if he should be ill!—why do they not raise him?—Why do they suffer him to injure himself as he does?"

The speaker, at the same time that she shrunk in a kind of sensitive horror from this exhibition of human infirmities, now unconsciously stopped, with an interest in the man that she could not controul, and thus compelled Maria to pause also. The crowd had withdrawn from the man, giving him sufficient room to roll over, in evident pain, while they yet stood gazing at him, with that indefinable feeling of curiosity and nerveless sympathy, which characterises man when not called on to act, by emulation, vanity, or the practice of well-doing. No one offered to assist the sufferer, although many said it ought to be done; some spoke of sending for those who monopolized the official charity of the city; many, having satisfied their curiosity, and finding that the moment for action was arriving, quietly withdrew from a trouble that would interfere with their comforts or their business—while a few felt an impulse to aid the man, but hesitated in being foremost in doing that which would be honourable to their feelings, but might not accord with their condition, or might seem as the ostentatious display of unusual benevolence. Where men are congregated, conduct must be regulated by the touchstone of public opinion; and, although it is the fashion of New-York to applaud acts of charity, and to do them too in a particular manner—it is by no means usual to run to the assistance of a fellow creature who is lying in distress on a pavement.

{those who monopolized the official charity = in 1821 the only officially supported charitable organization in New York City was the City Dispensary — municipal aid to others having been cut off in 1817 on the grounds that charity to the poor only made them lazy and improvident}

Whatever might be the impulses of the gentleman whom we have mentioned, his attention was too much absorbed by the conversation and manner of the two ladies to regard any thing else, and he followed them across the street, and stopped also when they paused to view the scene. He was inwardly and deeply admiring the most youthful of the females, for the natural and simple display of those very qualities that he forgot himself to exercise, when he was roused with a feeling of something like mortification, by hearing Charlotte exclaim, with a slight glow on her cheek—

"Ah! there is George Morton coming—he surely will not pass the poor man without offering to assist him."

The gentleman turned his head quickly, and noticed a youth making his way through the crowd, successfully, to the side of the sufferer. The distance was too great to hear what passed—but an empty coach, whose driver had stopped to gaze with the rest, was instantly drawn up, and the man lifted in, and followed by the youth, whose appearance had effected these movements with the silence and almost with the quietness of magic.

George Morton was far from possessing the elegant exterior of the uneasy observer of this scene, yet were the eyes of the lovely young woman who had caught his attention, fixed in evident delight on his person, until it was hid from view in the carriage; when, drawing a long breath, as if relieved from great uneasiness, she said, in a low voice—

"I knew that George Morton would not pass him so unfeelingly—but where are they going?—not far, I hope, on this cold day—and George without his great coat."

There was a plaintive and natural melody in the tones of the speaker's voice, as she thus unconsciously uttered her concern, that impelled the listener to advance to the side of the carriage, where a short conversation passed between the gentlemen, and the stranger returned to the ladies, who were yet lingering near the spot, apparently unwilling to depart from a scene that had so deeply interested one of them. Raising his hat, the gentleman, addressing himself to the magnet that had attracted him, said—

"Your friend declines the offer of my coat, and says that the carriage is quite warm—they are going to the alms-house, and I am happy to inform you that the poor man is already much better, and is recovering from his fit."

{The New York City Almshouse, at Bellevue on the East River, housed over 1,500 inmates at a time

(with annual deaths approaching 500), and served as a last refuge for the destitute of all ages}

Charlotte now for the first time observed the speaker, and a blush passed over her face as she courtesied her thanks in silence. But her companion, aroused from gazing at the finery of a shop window, by the voice of the stranger, turned quickly, and with very manifest satisfaction, exclaimed—

"Bless me! Mr. Delafield—I did not observe you before!—then you think the poor wretch will not die?"

"Ah! assuredly not," returned the gentleman, recognizing the face of an acquaintance, with an animation he could not conceal: "but how inadvertent I have been, not to have noticed Miss Osgood before!"—While speaking, his eyes rested on the lovely countenance of her friend, as if, by their direction, he meant to explain the reason of his remissness.

"We were both too much engaged with the sufferings of the poor man, for until this moment I did not observe you," said the lady—with that kind of instinctive quickness that teaches the fair the importance of an amiable exterior, in the eyes of the other sex.

"Doubtless," returned the gentleman, gravely, and for the first time withdrawing his gaze from the countenance of Charlotte; but the precaution was unnecessary:—the young lady had been too much engrossed with her own sensations to notice the conduct of others, and from the moment that the carriage had driven out of right, had kept her eyes on the ground, as she walked silently and unobtrusively by the side of her companion.

"Miss Henly—Mr. Seymour Delafield," said Maria. The silent bow and courtesy that followed this introduction was succeeded by an animated discourse between the gentleman and his old acquaintance, which was, but seldom interrupted by any remark from their more retiring companion. Whenever she did speak, however, the gentleman listened with the most flattering attention, that was the more remarkable, from the circumstance of his talking frequently at the same time with Maria Osgood. The trio took a long walk together, and returned to the house of Mr. Henly, in time for the necessary arrangements for the coming dinner. It was when within a short distance of the dwelling of Charlotte that the gentleman ventured to allude to the event that had made them acquainted.

"The fearless manner in which you predicted the humanity of Mr. Morton, would be highly gratifying to himself, Miss Henly," he observed; "and were I of his acquaintance, it should be my task to inform him of your good opinion."

"I believe Mr. Morton has not now to learn that," said Charlotte, simply, but dropping her eyes; "I have been the next door neighbour of George all my life, and have seen too much of his goodness of heart not to have expressed the same opinion often."

"But not to himself," cried Maria; "so, Mr. Delafield, if you wish to apprise him of his good fortune, you have only to attend my music party to-morrow evening, and I will take particular care that you get acquainted with the humane hero."

The invitation was gladly accepted, and the gentleman took his leave at the door of the house.

"Well, Charlotte, you have seen him at last!" cried Maria, the instant the door had closed; "and I am dying to know how you like him!"

"To save your life," said the other, laughing, "I will say a great deal, although you so often accuse me of taciturnity—but who is HIM?"

"Him! why, Delafield!—Seymour Delafield!—the pattern for all the beaux—the magnet for all the belles—and the delight of all the parents in town!"

"His own, too?" inquired Charlotte, a little archly.

"He has none—they are dead and gone—but their money is left behind, and that brings him fathers and mothers by the dozen!"

"It is fortunate that he can supply their loss in any way," said Charlotte, with emphasis.

"To be sure he can; he can do more than you or I could, my dear; he can pick his parents from the best in the city—and, therefore, he ought to be well provided."

"And could he be better provided, as you call it, in that respect, than ourselves?" asked Miss Henly, a little reproachfully.

"Oh no, surely not; now if he were a woman, how soon would he be married!—why, child, they say he is worth at least three hundred thousand dollars!— he'd be a bride in a month!"

"And miserable, perhaps, in a year," said Charlotte; "it is fortunate for him that he is a man, by your tale, or his wealth might purchase misery for him."

"Oh! no one can be miserable that is well married," cried Maria; "Heigho! the idea of old-maidism is too shocking to think about!"

"Why does not Mr. Delafield get married, then, if marriage be so very desirable?" said Miss Henly, smiling at the customary rattle of her companion: "he can easily get a wife, you say?"

{rattle = trivial chatter}

"It is the difficulty of choosing—there are so many attentive to him—"

"Maria!"

"Mercy! I beg pardon of female delicacy!—but since the young man has returned from his travels, he has been so much—much courted—nay, by the old people, I mean—and the girls beckon him about so—and it's Mr. Delafield, have you read Salmagundi?—and, Mr. Delafield, have you seen Cooke?—and, Mr. Delafield, do you think we shall have war?—and have you seen Bonaparte? And, in short, Mr. Delafield, with his handsome person, and three hundred thousand dollars, has been so much of all-in-all to the ladies, that the man has never time to choose a wife!"

{Salmagundi = a series of comic essays (1819- 1820) by New York City writer James Kirke Paulding (1778-1860), emulating an earlier series by Washington Irving and others; Cooke = probably Thomas Potter Cooke (1786-1864), a noted English actor; Bonaparte = Napoleon Bonaparte died on St. Helena in 1821}

"I really wonder that you never took the office upon yourself," said Charlotte, busied in throwing aside her coat and gloves; "you appear to have so much interest in the gentleman."

"Oh! I did, a month since—the moment that he landed."

"Indeed! and who was it?"

"Myself."

"And have you told him of your choice?" asked the other, laughing.

"Not with my tongue: but with my eyes, a thousand times—and with all that unspeakable language that female invention can supply:—I go where he goes— if I see him in the street behind me, I move slowly and with dignity; still he passes me—if before me, I am in a hurry—but{"}—

"You pass him?" interrupted Charlotte, amused with her companion's humour.

"Exactly—we never keep an equal pace; this is the first time that he has walked with me since he returned from abroad—and for this honour I am clearly indebted to yourself."

"To me, Maria?" said Charlotte, in surprise.

"To none other—he talked to me, but he looked at you. Ah! he knows by instinct that you are an only child—and I do believe that the wretch knows that I have twelve brothers and sisters—but you had better take him, Charlotte; he is worth twenty George Mortons—at least, in money."

"What have the merits of George Morton and Mr. Delafield to do with each other?" said Charlotte, removing her hat, and exhibiting a head of hair that opportunely fell in rich profusion over her shoulders, so as to conceal the unusual flush on her, ordinarily, pale cheek.

This concluded the conversation; for Charlotte instantly left the room, and was occupied for some time in giving such orders as her office of assistant in housekeeping to her mother rendered necessary.

