

# The Project Gutenberg eBook of The Elm Tree Tales, by F. Burge Griswold

This ebook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this ebook or online at [www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org). If you are not located in the United States, you'll have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

**Title:** The Elm Tree Tales

**Author:** F. Burge Griswold

**Release Date:** May 30, 2009 [EBook #29008]

**Language:** English

**Credits:** Produced by David Edwards, Josephine Paolucci and the Online Distributed Proofreading Team at <https://www.pgdp.net>. (This file was produced from images generously made available by The Internet Archive.)

\*\*\* START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE ELM TREE TALES \*\*\*

THE  
ELM TREE TALES.  
BY  
F. IRENE BURGE SMITH.

Little know they who dwell 'mid rural shades,  
Of life's great struggles. Poverty and want  
In direst forms, are never seen, where bloom  
And verdure revel, but within the dark  
And loathesome cellars of the crowded town,  
They hide their tattered forms.

NEW YORK:

MASON BROTHERS.

1856.

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1855, by  
MASON BROTHERS,  
In the Clerk's Office of the District Court, for the  
Southern District of New York

STEREOTYPED BY  
Thomas B. Smith,  
82 & 84 Beekman Street

PRINTED BY  
John A. Gray,  
97 Cliff St.

---

## PREFACE.

"There is a wisdom in calling a thing fitly. Names should note particulars."—PROVERBIAL PHILOSOPHY.

To make the title of this book significant to you, I must transport you to a sylvan nook, far from the city's boundaries, where an old stone cottage peeps forth from the thick foliage. Down through the maple avenue you will take your pleasant route, past the willow and alder clumps, and the ancient mill, that hangs its idle arms listlessly by its sides—on and on, over the little style, and the rustic bridge, which spans the rivulet, until you reach the giant elm that spreads its broad branches far and wide. Books and work are scattered about on the verdant turf, bright flowers peep forth from amid the green, and many a fair face greets you with its frank and

cordial welcome. The sky is very blue and clear, and the summer's breath comes refreshingly to you through the leafy screen, as you seat yourself upon a mossy stone and join in the merriments of the happy circle gathered there. But you are quite too late for the manuscript volume which a guest from the city has been reading aloud for the amusement of the group.

Perhaps you have lost nothing, however. I have obtained permission to give it you for a more leisurely perusal. I hope it will please you.

When a stranger goes to your door seeking your regard and patronage, you naturally look for some note of introduction, which generally reads somewhat after this fashion:

"Any attentions you may bestow upon my friend —, will confer an especial favor upon

"Yours truly,

"— —."

BROOKLYN, October 27, 1855.

---

## **THE ELM-TREE TALES.**

---

**JENNIE GRIG:**

THE

**STREET-SWEEPER.**

---

**NANNIE BATES:**

THE

**HUCKSTER'S DAUGHTER.**

---

**ARCHIBALD MACKIE:**

THE

**LITTLE CRIPPLE.**

---

**JENNIE GRIG,**

**THE STREET SWEEPER;**

OR THE

**VICISSITUDES OF LIFE.**

---

[Pg 10]

**JENNIE GRIG.**

---

[Pg 11]

## **CHAPTER I.**

Poor little girl! How sadly came her wailing tones on the frosty air, while the multitudes that

hurried past were hidden from the chilling blasts by warm and furry garments!

There were some humane ones who lifted her softly from the ground, and bore her carefully to the nearest apothecary's, to examine the extent of her injuries—and a slight figure clad in the deepest weeds, followed after and held the child's hand, and bathed her forehead, while the surgeon bound up the broken limb.

"She was such a pinched wee thing to be sweeping those dangerous crossings," said the lady; "no wonder the heedless crowd jostled her down, and nearly crushed her tiny body."

"Is not her consciousness returning, doctor?" continued she, addressing the surgeon, as a slight flush was beginning to be perceptible upon the little girl's cheek.

The child had lain in a kind of stupor from the time of the accident, and now, as her dark eyes slowly opened, she gazed faintly upon the curious faces that were gathered around her, until she met the sweet yet sorrowful glance of the strange lady—then, bursting forth into a wild and bitter sobbing, she cried, "Who now will help my poor weak mother, and my sick and dying father!—nine pennies only have I earned to-day, and all is lost in the muddy street—oh! who will get them bread and coals, now their Jennie can not work!"

[Pg 12]

"God will provide, only trust Him, poor child," said the kind lady, as she wiped the tears that had moistened her own eyes at sight of the child's grief.