Charlotte Henly was the only child that had been left from six who were born to her parents, the others having died in their infancy. The deaths of the rest of their children had occasioned the affection of her parents to center in the last of their offspring with more than common warmth; and the tenderness of their love was heightened by the extraordinary qualities of their child. Possessed of an abundance of the goods of this world, these doating parents were looking around with intense anxiety, among their acquaintance, and watching for the choice that was to determine the worldly happiness of their daughter.

Charlotte was but seventeen, yet the customs of the country, and the temptations of her expected

wealth, together with her own attractions, had already placed her within the notice of the world. But no symptom of that incipient affection which was to govern her life, could either of her parents ever discover; and in the exhibitions of her attachments, there was nothing to be seen but that quiet and regulated esteem, which grows out of association and good sense, and which is so obviously different from the restless and varying emotions that are said to belong to the passion of love.

Maria Osgood was a distant relative, and an early associate, who, although as different from her cousin in appearance and character as black is from white, was still dear to the latter, both from habit and her unconquerable good nature.

George Morton, the youth of whom such honourable mention has been made, was the son of a gentleman who had long resided in the next dwelling to Mr. Henly in the city, and who also possessed a country house near his own villa. These circumstances had induced an intimacy between the families that was cemented by the good opinion each entertained of the qualities of the other, and which had been so long and so often tried in scenes of happiness and misery, that were known to both. Young Morton was a few years the senior of Charlotte; and, at the time of commencing our tale, was but lately released from his collegiate labours. His goodness of heart and simplicity of manners made him an universal favourite; while the peculiarity of their situation brought him oftener before the notice of Charlotte than any other young man of her acquaintance.—But, notwithstanding the intimation of Maria Osgood, none of their friends in the least suspected any other feeling to exist between the youthful pair than the natural and very obvious one of disinterested esteem. As the family seated themselves at the dinner table, their guest exclaimed, in the heedless way that characterised her manner—

"Oh! Mrs. Henly, I have to congratulate you on the prospects of your soon having a son, and one so amiable and attractive as your daughter."

"Indeed!" returned the matron, comprehending the other's meaning intuitively, "and what may be the young gentleman's name?"

"You will be the envy of all the mothers in town," continued Maria, "and deservedly so. Two such children to fall to the lot of one mother!—Nay, do not shake your head, Charlotte; it must and shall be a match, I am determined."

"My friendship for you would deter me from the measure, should nothing else interfere," said Charlotte, good humouredly.

"Ah! I have already abandoned my pretensions— twelve brothers and sisters, my dear, are a dreadful addition to bring into a family at once!"

"I am sure I do not think so," returned Charlotte, timidly glancing her eye at her mother; "besides, I feel bound in honour to remember your original intention."

"I tell you I have abandoned it, with all thoughts of the youth."

"And who is the youth?" asked Mrs. Henly, affecting an indifference that she did not feel.

"You will have the handsomest son in the city, certainly," said Maria; "and, possibly, the richest— and the most learned—and, undeniably, the most admired!"

"You quite excite my curiosity to know who this paragon can be," said the mother, looking at her husband, who returned the glance with one of equal solicitude.

"I do not think he is more than four and twenty," added Maria; "and his black eyes would form a charming contrast to your blue ones."

"To whom does Miss Osgood allude?" asked Mrs. Henly, yielding to a solicitude that she could no longer controul.

"To Mr. Seymour Delafield," said Charlotte, raising her mild eyes to the face of her mother, and smiling, as she delicately pared her apple, with a simple ingenuousness that banished uneasiness from the breast of her parent in an instant.

"I know him," said Mr. Henly; "but I did not think you had ever seen him, Charlotte."

"We met him in our morning walk, sir, and Maria introduced him."

"He is thought to be very handsome," continued her father, helping himself to a glass of wine while speaking.

"And very justly," returned the daughter; "I think him the handsomest man that I have ever seen."

"Have I your permission for telling him so?" cried Maria, with a laugh.

"I have not the least objection to his knowing it, on my own account, except from the indelicacy of complimenting a gentleman," said Charlotte, with perfect simplicity; "but whether it would be beneficial to himself or not, you can best judge."

"You think him vain, then?" observed her mother.

"Not in the least; or, rather, he did not exhibit it to me"—was the answer, with the same open air as before.

"He has also a great reputation for good sense," continued her father, avoiding the face of his child.

"I thought he had wit, sir."

"And not good sense?"

"Am I a judge?" asked Charlotte, rising, and holding a lighted paper to her father, while he took a new segar.

Her clear blue eyes resting on him in the fulness of filial affection, as she performed this office, and the open air with which she bent forward to receive the kiss he offered in thanks, removed any apprehensions which the name of their morning's companion might have excited.

Mr. Henly knew nothing concerning this young man that would induce him at all to avoid the connexion, but still he had not yet examined his character with that searching vigilance that he thought due to the innocence and merit of his child. Determining within himself, however, that this was a task that should no longer be neglected, he rose, and telling the ladies that he left the bottle with them, withdrew to his study.

The door had hardly closed behind Mr. Henly, when George Morton entered the dining parlour, with the freedom of an old and favourite friend, and telling Mrs. Henly that, in consequence of his family's dining out, and his own engagements, he was fasting, and begged her charity for a meal. From the instant that he appeared, Charlotte had risen with alacrity, and was no sooner acquainted with his wants, than she rung to order what he required. She brought him a glass of sparkling wine with her own hands, and pushing a chair nearer to the fire than the one he occupied, she said—

"Sit here, George, you appear chilled—I thought you would miss your coat."

"I thank you," returned the youth, turning on her an eye of the most open affection; "I do feel unusually cold, and begin to think, that with my weak lungs it would have been more prudent to have taken a surtout."

{surtout = overcoat}

"And how was the poor man when you left him?"

"Much better, and in extremely good quarters," said George; but, turning quickly to Miss Osgood, he added, "So, Miss Maria, your beau has condescended to walk with you at last?"

"Yes, Mr. Impudence," said Maria, smiling; {"}but come, fill your mouth with food, and be silent."

He did as requested, and the conversation changed.

CHAPTER II

NOTWITHSTANDING the plenteous gifts which Providence had bestowed on the parents of Maria in the way of descendants, Fortune had sufficiently smiled on his labours to enable him to educate them in what is called a genteel manner, and to support them in a corresponding style. The family of Mr. Osgood exhibited one of those pictures which are so frequent in America, where no other artificial distinctions exist in society than those which are created by wealth, and where obscurity has no other foe to contend with than the demon of poverty. His children were indulged in luxuries that his death was to dissipate, and enjoyed an opulence that was only co-existent with the life of their parent. Accordingly, the music party that assembled on the following evening at the house of Mr. Osgood, was brilliant, large, and fashionable. Seven grown-up daughters was a melancholy sight for the

contemplation of the parents, and they both felt like venders of goods who were exhibiting their wares to the best advantage. The splendid chandeliers and lustres of the drawing-room were lighted for the same reason as the lamps in the glittering retail stores of Broadway; and the brilliant effect of the taste of the young ladies was intended much like the nightly lustre of the lottery-offices, to tempt adventurers to try their chances. >From this premeditated scheme of conquest we ought, in justice, however, to except Maria herself, who, from constitutional gayety and thoughtlessness, seldom planned for the morrow; and who, perhaps, from her association with Charlotte, had acquired a degree of disinterestedness that certainly belonged to no other member of her family.

Whatever were the views of the family in collecting their friends and acquaintances on this important evening, they were completely successful in one point at least; for, before nine, half the dilettanti of the city were assembled in Greenwich-street, in a most elaborate state of musical excitement. Charlotte Henly, of course, was of the party, although she was absolutely ignorant of a single note, nor knew how to praise a scientific execution, or to manifest disgust at simple melody. But, her importance in the world of fashion, and her friend Maria, obtained her a place. There was a reason that secretly influenced Charlotte in electing her evening's amusement, that was not known, however, even to her friend.—George Morton played on the German flute in a manner that vibrated on her nerves with an exquisite thrill that she often strove to conquer, and yet ever loved to indulge. His musical powers were far from being generally applauded, as they were thought to be deficient in compass and variety; but Charlotte never descended to criticism in music. She conceived it to be an enjoyment for the senses only, or, rather, she thought nothing about it; and if the rounds failed to delight her, she unhesitatingly attributed the circumstance to an absence of melody. It was to listen to the flute of George Morton, then, that the drawing-room of Mrs. Osgood was adorned with the speaking countenance of Miss Henly.

Among the guests who made an early appearance in this "Temple of Apollo," was the youth who had attended the ladies in their walk. Seymour Delafield glanced his eye impatiently around the apartment, as soon as he had paid the customary compliments to the mistress of the mansion and her bevy of fair daughters; but a look of disappointment betrayed the search to be an unsuccessful one. Both the look and the result were noticed by Maria; and, turning a glance of rather saucy meaning on the gentleman, she said—

"I apprehend your flute, which, by the by, I am glad to see you have brought, will be rather in the PENSEROSO style this evening, Mr. Delafield."

{penseroso = melancholy}

"Unless enlivened by the contagious gayety of your smile," returned Delafield, endeavouring to look excessively unconcerned; "but"—

"Oh! my very laugh is musical, I know," interrupted Maria; "but then it is often shockingly out of time."

"It seldom fails to produce an accompaniment," said the gentleman, now smiling in reality; "but"—

"Where is Charlotte Henley?" said the young lady, again interrupting him; "she has a perfect horror of the tuning of fiddles and the preparatory thrummings on the piano; so endeavour to preserve the harmony of your temper for the second act."

"Well! it is some relief to know she is coming at all," cried Seymour, quickly; and then, recovering himself with perfect breeding, he added—"for one would wish to see you as happy as all your friends can make you, on such an occasion."

"I am extremely indebted to your unbounded philanthropy," said Maria, rising and courtseying with great gravity; "do not doubt of its being honourably mentioned at"—

"Nay, nay," cried the youth, colouring and laughing, "you would not think of mentioning my remarks to"—

"At the next meeting of the Dorcas Society, of which I am an unworthy member," continued Maria, without listening to his remonstrance.

{Dorcas Society = lady's group at a church, devoted to making and providing clothes for the poor}

Seymour Delafield now laughed without any affectation—and exchanging a look of perfect consciousness of each other's meaning, they separated, as the preparations for the business of the evening were about to commence. For a short time there was a confusion of sounds that perfectly justified the absence of Miss Henly, when the music began in earnest. Within half an hour, Mr.

Delafield, who had suffered himself to be drawn to the back of the chair of a professed belle, turning his head to conceal a yawn that neither the lady's skill nor his good manners could repress, observed Charlotte sitting quietly by the side of her friend. Her entrance had been conducted with such tact, that had she possessed the most musical ear imaginable, it were impossible to disturb the party less; a circumstance that did not fail to impress Seymour agreeably, from its novelty. He moved to the side of the fair vision that had engrossed all his thoughts since the moment they had first met, and took the chair that the good nature of Miss Osgood offered to his acceptance between them.

"Thank fortune, Miss Henly," he said, the instant he was seated, "that bravura has ceased, and I can now inquire how you recovered from the fatigue of your walk?"

"I suffered no fatigue to recover from," replied the lady, raising her eyes to his with an expression that told the youth he had better talk straight forward at once; "I walk too much to be fatigued with so short an excursion."

"You came here to favour us with your skill on the harp, Miss Henly?"

"No."

"On the piano?"

"On neither—I play on nothing."

"You sing, then?"

"Not at all."

"What! not with that voice?" exclaimed the young man, in surprise.

"Not with this voice, and surely with no other."

Seymour felt uneasy, and, perhaps, disappointed. He did not seem to have roused a single sensation in the breast of his companion, and it was seldom that the elegant possessor of three hundred thousand dollars failed to do so, wherever he went, or whatever he did. But, in the present instance, there was nothing to be discerned in the countenance or manner of Charlotte that indicated any thing more than the sweetness of her nature and the polish of her breeding. He changed the subject.

"I hope your friend did not suffer yesterday from his humanity?"

"I sincerely hope so too," said Charlotte, with much simplicity, and yet with a good deal of feeling.

"I am fearful that we idle spectators," continued the gentleman, "suffered in your estimation, in not discovering equal benevolence with Mr. Morton."

Charlotte glanced her mild eyes at the speaker, but made no reply.

"Your silence, Miss Henly, assures me of the truth of my conjecture."

"You should never put a disagreeable construction on the acts of another," said Charlotte, with a sweetness that tended greatly to dissipate the mortification Mr. Delafield really felt, at the same time that he was unwilling to acknowledge it, even to himself.

They were now again interrupted by the music, which continued some time, during which George Morton made his appearance. His coat close buttoned to his throat, and an extra silk handkerchief around his neck, which he removed only after he entered the apartment, immediately arrested the attention of Charlotte Henly. Turning to Maria, she said, in those tones of real interest that never can be mistaken for manner—

"I am afraid that George has suffered from his exposure. Do not ask him to play, for he will be sure to comply."

"Oh! the chicken has only taken cold," cried Maria; "If he does not play, what will you do? you came here to hear him only."

"Has Miss Henly ears for no other performer, then?" asked Seymour Delafield.

"Miss Henly has as many ears as other people," said Maria, "but she does not condescend to use them on all occasions."

"Rather say," cried Charlotte, laughing, "that the want of taste in Miss Henly renders her ears of but little use to her."

"You are not fond of music, then?" asked the youth, a little vexed at thinking that an accomplishment on which he prided himself would fail to make its usual impression.

"Passionately!" exclaimed Charlotte; then, colouring to the eyes, she added, "at least I sometimes think so, but I believe I am thought to be without taste."

"Those who think so must want it themselves," said Seymour, in a low voice; then, obedient to the beck of one of the presiding nymphs, he hastened to take his share in the performance.

"Now Charlotte, you little prude," whispered her friend, the instant he withdrew, "is he not very, very handsome?"

"Very," said Charlotte; "more so than any other gentleman I have ever seen."

"And engaging, and agreeable, and gentlemanlike?"

"Agreeable, and gentlemanlike too."

"And graceful, and loveable?"

"Graceful, certainly; and, very possible, loveable, to those who know him."

"Know him!—what more would you know of the man? You see his beauty and elegance—you witness his breeding—you listen to his sense and information—what more is necessary to fall in love with him?"

"Really, I pretend to no reasoning upon the subject at all," said Charlotte, smiling; "but if you have such an intention, indulge in it freely, I beg of you, for you will not find a rival in me.—But, listen, he is about to play a solo on his flute."

A man with three hundred thousand dollars may play a solo, but he never can be alone where there are any to listen. The hearts of many throb at the very breathings of wealth through a flute, who would remain callous to the bitterest sighs of poverty. But Delafield possessed other attractions to catch the attention of the audience: his powers on the instrument greatly exceeded those of any of his competitors, and his execution was really wonderful; every tongue was silent, every ear was attentive, and every head nodded approbation, excepting that of our heroine. Delafield, perfectly master of his instrument and the music, fixed his eye on the countenance of Charlotte, and he experienced a thrill at his heart as he witnessed her lovely face smiling approbation, while his fingers glided over the flute with a rapidity and skill that produced an astonishing variety and gradation of sounds. At length, thought he, I have succeeded, and have made an impression on this charming girl that is allied to admiration. The idea gave him spirits for the task, and his performance exceeded any thing the company had ever witnessed before. On laying down the instrument, he approached the place where the friends were sitting, with an exultation in his eyes that was inferior only to modesty in the power to captivate.

"Certainly, Mr. Delafield," cried Maria Osgood, "you have outdone your own outdoings."

"If I have been so fortunate as to please here, then I am rewarded indeed," said the youth, with a bow and an expression that rendered it a little doubtful to which of the ladies the compliment was addressed. At this instant, George Morton approached them.

"Mr. Delafield, let me make you acquainted with Mr. Morton," said Maria, glancing her eye at the former in a manner that he understood.

"I have great pleasure in taking Mr. Morton by the hand," said Seymour, "if he will excuse the want of ceremony in this company. The lesson that you gave to me yesterday, sir, will not soon be forgotten."

"In what manner, sir?" inquired George, with a little embarrassment and a conscious blush.

"In teaching me, among others, Mr. Morton, the difference between active and passive humanity—between that which is satisfied with feeling, and that which prompts to serve."

To this unexpected compliment young Morton could do no more than bow in silence, for it was too flattering for a reply—and too true to deny. As Delafield turned his eye, at a little loss to know whether to be pleased or not with his own humility, he met a look from Charlotte that more than rewarded him for the effort. It was a mild, benevolent, pure glance, that spoke admiration and heartfelt pleasure. He forgot his solo, and the expected compliments; and, for the rest of the evening, that thrilling expression floated in his brain, and was present to his thoughts; it was worth a thousand of the studied glances that were continually aimed at him from all sides of the room, and with every variety of eye—from the piercing black, to the ogling gray. It was a look that came directly from, and went to, the heart. If

young ladies always knew how nicely nature has qualified the other sex to judge of their actions, what multitudes of astonishingly expressive glances, and artfully contrived gestures and movements, would sink down into looks, that indicated feelings and motives, that were adapted to the occasion! What trouble in creating incidents that might draw out charms would be avoided! And, in short, how much extra labour, both of body and mind, would be spared!

This agreeable contemplation of Mr. Delafield was soon interrupted by the cheerful voice of Maria Osgood, who cried—

"Bless me, George, you really do look ill."

"It is seldom that I have much health to boast of," replied the youth, in a feeble voice, and with a still feebler smile.

"But," said Maria, without reflecting, "you look worse than usual."

There was so much truth in this remark, that the young man could only smile in silence, while Seymour, surveying the very plain exterior of his new acquaintance, turned his eyes with additional satisfaction towards a mirror that reflected his own form from head to feet.

"You will not attempt the flute to-night, George?" said Charlotte.

"I believe I must, or not fulfil my engagement to Mrs. Osgood."

"Surely," continued Charlotte, in a low tone to her friend, "George had better not play, looking so ill as he does."

"Certainly not; besides, his performance would not shine after that of Mr. Delafield."

Seymour overheard this speech, which was really intended only for the ear of Charlotte, and he was instantly seized with an unaccountable desire to hear the flute of Mr. Morton. Seymour was conscious that he played well, and could he have forgotten the indifference that Miss Henly exhibited to his performance, would have been abundantly flattered with the encomiums that were lavished on his skill.