"Where do your parents live, my little girl," asked the benevolent surgeon—"we must be getting you home, or they will be anxious about you now that the night is coming on."

The child started as she heard the word "*home*," and blushing the deepest crimson, replied, "If you please, sir, I am able to walk now, and will go alone, for dear mamma would be angry if I had strangers with me—she never sees any one but father, now."

"'Twould be madness to send her forth into this wintery air with a newly broken arm," said the lady—"if you will come with me, little Jennie, we will soon satisfy your parents that you are in comfortable quarters, my carriage is at the door, and John shall go alone to your home with a message"—and, calling her servant, she bade him bring one of the soft robes from the carriage, and wrapping it closely about the shivering child, she had her conveyed to her own noble home.

[Pg 13]

---

## CHAPTER II.

Up, up, up till you reached the very topmost room in a rickety building in — street, and there they were—a woman in neat but coarse raiment, seated by a flickering candle, stitching for the life, and with every effort for the life, stitching out the life. Near her, on a lowly bed, lay her suffering husband, watching the wan fingers as they busily plied for him who would fain have spent his last strength for their rest.

The frosty breath of a December night came through the chinks in the roof, and around the windows, and left its bitter impress upon the sick and weary. A few coals partially ignited, seemed to mock at the visions of warmth and comfort they inspired, and the simmering of the kettle that hung low over the coals, made the absence of a cheery board, and a happy group around it only the more painfully apparent.

The sick man closed his eyes, as if to shut out the memory of those wasted fingers that were ever so zealously moving, and then looking wistfully at the murmuring kettle, he said, "Has not the child come yet, Mary?—perhaps she has enough for our scanty meal to-night, and yet my heart misgives me on her account—is it not very late for her to stay away? She is such a timid little thing, and always flies to us before the darkness begins to come! Her's is a cruel age, and a loathsome employment. Would God I had died, Mary, ere it had come to this!"—and the poor man hid his face in the bedclothes, and moaned like a stricken child. The patient wife laid aside her work, and taking the well-worn Bible from its sacred resting-place, read to him the thirty-seventh Psalm—then rising and going to the window, she pressed her ear against the pane, and listened for her Jennie's coming. Hark! a step is on the stairs! The husband and wife both started—it was a heavy, lumbering tread—not the soft foot-falls of their gentle little one, that brought music even to their dismal abode:

[Pg 14]

"Some one is knocking, Mary," said the husband, and, as he spoke, the door opened, and a man appeared with a note and a basket.

"Is Mrs. Grig here," asked the man.

"That is my name," replied the frightened woman whose maternal heart immediately suggested that something had happened to her child.

"Tell me of my darling. Is she hurt? Is she dead?"—then seizing the note which the servant held out to her she read as follows:

"Mr. and Mrs. Grig must not be alarmed about their little Jennie. She has met with a slight accident; but her life is not endangered, and she is where every attention will be bestowed upon her. If they will spare her to me until she is wholly restored,

[Pg 15]

they will confer the greatest of favors upon their friend,

"HELENA DUNMORE.

"I send a few delicacies, which I hope her sick father will relish. Jennie wishes to see her mother before she sleeps, will she come to her an hour this evening?"

The servant left the name of the street, and the number of the house where his mistress lived, and departed, with an humble reverence, for there was an innate aristocracy in Mrs. Grig that commanded the respect of all who saw her, even though the vicissitudes of life had robbed her of the external marks of rank and elegance. "God be praised!" said she, as she pressed her lips to the pale brow of her now hopeful husband, "Our house is not left unto us desolate, neither has our Father forsaken us in our time of necessity. Surely He giveth bread to the hungry, and filleth the fainting soul with gladness!" Then spreading the tempting viands before the famished invalid, she smiled with the cheerfulness of her earlier days, as she saw with what relish he ate and drank.

When they had finished their unexpected, but welcome meal, she placed the fragments carefully away, and blowing out the light, which she must save for her midnight toils, she left the house in order to seek her child.

[Pg 16]

---

### CHAPTER III.

The stars were shining tranquilly, and the moon looked calmly down upon the great and noisy city, imparting their quietness and peace to the heart of the eager mother who threaded her way to her sick child. Long and tedious was the distance, but she felt it not, excepting that she shrunk from the rough contact of brawling and wicked men, who rudely pushed past her, as they hurried on to their nightly debauches.

Oh! how sensitive was she then to the thought of the horrors that ever threaten the innocent and unprotected, if forced by their sad necessity to encounter the vile and polluted!—and how resolutely did she determine thenceforth to shield the child of her love from all such dangers, even though her own life were the forfeit of her care.