A request from the mistress of the mansion now compelled George to make his appearance among the musicians, and in a few minutes his flute was heard alone. There was a vacancy in the looks of Charlotte, during the scientific execution of the different individuals who had been labouring at the several instruments in the course of the evening, that denoted a total indifference to the display. But, the moment that George was called on to take his part in the entertainment, this restlessness disappeared, and was succeeded by an expression of intense interest and deep anxiety. The melody of George was simple and plaintive; he aimed at no extraordinary exhibition of skill, and it was difficult to compare his music with that of Seymour. The latter, however, studied the countenance of the young lady near him as the best index to their comparative merit, and he was soon able to read his own want of success. For the first few minutes, anxiety was the principal expression portrayed in her lovely face, but it was soon succeeded by a deep and powerful emotion. There is something contagious in the natural expression of our passions, that insensibly enlists the sympathies of the beholder—and Seymour felt a soft melancholy stealing over him as he gazed, that was but a faint reflection of the tenderness excited in the breast of Charlotte, while she listened to sounds that penetrated to her very soul. There is no mistaking the effect of music that depends only on its melody. Its appeal to the heart is direct and unequivocal, and nothing but callous indifference can resist its power. The most profound silence pervaded the apartment, and George was enabled to finish his piece with a spirit that increased with the attention. As the last breathing notes died on the ear, Delafield turned to meet those eyes which had already secured an unconscious victory, and saw them moistened with a lustre that added to their natural softness. Beauty in tears is proverbially irresistible—and the youth, bending forward, said in a voice that was modulated to the stillness of the room—

"Such melody, Miss Henly, captivates the senses."

"Does it not touch the heart?" asked the young lady, with a little of unusual animation.

"The heart too. But Mr. Morton looks exhausted after his labours."

All the pleasure which had shone in the countenance of Charlotte, vanished instantly, and gave place to deep concern.

"Oh! it is unjustifiable, thus to purchase pleasure at the expense of another," said she, in a tone that Seymour scarcely heard.

How tenderly would the man be loved, thought the youth, who succeeded in engaging the affections of this young creature! how disinterested is her regard—and how considerate are her feelings! Here will I trust my hopes for happiness in this life, and here will I conquer, or here will I die!

No two persons could possibly be actuated by sensations more different than Charlotte and Seymour Delafield. He had been so long palled with the attentions of managing mothers and designing daughters; had seen so much of female manoeuvring, and had so easily seen through it, that the natural and inartificial loveliness of Charlotte touched his senses with a freshness of delicacy that to him was as captivating as it was novel. Upon unpractised men, the arts of the sex are often successful, but generally they are allies that increase the number of the assailants, without promoting the victory. It is certain that many a fair one played that evening in order that Mr. Delafield might applaud; that some sighed that he might hear, and others ogled that he might sigh: but not one made the impression that the quiet, speaking eye, and artless but peaceful nature of Charlotte produced on the youth. While this novel feeling was gaining ground in the bosom of Mr. Delafield, Charlotte saw nothing in her new acquaintance but a gentleman of extraordinary personal beauty, agreeable manners, and graceful address—qualities that are always sure to please, and, not unusually, to captivate. But to her he was a stranger; and Charlotte, who never thought or reasoned on the subject, would have been astonished had one seriously spoken of her loving him. The road to conquest with her lay through her heart, and was but little connected with her imagination.

"Heigho! George," cried Maria, as he approached, "you have given me the dolefuls."

"And me both pleasure and pain," said Charlotte.

"Why the latter?" asked the youth, quickly.

"Surely it was imprudent in you to play, with such a cold."

The lip of the youth quivered, and a smile of mournful and undefinable meaning passed over his features, but he continued silent.

"It is to be hoped it had one good effect at least," continued Maria.

"Such as what?"

"Such as putting the little dears to sleep in the nursery, which is directly over our heads."

"It is well if I have done that little good," said George.

"You have brought tears into eyes that never should weep," cried Delafield, "and melancholy to a countenance that seems formed by nature to convey an idea of peaceful content."

Morton looked earnestly at the speaker for a moment, when a painful feeling seemed suddenly to seize on his heart—for his cheek grew paler, and his lip quivered with an agitation that apparently he could not control. Charlotte alone noticed the alteration, and, speaking in a low tone, she said—

"Do go home, George; you are far from being well— to oblige me, go home."

"To oblige you, I would do much more unwelcome biddings," he replied, with a slight colour; "but I believe you are right; and, having discharged my duty here, I will retire."

He rose, and, paying the customary compliments to the mistress of the mansion, withdrew. With him disappeared all the awakened interest of Charlotte in the scene.

In vain was Seymour Delafield attentive, polite, and even particularly so. That devotedness of admiration for which so many sighed, and which so many envied, was entirely thrown away upon Charlotte. She listened, she bowed, and she smiled—and, sometimes, she answered; but it was evidently without meaning or interest, until, wearied with his fruitless efforts to make an impression, and perhaps with a hope of exciting a little jealousy, he turned his attention to her more lively companion.

"Your mother's nursery, Miss Osgood," he cried, "ought on such an occasion to be tenantless."

"You think there are enough of us here to make it so," returned the lady, with an affected sigh.

"I really had not observed the number of your charming family—how many are there of you?"

"A baker's dozen." Charlotte laughed, and the youth felt mortified. The laugh was natural, and clearly extorted, without a thought of himself.

"When you are all married," he said, "you will form a little world in yourselves."

"When the sky falls we shall catch larks."

{When the sky.... = an old proverb, found in English, French, and even Latin, meaning that the idea or proposal is absurd}

"Surely, you intend to marry?"

Maria made no reply, but turned her eyes on Delafield, with an affected expression of melancholy that excited another laugh in her friend.

"You certainly have made no rash vow on the subject," continued Seymour, pretending to a slight interest in her answer.

"My troth is not yet plighted," said the lady, a little archly.

"But there is no telling how long it will continue so."

"I am afraid so—thirteen is a dreadful divisor for a small family estate."

A general movement in the party was gladly seized by Charlotte as an excuse to go, and Delafield handed her to her carriage, with the mortifying conviction that she was utterly indifferent to every thing but the civility of the act.

CHAPTER III.

IT was quite early on the following morning, when Mr. Delafield rung at the door of the house in which the father of Miss Henly resided. The gentleman had obtained the permission of the young lady, the preceding evening, to put himself on the list of her visiting acquaintance, and a casual introduction to both of Charlotte's parents had smoothed the way to this intimacy. It is certain, that, much as Mr. and Mrs. Henly loved their child, neither of them entertained the selfish wish of monopolizing all of her affections to themselves during life. It was natural, and a thing to be expected, that Charlotte should marry; and among the whole of their acquaintance there appeared no one so unobjectionable as her new admirer. He was agreeable in person, in manners, and in temper; he was intelligent, witty, and a man of the world; and, moreover, he was worth—three hundred thousand dollars! What parent is there whose judgment would remain unbiassed by these solid reasons in favour of a candidate for the hand of his child? or what female is there whose heart could be steeled against such attractions in her suitor? Many were the hours of care that had been passed by the guardians of Charlotte's happiness, in ruminating on the event that was to yield their charge to the keeping of another; frequent were their discussions on this interesting subject, and innumerable their plans to protect her inexperience against falling into those errors that had blasted the peace of so many around them; but the appearance of Seymour Delafield seemed as the fulfilment of their most sanguine expectations. To his refinement of manners, they both thought that they could yield the sensitive delicacy of their child with confidence; in his travelled experience they anticipated the permanency of a corrected taste; nor, was it a disagreeable consideration to either, that as the silken cord of paternal discipline was to be loosened, it was to be succeeded by the fetters of hymen cast in polished gold. In what manner their daughter regarded the evident admiration of Mr. Delafield will appear, by her conclusion of our tale.

On entering the parlour, Delafield found George Morton seated in a chair near the fire, with his person more than usually well guarded against the cold, as if he were suffering under the effects of a serious indisposition. The salutations between the young men were a little embarrassed on both sides; the face of George growing even paler than before, while the fine colour on Delafield's cheek mounted to his very temples. After regarding for a moment, with much inward dissatisfaction, the apparent ease with which George was maintaining possession of the apartment by himself, Mr. Delafield overcame the sudden emotion created by the surprise, and spoke.

"I am sorry that you appear so ill, Mr. Morton, and I regret that you should have suffered so much in the cause of humanity, when one so much better able to undergo the fatigue, by constitution, should have remained an idle spectator, like myself."—

The silent bow of George might be interpreted into a desire to say nothing of his own conduct, or into an assent with the self-condemnation of the speaker. Delafield, however, took the chair which the other politely placed for him, and continued—

"But, Sir, you have your reward. The interest and admiration excited in Miss Henly, would

compensate me for almost any privation or hardship that man could undergo."

"It is no hardship to ride a few miles in a comfortable coach," said George, with a feeble smile, "nor can I consider it a privation of enjoyment, to be able to assist the distressed,"—he hesitated a moment, and a flush gradually stole over his features as he continued, "It is true, Sir, that I prize the good opinion of Miss Henly highly, but I look to another quarter for approbation on such a subject."

"And very justly, George," said the soft voice of Charlotte, "such applause as mine can be but of little moment to one who performs such acts as yours."

The gentlemen were sitting with their faces towards the fire, and had not heard the light step of Miss Henly as she entered the apartment, but both instantly arose and paid their salutations; the invalid by a silent bow, and by handing a chair, and Delafield with many a graceful compliment on her good looks, and divers protestations concerning the pleasure he felt at being permitted to visit at her house. No two things could be more different than the manners of these gentlemen. That of the latter was very highly polished, insinuating, and although far from unpleasantly so, yet slightly artificial; while that of the former was simple, ingenuous, and in the presence of Miss Henly was apt to be at times a little constrained. Charlotte certainly perceived the difference, and she as certainly thought that it was not altogether to the advantage of George Morton. The idea seemed to give her pain, for she showed several little attentions to her old friend, that by their flattering, but unstudied particularity, were adapted to put any man at his ease and assure him of his welcome, still the embarrassment of George did not disappear, but he sat an uneasy listener to the conversation that occurred, as if reluctant to stay, and yet unwilling to depart. After a few observations on the entertainment of the preceding evening, Mr. Delafield continued—

"I was lamenting to Mr. Morton, as you entered, that he should have suffered so much from my want of thought, the day before yesterday; it requires a good constitution to endure exposure—"

"And such I often tell you, George, you do not possess," said Charlotte, kindly and with a little melancholy; "yet you neither seem to regard my warnings on the subject, nor those of any of your friends"—

"There is a warning that I have not disregarded," returned the youth, endeavouring to smile.

"And what is it?" asked Charlotte, struck with the melancholy resignation of his manner.

"That I am not fit company, just now, for hearts as gay as yours and Mr. Delafield's," he returned, and rising, he made a hasty bow and withdrew.

"What can he mean!" said Charlotte, in amazement, "George does not appear well, and latterly his manner is much altered—what can he mean, Mr. Delafield?"

"He is ill," said Delafield, far from feeling quite easy at the evident interest that the lady exhibited; "he is ill, and should be in his bed, instead of attending the morning levees of even Miss Henly."

"Indeed, he is too regardless of his health," said Charlotte in a low tone, fixing her eyes on the grate, where she continued gazing for some time. Every effort of Seymour was made to draw off the attention of the young lady from a subject, that, however melancholy, seemed to possess peculiar charms for her. In this undertaking the gentleman would not have succeeded but for the fortunate appearance of Miss Osgood, who came into the room very opportunely to keep alive the discourse.

"What, tete-a-tete!" exclaimed Maria; "you should discharge your footman, Charlotte, for saying that you were at home. A young lady is never supposed to be at home when she is alone—with a gentleman."

"I shall then know how to understand the servant of Mr. Osgood, when I inquire for his daughter," cried Seymour gayly.

"Ah! Mr. Delafield, it is seldom that I have an opportunity of hearing soft things, for I am never alone with a gentleman in my father's house"—

"And is Mrs. Osgood so rigid?" returned the gentleman; "surely the gravity of her daughter should create more confidence"—

"Most humbly I thank you, Sir," said Maria, courtseying low before she took the chair that he handed; "but it is not the caution of Mrs. Osgood that prevents any solos in her mansion, unless it be on a harp or flute, or any possibility of a tete-a-tete."

"Now you have excited my curiosity to a degree that is painfully unpleasant," said Delafield, "I know you to be too generous not to allay it"—

"Oh! it is nothing more than a magical number, that frightens away all applicants for such a favour, unless indeed it may be such as would not be very likely to be successful were they to apply; and which even would render it physically impossible to have a tender interview within the four walls of the mansion"—

"It is a charmed number, indeed! and is it on the door? is it the number of the house?"

"Oh! not at all—only the number of the family, the baker's dozen, that I mentioned last evening; now in visiting Miss Henly there is no such interruption to be apprehended."

Charlotte could not refrain from smiling at the vivacity of her friend, who, perceiving that her wish to banish the look of care that clouded the brow of the other had vanished, changed the discourse as abruptly as she had introduced it.

"I met George Morton at the door, and chatted with him for several minutes. He appears quite ill, but I know he has gone two miles in the country for his mother this raw day; unless he is more careful of himself he will ruin his constitution, which is none of the best now."

Maria spoke with feeling, and with a manner that plainly showed that her ordinary levity was assumed, and that she had at the bottom, much better feelings than the trifling intercourse of the world would usually permit her to exhibit. Charlotte did not reply, but her brightening looks once more changed to that pensive softness which so well became her delicate features, and which gave to her countenance an expression such as might be supposed to shadow the glory of angels, when, from their abode of purity and love, they look down with pity on the sorrows of man.

The quick glance of Delafield not only watched, but easily detected, both the rapid transitions and the character of these opposite emotions. Under the sudden influence of passions, that probably will not escape our readers, he could not forbear uttering, in a tone in which pique might have been too apparent.

"Really, Mr. Morton is a happy fellow!"

The blue eyes of Charlotte were turned to the speaker with a look of innocent inquiry, but she continued silent. Maria, however, not only bestowed a glance at the youth from her laughing hazel ones, but found utterance for her tongue also.

"How so?" she asked—"He is not of a strong constitution, not immensely rich, nor over and above—that is, not particularly handsome. Why is he so happy?"

"Ah! I have discovered that a man may be happy without one of those qualifications."

"And miserable who has them all?"

"Nay, nay, Miss Osgood, my experience does not extend so far—I am not quite the puppy you think me."

Maria, in her turn, was silent; but she arose from her seat, and moved with an absent air to a distant part of the room, and for a short time seemed to be particularly occupied in examining the beauties of a port-folio of prints, with every one of which she was perfectly familiar. The conversation was resumed by her friend.

"You have mortified Miss Osgood, Mr. Delafield," said Charlotte; "she is too good natured to judge any one so harshly."

"Is her good nature, in this particular, infectious?" the young man rather whispered than uttered aloud—"Does her friend feel the same indulgence for the infirmities of a frail nature to which she really seems herself hardly to belong?"

"You compliment me, Mr. Delafield, at the expense of truth, if it really be a compliment to tell me that I am not a girl—a female; for if I am not a woman, I must be something worse."

"You are an angel!" said Delafield, with uncontrollable fervour.

Charlotte was startled by his manner and his words, and unconsciously turned to her friend, as if to seek her protecting presence; but to her astonishment, she beheld Maria in the act of closing the door

as she was leaving the room.

"Maria!" she cried, "whither in such a hurry? I expected you to pass the morning with me."

"I shall see your mother and return," replied Miss Osgood, closing the door so rapidly as to prevent further remark. This short speech, however, gave Charlotte time to observe the change that something had produced in the countenance of her old companion, where, in place of the thoughtless gaiety that usually shone in her features, was to be seen an expression of painful mortification; and even the high glow that youth and health had imparted to her cheeks, was supplanted by a death-like paleness. Delafield had been endeavouring to peruse the countenance of Miss Henley in a vain effort to discover the effect produced by his warm exclamation; and these observations, which were made by the quick eye of friendship, entirely escaped his notice.

"Maria is not well, Mr. Delafield," Charlotte said hastily. "I know your goodness will excuse me while I follow her."

The young man bowed with a mortified air, and was somewhat ungraciously beginning to make a polite reply, when the door opened a short space, and the voice of Miss Osgood was once more heard, saying in a forced, but lively manner—

"I never was better in my life; I shall run into Mrs. Morton's for ten minutes; let me find you here, Mr. Delafield, when I return." Her footstep was heard tripping along the passage, and in a moment after, the street door of the house opened and shut. Charlotte perceiving that her friend was determined, for some inexplicable reason, to be alone, quietly resumed her seat. Her musing air was soon changed to one of surprise, by the following remark of her companion:

"You appear, Miss Henley," he said, "to be sensitively alive to the ailings of all you know but me."

"I did not know that you were ill, Mr. Delafield! Really, sir, I never met with any gentleman's looks which so belied him, if you are otherwise than both well and happy."

As much experience as Delafield possessed in the trifling manoeuvres of managers, or perhaps in the manifestations of feelings that are exhibited by every-day people, he was an absolute novice in the emotions of a pure, simple, ingenuous female heart. He was alive to the compliment to his acknowledged good looks, conveyed in this speech, but he was not able to appreciate the single-heartedness that prompted it. Perhaps his handsome face was as much illuminated by the consciousness of this emotion as by the deeper feeling he actually experienced, while he replied,—

"I am well, or ill, as you decree. Miss Henley; it is impossible that you should live in the world, and be seen, be known as you are, and must have been seen and known, and not long since learned the power you possess over the happiness of hundreds."

Though Charlotte was simple, unsuspecting, pure, and extremely modest, she was far from dull—she was not now to learn the difference between the language of ordinary trifling and general compliment, and that to which she now listened, and which, however vague, was still so particular as to induce her to remain silent. The looks and manner of the youthful female, at that moment, would have been a study to those who love to dwell on the better and purer beings of creation. She was silent, as we have already remarked, because she could make no answer to a speech that either meant every thing or nothing. The slight tinge that usually was seated on her cheek spreading over its whole surface like the faintest glow of sunset blending, by mellow degrees, with the surrounding clouds, was heightened to richness, and even diffused itself like a reflection, across her polished forehead, because she believed she was about to listen to a declaration that her years and her education united to tell her was never to approach female ears without slightly trespassing on the delicacy of her sex. Her mild blue eyes, beaming with the glow on her face, rose and fell from the carpet to the countenance of Delafield, but chiefly dwelt in open charity, and possibly in anxiety, on his own. In fact, there was thrown around her whole air, such a touch of exquisite and shrinking delicacy, so blended with feeling benevolence, and even tender interest, that it was no wonder that a man, handsome to perfection, young, intelligent, and rich, mistook her feelings.

"Pardon me, Miss Henley," he cried, and the apology was unconsciously paid to the commanding purity and dignity of her air, "if I overstep the rules of decorum, and hasten to declare that which I know years of trial would hardly justify my saying; but your beauty, your grace, your—your—where shall I find words to express it?—your loveliness, yes, that means every thing—your loveliness has not been seen with impunity."

This might have done very well for a sudden and unprepared declaration; but being a little indefinite, it failed to extract a reply, his listener giving a respectful, and, at times, a rather embarrassing attention to what he was to add. After a short pause, the youth, who found words as he proceeded, and

with whom, as with all others, the first speech was the most difficult, continued—

"I have known you but a short time, Miss Henley; but to see you once is to see you always. You smile, Miss Henley, but give me leave to hope that time and assiduity will enable me to bring you to such a state of feeling, that in some degree, you may know how to appreciate my sensations."