She gazed upward into the clear heavens, as if to gather strength for her future trials, and then pressing quickly on, was soon in the presence of Mrs. Dunmore. The transition from her own dreary room to the luxurious and tasteful apartment where she now found herself, was so completely bewildering, that she stood for a moment, as if in a strange and mysterious dream. Every thing that taste could desire, or wealth procure, was lavished upon this sanctum, where Mrs. Dunmore, since her double bereavement, found her chief delight—yet amid all the splendor of the place, were tokens of that presence from which naught can exempt us.

[Pg 17]

A little portrait draped in black, hung above a crimson couch, whereon lay a child of exquisite beauty. Her tiny form was wrapped in the purest muslin, and a light blue cashmere shawl was thrown negligently over her. One little foot, encased in a delicate slipper, hung over the edge of the couch, and her long dark curls fell about the pillow in the richest profusion.

In one hand she held a pretty vinaigrette, and the other was bound in soft cloths, and slightly confined to her waist by a silken sash. As the door of the room opened, she flung off the shawl that covered her, and tried to rise; but the effort was too much for her exhausted frame, and she fell faintly back, murmuring "Mother, dearest mother!"

In one moment the poor woman was kneeling beside the couch, clasping the sweet child to her bosom, who with her one little arm girdled that sacred neck, and with smiles and kisses awakened her to a perfect consciousness of her safety and of her happy position.

Mrs. Dunmore had all this time been partially concealed by the drapery of the window, but as she moved from the recess Jennie's quick ear caught the sound of her step, and she whispered to her mother, who arose, and with some confusion at the novelty of her situation and the meanness of her attire, advanced to meet the gentle widow, saying, "Jennie tells me you are the kind lady who befriended her in her distress—I have not words to thank you, dear madam, for your pity, and care for my unfortunate child; but if the prayers of an earnest heart will avail before God, the choicest of Heaven's blessings shall be your reward."

[Pg 18]

"A glance at that portrait," said Mrs. Dunmore, "will betray to you the motive for any unwonted interest in your precious child; but were it simply a humane act, the thought of having performed one's duty is a sufficient recompense—still, I ask another, and that is, that your little one may supply to me the place of my darling 'Bella.' I know," continued she, as she noticed the flush upon the mother's face, and the increased pulsations of her heart, "how great a sacrifice I ask, and I can not press you to give up your own right over the treasure God has bestowed upon you; but I would so far share that blessing with you, as to keep your little Jennie always near me, and to assist you in your care for her comfort and advancement."

Mrs. Grig was struck with the delicacy and refinement of Mrs. Dunmore's manner toward her; instead of bluntly offering to adopt her child, with the evident feeling that it was too good a bargain to require a moment's wavering, she proposed it to her in the light of a favor conferred

upon herself, and in which they would both ever have a mutual interest. The poor woman could not see that her own apparent good breeding had—in Mrs. Dunmore's estimation—diminished the distance in their relative positions, so that a free and full sympathy was compatible with her dignity, as well as the dictate of her heart. She looked upon her child as she lay there, in her now adorned loveliness; she gazed about the room so filled with comfort and delight, and as her thoughts wandered from these blessings to her own cheerless home, and to the past few months of destitution; and as visions of weary days of toil, and nights of cold and hunger and wretchedness, and the shadow of that lovely little one returning from her loathsome labors, with muddy garments, and a worn and saddened face, passed before her, she shrunk from the latter alternative, and placing the hand of her child in that of her adopted mother she said, with the calmness of a settled purpose—"It will make a sad void in our desolate home, but God has opened your heart to her before she is left alone, and His goodness shall be my constant theme of gratitude; you will allow her to come to us every day while her poor father lives; his pains will be lightened by her presence, and 'twill comfort me to see the eyes that have beamed upon me these nine long years, more joyously beaming as I hasten to the end of my pilgrimage. You will love this kind lady, will you not, my child?" said she to the little girl, by whom she was again kneeling—"and be to her a dear and dutiful daughter, if you would please your own parents."

[Pg 19]

"Love her, dear mother? Who could help loving the beautiful and kind, and good!—and is she not beautiful, and has she not been kind and good to me when others did but rail at me, and jostle me down in the crowded street! Oh! yes, I will indeed love her, very, very dearly!" and she clung to the hand of the widow that held her own, and caressingly fondled and kissed it, until her mother laid her gently back upon her pillow, and arose to return to her home.