"If I smile, Mr. Delafield," said Charlotte in a low but distinct voice, "it is not at you, but at myself. I, who have been for seventeen years constantly with Charlotte Henley, find each day something new in her, not to admire, but to reprehend." She paused a moment, and then added, smiling most sweetly as she spoke, "I will not affect to misunderstand you, Mr. Delafield; your language is not very intelligible, but it is such that I am sure you would not use to me if you were not serious, and did not feel, or rather think you feel what you utter."

"Think I feel?" he echoed. "Don't I know it? Can I be mistaken in my own sentiments? I may be misled in yours—may have flattered myself with being able to accomplish that at some distant day, which your obduracy may deny me, but in my own feelings I cannot be mistaken."

"Not where they are so very new; nay, do not start so eagerly—where they MUST be so very new. Surely your fancy only leads you to say so much, and to-morrow, or next day, your fancy, unless encouraged by you to dwell on my unworthy self, will lead you elsewhere."

"Now, Miss Henley, what I most admire in your character is its lovely ingenuousness, its simplicity, its HEART; and I will own I did not expect such an answer to a question put, like mine, in sincerity and truth."

"If I have failed to answer any question you have put to me, Mr. Delafield, it is because I am unconscious than any was asked; and if I have displayed disingenuousness, want of simplicity, or want of feeling, it has been unintentional, I do assure you; and only proves that I can be guilty of errors, without their being detected by one who has known me so long and so intimately."

"My impetuosity has deceived me and distressed you," said Delafield—"I would have said that I love you ardently, passionately, and constantly, and shall for ever love you. I should have asked your permission to say all this to your parents, to entreat them to permit me to see you often, to address you; and, if it were not impossible, to hope that in time they would consent to intrust me with their greatest treasure, and that you would not oppose their decree."

"This is certainly asking many questions in a breath," said Charlotte smiling, but without either irony or triumph; "and were it not for that word, breath, I should experience some uneasiness at what you say; I find great satisfaction, Mr. Delafield, in reflecting that our acquaintance is not a week old."

"A week is time enough to learn to adore such a being as you are, Miss Henley, though an age would not suffice to do justice to your merits. Say, have I your permission to speak to your father? I do not ask you yet to return my affection—nay, I question if you can ever love as I do."

"Perhaps not," said Charlotte; "I can love enough to feel a great and deep interest in those who are dear to me, but I never yet have experienced such emotions, as you describe—I believe, in this particular, you have formed a just opinion of me, Mr. Delafield; I suspect such passions are not in the compass of my feelings."

"They are, they must be, Miss Henley: allow me to see you often, to speak to your father, and at least to hope—may I not hope that in time you will learn to think me a man to be trusted with your happiness as your husband?"

The quiet which had governed the manner of Charlotte during this dialogue, was sensibly affected by this appeal, and for a short time she appeared too much embarrassed to reply. During this interval, Delafield gazed on her, in delight; for with the sanguine feelings of youth, he interpreted every symptom of emotion in his own favour. Finding, however, that she was distressed for a reply, he renewed his suit—

"Though I have known you but a few days, I feel as if I had known you for years. There are, I believe, Miss Henley, spirits in the world who commune with each other imperceptibly, who seem formed for each other, and who know and love each other as by instinct."

"I have no pretensions to belong to that class," said Charlotte; "I must know well to love a little, but I trust I feel kind sentiments to the whole human race."

"Ah, you do not know yourself. You have lived all your life in the neighbourhood of that Mr. Morton who just went out, and you feel pity for his illness. He does indeed look very ill—but you have yet to

learn what it is to love. I ask the high favour of being permitted to attempt the office of—of—of—"

"Of teaching me!" said Charlotte with a smile." {sic}

"No—that word is too presumptuous—too coarse—"

"Hear me, Mr. Delafield," said Miss Henley after a short pause, during which she seemed to have experienced some deep and perhaps painful emotions—"I cannot undertake to give you a reason for my conduct—very possibly I have no good one; but I feel that I should be doing you injustice by encouraging what you are pleased to call hopes—I wish to be understood now, as saying that I cannot consent to your expecting that I should ever become your wife."

Delafield was certainly astonished at this refusal, which was given in that still, decided manner that admits of little opposition. He had long been accustomed to apprehend a sudden acceptance, and had been in the habit of strictly guarding both his manner and his language, lest something that he did or said might justify expectations that would have been out of his power to fulfil; but now, when, for the first time, he had ventured a direct offer, he met with a rejection that possessed all the characteristics of sincerity, he was, in truth, utterly astounded. After taking a sufficient time to collect in some degree his faculties, he came to the conclusion that he had been too precipitate, and had urged the suit too far, and too hastily.

"Such may be your sentiments now, Miss Henley," he said, "but you may alter them in time: you are not called on for a definite answer."

"If not by you, I am by truth, Mr. Delafield. It would be wrong to lead you to expect what can never—"

"Never?" said Delafield—"you cannot speak so decidedly."

"I do, indeed I do," returned Charlotte firmly.

"I have not deceived myself in believing you to be disengaged, Miss Henley?"

"You have a right to require a definite answer to your questions, Mr. Delafield; but you have no right to exact my reasons for declining your very flattering offer—I am young, very young—but I know what is due to myself and to my sex—"

"By heavens! my suspicion is true—you are already betrothed!"

"It would be easy to say NO to that assertion, sir," added Charlotte, rising; "but your right to a reason in a matter where inclination is so material, is exactly the same as my right would be to ask you why you did not address me. I thank you for the preference you have shown me, Mr. Delafield. I have not so little of the woman about me, not to remember it always with gratitude; but I tell you plainly and firmly, for it is necessary that I should do so—I never can consent to receive your proposals."

"I understand you, madam—I understand you," said the young man with an offended air; "you wish my absence—nay, Miss Henley, hear me further."

"No further, Mr. Delafield," interrupted Charlotte, advancing to him with a kind, but unembarrassed air, and offering her hand—"we part friends at least; but I think, now we know each other's sentiments, we had better separate."

The gentleman seized the hand she offered, and kissed it more with the air of a lover, than of an offended man, and left the room. A few minutes after he had gone, Miss Osgood re-appeared.

CHAPTER IV.

NOTWITHSTANDING the earnest injunction that Maria had given to Mr. Delafield to continue where she left him, until her return, she expressed no surprise at not finding him in the room. The countenance of this young lady exhibited a droll mixture of playful mirth and sadness; she glanced her eyes once around the apartment, and perceiving it was occupied only by her friend, she said, laughing —

"Well, Charlotte, when is it to be? I think I retired in very good season."

"Perhaps you did, Maria," returned the other, without raising her face from the reflecting attitude in which she stood—"I believe it is all very well."

"Well! you little philosopher—I should think it was excellent—that—that is—if I were in your place. I

suspected this from the moment you met."

"What have you suspected, Maria?—what is it you imagine has occurred?"

"What! why Seymour Delafield has been stammering—then he looked doleful—then he sighed—then he hemmed—then he said you were an angel—nay, you need not look prudish, and affect to deny it; he got as far as that before I left the room—then he turned to see if I were not coming back again to surprise him—then he fell on his knees—then he stretched out his handsome hand— it is too handsome for a man's hand!—and said take it, take me, take my name, and take my three hundred thousand dollars!—Now don't deny a syllable of it till I tell your answer."

Charlotte smiled, and taking her work, quietly seated herself at her table before she replied—

"You go through Cupid's exercise so dexterously, Maria, one is led to suspect you have seen some service."

"Not under such an officer, girl! Ah! Colonel Delafield, or General—no, Field Marshal Delafield, is an officer that might teach"—as Miss Osgood spoke with short interruptions between her epithets, as if in search of proper terms, she dwelt a moment on the last word in such a manner as to give it a particular emphasis—Charlotte started, more perhaps from the manner than the expression, and turning her glowing face towards her friend, she cried involuntarily—

"Is it possible that you could have overheard—"

"What?"

"Nothing—what nonsense!"

"Let me tell you, Miss Prude, it is in such nonsense, however, that the happiness or misery of us poor sports of fortune, called women, in a great measure blooms or fades—now that I call poetical!—but for your answer: first you said—indeed, Mr. Delafield, this is SO unexpected—though you knew well enough what was coming—then you blushed as you did a little while ago, and said I am so young—I—am but poor seventeen—then he swore you were seventy—no, no,—but he said you are old enough to be his ruling star—his destiny—his idol—his object of WORSHIP—ha! I do hit the right epithet now and then. Well—then you said you had parents, as if the poor man did not know that already, and that they must be consulted; and he desired you to ask the whole city—he defied them all to say aught against him—he was regular at church—subscribed to the widow's society, and the assembly; and in short, was called a 'good' young man, even in Wall- street."

"All this is very amusing, Maria—but—"

"It is all very true. Then he was pressing, and you were coy, until finally he extorted your definitive answer, which was—" Maria paused, and seemed to be intensely studying the looks of the other—Miss Henley smiled as she turned her placid, ingenuous features to her gaze, and continued the conversation by repeating,

"Which was?"

"NO; irretrievable—unanswerable—unalterable NO."

"I have not authorized you to suspect any part of this rhapsody to be true—I have not said you were right in a single particular."

"Excuse me, Miss Henley, you have said all, and Seymour Delafield told me the same as we passed each other at the street door."

"Is it possible!"

"It could not be otherwise. His mouth was shut, it is true, and his tongue might have been in his pocket, for any thing I know: but his eyes and his head, his walk, and even his nose were downcast, and spoke mortification. On the other hand, your little body looks an inch higher, your eyes look resolute, as much as to say, 'Avaunt, false one! your whole appearance is that of determined denial, mingled—"

"Mingled with what, trifler?"

"Mingled with a little secret, woman's pride, that you have had an opportunity of showing your absolute character."

"You know these feelings from experience, do you?"

"No child, my very nature is charity; if the request had been made to me, I should have sent the desponding youth to my father, and if he refused, to my mother—"

"And if she refused?"

"Why then I should have said, two negatives make an affirmative."

Charlotte laughed, and in this manner the serious explanation which, between friends so intimate might have been expected, was avoided. Maria, at the same time, that she fell and manifested a deep interest in the TETE-A-TETE that she had promoted, always avoided any thing like a grave explanation, and we have failed in giving the desired view of the character of Miss Henley, if our readers deem it probable that she would ever touch on the subject voluntarily.

The winter passed by in the ordinary manner in which other winters pass in this climate, being a mixture of mild, delightful days, clear sky, and invigorating sun, and of intense, cold, raw winds, and snow storms. The two latter seemed to try the constitution of poor George Morton to the utmost. The severe cold that he took in his charitable excursion lingered about him through the cold months, and before the genial warmth of May occurred to relieve him, his physicians pronounced that his lungs were irremediably affected. During the period of doubt and apprehension which preceded the announcement of this opinion, and of distress and agony which succeeded it, the family of Mr. Henley warmly sympathized in the feelings of their neighbours. The long intimacy that had existed between George and Charlotte and their parents, removed all superfluous forms, and the latter passed a great deal of her time with Mrs. Morton, or by the side of the invalid. Her presence gave him such manifest and lively pleasure, that it would have been cruel to have denied him what the other appeared to grant spontaneously. Charlotte had gradually withdrawn herself from society as the illness of George increased, and his danger became more apparent; and at the expiration of the month of April, she was seldom visible to those who are called the world, with the exception of the immediate connexions of her family, and her friend Maria Osgood. In the beginning of May both Mr. Morton and his neighbour withdrew to their country houses, and thus the retirement from the world and the intercourse between the two families became more complete.

Delafield had made one or two efforts to renew his addresses to Charlotte, but finding them in every instance firmly, though mildly rejected, he endeavoured to discover such imperfections in the object of his regard as might justify him in disliking her. The more he reflected on her conduct, however, the more he became sensible of the propriety and simplicity of her deportment; and had not the impression she had made on the young man proceeded rather from the effect on his fancy, than from having touched his heart, the consequences of his conviction of her purity and truth might have been more lasting and deplorable. As it was, his heated imagination gradually ceased to glow with the beauties of an image that was, however perfect in itself, extravagantly coloured by his own youthful imagination, and in time, if he thought at all of Charlotte Henley, he thought of her as a beautiful object, it is true, but as of one that brought somewhat mortifying reflections along with it. This might not have been manly or generous, perhaps, but we believe it is the manner in nine cases out of ten in which such sudden emotions expire, especially if the ardour of the youth has precipitated a declaration that the more chastened feelings of the damsel are not yet prepared to reciprocate. While the image of Charlotte was still lingering in his mind, he was in the habit of visiting Maria Osgood almost daily, to ask questions about her, and perhaps with a secret expectation of their meeting her at the house of her friend. The gay trifling of Miss Osgood aided greatly both in cooling his spleen and removing his melancholy, till in the course of a month he even proceeded so far as to make her the confidant of what she already knew, though only by conjecture and inference. Delafield at this time was so urgent, and secretly so determined to prevail, in order that his pride if not his affections might be soothed, that in an unguarded moment he induced the inconsiderate Maria to betray, we will not say the confidence of her friend, but such facts as could only have come to her knowledge by the intimacy of unaffected association. If there were any thing to extenuate this breach of decorum by Maria, it was the manner in which it was effected. Miss Osgood had just returned from one of her frequent visits to the villa of Mr. Henley, when Delafield made his customary morning call: the absence of Maria, and the object of her visit, had been well known to him, and as it was a time when he began to speak of Miss Henley without much emotion, and but little love, he could not avoid yielding so far to his pique as to express himself as follows:

"So, Miss Maria, you have just returned from paying another visit to your beautiful little friend without any heart."

"My little friend without any heart! Of whom do you speak? and what do you mean!"

"I speak of Miss Charlotte Henley, the nun,—she who has all of heaven about her but its love—that brilliant casket without its jewels—that woman— yes, that YOUNG woman without any heart."

"Upon my word, sir, this is a very pretty poem you have been reciting! but in my opinion, your conclusion is wrong. As she refused to give you her heart, it is the more probable that she has it yet in that brilliant casket you speak of—"

"No—she never had one. She wants the greatest charm that nature can give to a woman—a warm, grateful, and affectionate heart."

"And pray, sir," said Maria, bending her eyes inquisitively toward the youth, "if she want it, what has she done with it!"

"She never had one, Miss Osgood. I will grant you that she is lovely, exquisitely lovely! pure, gentle, amiable, every epithet you may wish to apply, that indicates nothing but acquired excellence: but as to natural feelings, she is as cold as an icicle—in short she is destitute of HEART—the thing of all others I most prize in a woman, and for which I admire you so much."

Maria laughed, but she coloured also. It had long been obvious to herself, and to the world too, that Delafield sought her society, now that he was not admitted at Mr. Henley's, much more than that of my other young woman in the city; but she thought that she well understood the secret reason for this preference, though the world might not. How gratifying this speech was to the feelings of the gay girl, the sequel of our tale must show. The young man however did not judge her too favourably, when he supposed her to possess those kindred sensations that unite us with our fellow-beings, and he might have added a good deal of generosity to the catalogue of her virtues. After a pause of a moment she replied—

"I suppose I must thank you, Delafield, for the pretty compliment you have just paid me, but I am so unused to this sort of thing, that I really feel as bashful as sweet fifteen, though I am at mature twenty."

"That is because you DO feel, Miss Osgood; I might have said as much to Charlotte Henley without exciting the least emotion in her, or of even bringing one tinge of that bright blush over her features which makes you look so handsome."

"Mercy! mercy! have mercy, I entreat you," cried Maria, averting her face, "or I shall soon be as red as the cook. But I cannot, I will not consent to hear my friend traduced in such a manner; so far from wanting feeling, Charlotte Henley is all heart. To use your own language," she added, turning her eyes towards him archly, "it is for her heart that I most love her."

"You deceive yourself. Early attachment, and long association, and your own generous, warm feelings deceive you. She is accustomed to show gentle and kind civilities to all around her, and you mistake habit for affection."

"She is accustomed to do all that, I own; but to do it in a manner that adds to its value by her simple unaffected feelings. She is not, I must acknowledge, like certain people of my acquaintance, a bundle of tinder to take fire at every spark that approaches, but she loves all she should love, and I fear she loves one too well that she should not love."

"Love one that she should not love?" cried Delafield: "what, is her heart then engaged to another! Is it possible that Miss Henley, the cold, prudish Miss Henley, can indulge an improper attachment after all?"

"Mr. Delafield," said Miss Osgood, gravely, "I am not apt to betray what I ought to conceal, although I am the giddy creature that I seem. But I have spoken unguardedly, and must explain: in the first place, I would not have you suppose that Charlotte Henley and I talk of our hearts and our lovers to each other, like two girls at a boarding school. If I know that she has such a thing as a heart at all, it is not from herself but from my own observation; and as for lovers, though she may have had dozens for any thing I know, to ME they are absolutely strangers.—Don't interrupt me, I am not begging one. After this explanation I will say, trusting, Delafield entirely in your honour, which I do believe you to possess in a high—"

"You may—you may," interrupted the young man eagerly: "I will never betray your confidence—you might trust yourself to my honour and good faith—"

"I wish you would not be bringing yourself and myself constantly into the conversation," said the lady, compressing her lips to conceal a smile; "we are talking of Charlotte Henley, and of her only. She was brought up in the daily habit of seeing much of George Morton, who, I believe, even you will own has a heart, for it will cost him his life."

"His life!"

"I fear so; nay, it is without hope. The cold he took in carrying the poor sufferer to the hospital last winter has thrown him into a decline. I do believe that Charlotte Henley is fond of him; but mind, I do not say that she is in love—if appears to be less of passion than of intense affection."

"Yes, such as she would feel for a brother."

"She has no brother. I do not intend to define the passions: but I do believe that if he were to live and offer himself, she would marry him, and make him such a wife as any man might envy."

"What! do you think she loves him unasked, and yet refuse me who begged her hand like her slave."

"It is not unasked; he has known her all her life—has ever shown a preference for her—has been kind to her and to all others in her presence—he has long anticipated her wishes, in trifles, and—and—in short, he has done just what he ought to do, to gain her love."

"Then you think I erred in the manner in which I made my advances?"

"Your advances, as you call them, would have succeeded with nine girls in ten, though not with Miss Henley—besides, you are too late."

"Certainly not too late when no declaration had been made by any other."

"I am not about to discuss the proprieties of courtship with you, Mr. Delafield," cried Maria, laughing and rising from her chair. "Come, let us walk; it is a sin to shut ourselves up on such a morning. The subject must now be changed and the scene too."

He accepted her challenge, and they proceeded through the streets together; but she evaded every subsequent attempt he made to renew the discourse. Perhaps she felt that she had gone too far—perhaps there was something in it that was painful to her own feelings.