[Pg 20]

[Pg 21]

---

## CHAPTER IV.

The sick husband lay watching the moonbeams as they came through the window and played fantastically upon the walls, and his thoughts went far away to a pleasant spot beneath a group of willows, by a gently flowing stream, where the moonbeams once played upon the fair face of his Mary, and he sighed heavily as he reviewed the many changes that had brought them where they now were. Many a sunny hour came flashing upon his memory, with its dear and hallowed associations; the early days of their marriage when their home was green and sylvan—the gathering of friends on every festive occasion—the birth of their sweet babe that brought with it such new and blessed ties; and then the sunny hours departed, and the clouds covered them; the days of sickness came and their property fled away, and with their wealth went their friends from them. Weary months of toil in a strange city was thenceforward their portion; a sick-bed was the strong man's heritage, and days of fasting and misery and labor devolved on the delicate wife. The child that had been nursed in the lap of luxury went out into dirty streets to get her bread from pitying strangers, and the three—husband, wife, and child—were alone in the wide world, with their burden of poverty and woe, all the harder to bear from the fact that they were unused to it. Thus mused the sick man in the solitude of his chamber, and while he mused a mellow gleam of light fell upon his pillow and illumined his shrunken features, and a soft step was by the bed-side, and a beloved voice in his ear, telling him news that made him willing to die. God had sent them a friend! Even when he had been repining at the decrees of His Providence, that Providence was working out his best and truest good. He felt that his days would be few upon the earth, and that his Mary would soon follow him; but their darling Jennie would be sheltered and taught, and that by a true disciple of their Lord and Master. No more anguish lest his precious child should become a prey to the wary and dissolute; no more grief at her withered, cheerless youth; no more sorrowings for the wants that he could not appease. "Oh! too much! too much mercy and goodness hast thou shown toward Thine unworthy servants, my Saviour and my God!" murmured he, and a violent hemorrhage ensued, occasioned by the sudden shock of the unlooked for joy.

[Pg 22]

[Pg 23]

---

## CHAPTER V.

Before another week had elapsed, Mr. and Mrs. Grig were comfortably settled in a pleasant cottage belonging to Mrs. Dunmore, whose increasing benevolence had found a delightful impulse in the certainty that the poor woman was no other than one of her school-girl acquaintances, whom she had most dearly loved, but of whom she had heard little since they had completed their studies. They had married, and in their new relationships lost sight of each other, until, by a mysterious Providence, they were now united. It would have been but a mockery in Mrs. Grig to appear at all reluctant to accept the support she so much needed, since her own precarious health, and her husband's approaching dissolution rendered it impossible for her to obtain her own livelihood. Gladly, therefore, and with alacrity, they left the scene of their past troubles and necessities for the pretty cottage and the congenial society of their disinterested friend, yet scarcely were they established in their new abode when the messenger of death came to claim his victim. The child was there, with her young head nestling in her dying father's bosom; the wife stood by with a deep but subdued grief, and the faithful friend was near with pious words of sympathy and comfort.

[Pg 24]

The sick man had given his parting embrace to the beloved objects of his affection, and had assured them of his perfect confidence in a rest and peace beyond the grave, but now his mind seemed wandering to other scenes.

"Down by the willows, dear Mary," said he, "I wish to cross the river once more; it is chilly here, but do you see how warmly the sun is shining upon the green banks opposite! There are bright flowers there, too, such as we have often gathered, and the birds sing so sweetly! Oh! let us cross the river, once more, dear Mary!" His words grew fainter and fainter, and they heard them no more, for he had crossed the river, and was wandering where the sun shines more resplendently than earthly sun can shine, and where brighter flowers, and sweeter birds than mortal ever saw or heard, forever bloom and sing; but his Mary still lingered on the other shore, detained by an invisible Power, who calleth home whom he will, and when he will. But two short months she lingered, and then the husband and wife were roaming together beside the pure river of life, that floweth out from the Throne of God and of the Lamb, and the child was left, but not alone.

[Pg 25]

---

## CHAPTER VI.

The month of June saw Mrs. Dunmore settled in her country-house for the summer. It was a pretty, unobtrusive cottage, standing upon a sloping lawn, and facing the east. In the distance lay a sylvan lake, beyond which, through the trees, gleamed the white spires of an adjoining village. All around were lofty mountains covered with verdure and glory. On the north of the house was a dense grove of chestnut, and walnut, and maple, and pine, where multitudes of squirrels had their hiding-places, and the birds sang unmolested.