The explanation, however, had a great tendency to destroy the remains of what Delafield mistook for love. Instead of having his affections seriously engaged in a short intercourse with Miss Henley, our readers may easily perceive that it was nothing but his imagination that was excited, and which had kept his brain filled with images still more lovely than the original: but now that the wan features of George Morton were constantly brought into the picture by the side of the deity he had worshipped, the contemplation of these fancied beauties become hourly less pleasant, and in a short time he ceased to dwell on the subject altogether.

A consequence, however, grew out of his short-lived inclination, that was as unlooked for by himself as by the others interested in the result. He became so much accustomed to the society of Maria Osgood, that at length he felt it was necessary to his comfort. To the surprise of the whole city, the handsome, rich, witty, and accomplished Mr. Seymour Delafield declared himself in form before the spring had expired to one of the plain daughters of Mr. Osgood, a man with a large family, and but little money. Maria had a difficult task to conceal the pleasure she felt, as she listened to, not the passionate declaration of her admirer, but to his warm solicitation that she would unite her destinies to his own. She did conceal it, however, and would only consent to receive his visits for a time, on the condition that he was not to consider her as at all engaged by the permission.

CHAPTER V.

WHILE such happy prospects were opening on the future life of her friend, the time of Charlotte Henley was very differently occupied in the country. There is, however, a tendency in youth to rise with events that does not readily admit of depression, and the disorder of George Morton was one of all others the most flattering when near its close. Even the more mature experience of his parents was misled by the deceptive symptoms that his complaint assumed in the commencement of summer. They who so fondly hoped the result, began to believe that youth and the bland airs of June were overcoming the inexorable enemy. That the strength of the young man lessened with every succeeding day, was an event to be expected from his low diet and protracted confinement; but his brightening eyes, and the flitting colour that would at times add to their fiery radiance, brought to the youthful Charlotte the most heartfelt, though secret, rapture. This state between reviving hope and momentary despondency had prevailed for several weeks, when the affectionate girl entered an apartment that communicated with George's own room, where she found the invalid reclining on a settee apparently deeply communing with himself. He was alone; and his appearance, as well as the heavens and the earth, united to encourage the sanguine expectation of the pure heart that throbbed so ardently when its owner witnessed any favourable change in the countenance of the young man. The windows were raised, and the balmy air of a June morning played through the apartment, lending in reality an elastic

vigour to the decaying organs of the sick youth. The tinge in his cheeks was heightened by the mellow glow of the sun's rays as they shone through the medium of the rose-coloured curtains of the window, and Charlotte thought she once more beheld the returning colour of health where it had been so long absent.

"How much better you appear this morning, George," she cried, in a voice whose melody was even heightened by its gaiety. "We shall soon have you among us once more, and then, heedless one, beware how you trifle again with that best of heaven's gifts, your health. Oh, this is a blessed climate! our summer atones with its mildness for the dreariness and perils of our winter; it has even given me a colour, pale-face as I am—I can feel it burn on my cheek."

He raised his head from its musing position at the first sounds of her voice, and smiled faintly, and with an expression of anguish, as she proceeded; but when she had ended, and taken her seat near him, still keeping her eyes on his varying countenance, he took her hand into his own before he replied. A good deal surprised at his manner, and at this act, which exceeded the usual familiarity of even their affectionate intercourse, the colour, of which Miss Henley had been so playfully boasting, changed once or twice with rapid transitions.

"Seem I so well, dear Charlotte?" he at length said in a low, tremulous, and hollow voice, "seem I so well? I believe you are right, and that I shall shortly be better—much better."

"What mean you, George? feel you any worse? have I disturbed you with my presence and my thoughtless gaiety?"

The young man smiled again, but the expression of his face was no longer mingled with a look of anguish; it was a kind benevolent gleam of gratitude and affection which crossed his ghastly features, like a ray of sunshine enlivening the gloom of a day in winter.

"You disturb me, Charlotte!" he answered, his very voice trembling as if in sympathy with his frame: "I do believe but for you I should have been long since in my grave."

"No, no, George, this is too melancholy a theme for us both just now; let us talk of your returning health."

He pressed her hand to his heart before he replied— "My health will never return; I am lost to this world; and in fact at this moment I properly belong to another in my body: would to God that I was purely so in feelings also."

"Surely, George, you are alarming yourself unnecessarily."

"I am not alarmed," he replied; "I have too long foreseen this event, to feel alarmed at my approaching dissolution—no, for that, blessed be my God and my Redeemer, I am in some degree prepared; but I feel it impossible to shake off the feelings of this life while the pulse continues to beat, and yet the emotions I now experience must be in some measure allied to heaven; they are not impure, they are not selfish; nothing can partake of either, dear Charlotte, where your image is connected with the thoughts of a future world."

"Oh, George! talk not so gloomily, so cruelly, this morning—your whole countenance contradicts your melancholy speech, and you are better—indeed you are;—you must be better."

"Yes, I am better, I am nearly well," returned the youth, pausing a moment, while a struggle of the most painful interest seemed to engross his thoughts. As it passed away, he drew his hand feebly across his clammy brow, and, smiling faintly, resumed his speech,— "on the brink of the grave, at a moment when all thoughts of me must be connected with the image of death, there can no longer be any necessity for silence. You have been kind to us, dear Miss Henley, as you are kind to all; but to me your sympathy has been trebly dear, for it has brought with it a consolation and pleasure that you but little imagine."

Miss Henley raised her tearful eyes from the floor to his wan features, that now appeared illumined with more than human fires, and her pale lips quivered, but her voice was inaudible.

"Yes, Charlotte, I may now speak without injustice, or the fear of being selfish: I have long loved you — how tenderly, how purely, none can ever know; but could I, with a certainty of my fate before my eyes, with the knowledge that my days were numbered, and that the sun of my life could never reach its meridian, woo you to my love, to make you miserable! No, dearest! your gentle heart will mourn the brother and the friend too much for its own peace; it needed not the sting of a stronger grief."

"George, George," sobbed the convulsed girl, "think not of me; speak not of me—if it can cheer you at

such a moment to know how much you are valued by me, no cold reserve shall be found on my part."

The young man started, and fastened his eyes on her face with an indefinable look of delight mingled with sorrow.

"Charlotte!" he exclaimed, "do I hear aright? am I so miserable! am I so happy! repeat those words—quick—my eyes grow dim—my senses deceive me."

"Live, George Morton," said Charlotte firmly: "you are better—your whole face bespeaks it; and if the tender care of an affectionate wife can preserve your health, you shall long live a blessing to all who love you."

As Charlotte uttered, thus ingenuously, her pure attachment, the youth extended his hand towards her blindly. She gave him her own, which he drew to his heart, and folded to his bosom with a warm pressure for an instant, when his hold relaxed, his form dropping backward on the sofa, and in that attitude he expired without a struggle.

We shall not dwell on the melancholy scene that followed. At the funeral of George Morton Miss Henley was not to be seen, nor was it generally understood that the young people had been connected in the closest ties of feeling. She made no display of her grief in her dress, unless the slight testimonials of a few bright ribbands on the virgin white of her robe could be called such, and the rumour that was at first propagated of their being engaged to each other was discredited, because the traces of sorrow were not particularly visible in the attire of Miss Henley. When the season of gaiety returned, she appeared as usual in her place in society. Though her cheeks were seldom enriched with the faint glow that once rendered her so beautiful, and she was less dazzling in her appearance, yet, if possible, she was more lovely and attractive. In the course of the winter, several gentlemen approached her with the evident intention of offering their hands. Their advances were received with great urbanity, but in most instances with that unembarrassed manner that is fatal to hope. One of her admirers, however, persevered so far as to solicit her hand: the denial was mild, but resolute; like most young men who think their happiness dependent on a lady's smile, he wished to know if he had a successful rival. He was assured he had not. His curiosity even went so far as to inquire if Miss Henley had abjured matrimony. The answer was a simple, unaffected negative. Amazed at his own want of success, the youth then intimated his intention of making a future application for her favour.

In the mean time, Seymour Delafield, after casting one longing, lingering look at Miss Henley, became the husband of her friend, and made the fourteenth in the prolific family of the Osgoods, where his wealth was not less agreeable to the parents, than his person to the daughter.

Many years have rolled by since the occurrence of these events, and Miss Henley continues the same in every thing but appearance. The freshness of her beauty has given place to a look of intelligence. and delicacy that seems gradually fitting her for her last and most important change. The name of George Morton is never heard to pass her lips. Mrs. Delafield declares it to be a subject that she never dares to approach, nor in her repeated refusals of matrimonial offers has Charlotte ever been known to allude to the desolation of her own heart. Her father is dead; but to her mother Miss Henley has in a great measure supplied his loss. With her friends she is always cheerful, and apparently happy, though the innocent gaiety of her childhood is sensibly checked, and there are moments that betray the existence of a grief that is only the more durable, because it is less violent. In short, she lives a pattern for her sex, unfettered by any romantic and foolish pledges, discharging all the natural duties of her years and station in an exemplary manner, but unwilling to incur any new ones, because she has but one heart, and that was long since given with its purity, sincerity, and truth, to him who is dead, and can never become the property of another.

When Charlotte Henley dies, although she may not have fulfilled one of the principal objects of her being, by becoming a mother, her example will survive her; and those who study her character and integrity of feeling, will find enough to teach them what properties are the most valuable in forming that sacred character—while her own sex can learn that, though in the case of Miss Henley, Providence has denied the full exercise of her excellences, it has at the same time rendered her a striking instance of female dignity, by exhibiting to the world the difference between affection and caprice, and by shewing how much imagination is inferior to Heart.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK TALES FOR FIFTEEN; OR, IMAGINATION AND HEART ***

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