There little Bella used to love to play, while nurse Nannie gathered flowers to deck the neck of her pet lamb, or, when the nuts began to fall, helped her to fill her tiny basket; and there her mother had her laid, when she could no longer play, with her folded hands clasping some forest-buds, and a wreath of wild-flowers around her brow. There was a pure white monument at the head of her grave, in the sunniest and happiest spot in the whole grove, with a rose carved upon it, and a beauteous bud broken from the parent stem; and there Jennie stood with old Nannie, a few days after their arrival, wondering that the bud on the tombstone should be broken, and listening to Nannie as she talked about the "angel child," as she called her departed darling.

[Pg 26]

"She was too good for this world, Miss Jennie," said she; and then the faithful old creature rocked to and fro as she sat upon the trunk of a tree that had fallen down, and wiped her eyes with her clean checked-apron, sobbing as if her grief was even then but new.

"You are just like her in all your little ways," continued she, as Jennie stole up to her and patted her black head with her tiny hand, as if to soothe her sorrows; "Missus would have been clean gone and done with this life if she had not lighted upon you to take the sadness out of her heart for her Bella."

"But, Nannie, I am not Bella," said the child. "Do you think I can ever be as dear as she was, so that her mother may forget that she is dead? I saw her weeping the other day as she came from the grove, and I was afraid she did not love me, and was sorry I was here to make her think of her loss."

"Not love you, Miss Jennie! how can you say so, when she took you, poor little beggar as you was, all from the mire and dirt to be her own child."

"You must not tell me of that time, Nannie, it makes me ache here;" said she, putting her hand to her heart. "Many a long day have I gone back and forth on that sad walk, trembling for fear the lumbering omnibuses would run over me, and not one penny did I ever ask, for I could not beg, Nannie, and if some kind gentlemen and ladies had not noticed me, and sometimes given me a sixpence or two, I should have gone home to my poor father and mother with nothing for my hard day's work, and then we must have starved, for dear mamma was not able to get bread for us all, and nurse my sick father besides. You must not speak of that time again, Nannie, for it takes me away from this pleasant sunny spot, and puts me back in a dismal room, with no light, nor warmth, nor greenness."

[Pg 27]

"What is the matter with my little girl?" said Mrs. Dunmore, who just then approached the child, and perceived the traces of recent tears on her sweet face. "Is she not happy among the birds, and squirrels, and flowers?"

"Oh! yes, very happy indeed, dear mamma," and Jennie took the hand that was extended to her, and kissed it with all the ardor of her impetuous nature; "but I was thinking of the dreary home that was mine before you found me and cared for me."

"Sit down here, my darling, and talk to me a little. Is the thought of the past very sad to my Jennie; and can she see no reason to be grateful, even for that time of darkness and sorrow? Do you remember how the black clouds came yesterday, and quite hid the sun from our sight, and the strong wind shook the house, so that we were almost afraid of its fury, and the heavy rain fell and bowed some of our beauteous shrubs nearly to the ground; then the clouds passed away and the sun shone more brightly than ever, and the fierce winds were hushed, and the shrubs lifted up their drooping heads all the more graceful and lovely for the crushing storm. So it is when

[Pg 28]

God sends trials and sufferings upon us—the world looks black and dreary, and we are bowed very low in our affliction, and His purpose in it all is to make our hearts better and purer, and more beautiful in His sight when the troubles shall have passed away."

"Did the world seem very dismal to you, dear mamma, when Bella died?"

"Very dismal, my child, until God sent me another little daughter to lighten the grief that was pressing me down; now the clouds are parting, and the sunlight comes beaming through, and I think we may be very happy, my darling, if we will. But here comes Mr. Colbert. Let us go to meet him, he used to love dear Bella, and will be glad to see you, I know."

[Pg 29]

---

## CHAPTER VII.

Mr. Colbert was the clergyman of the parish and lived near Mrs. Dunmore with his widowed mother, and often, as he took his daily walk, he bent his steps toward the cottage of his friend whom he had known in her joys and her sorrows, and from whose subdued and Christian conversation he derived both pleasure and profit. He had baptized and buried her little Bella, and now as he gave Mrs. Dunmore a kind and earnest greeting, he looked with painful interest upon the child who stood modestly by her side, and in whom he traced a striking resemblance to the departed. Mrs. Dunmore instantly perceiving the impression made upon him, hastened to present her young *protégée*, saying, "You have doubtless noticed how like my sweet Bella, the child of my adoption is in feature and expression—I trust to you, my dear sir, to aid me in trying to make her as truly like her in heart and life. It is a weighty responsibility that I have assumed; but He who directed the impulse to make her my own, will impart the strength and wisdom to guide her aright."

"You do me honor in admitting me to a participation in your new and sacred duties, dear madam," replied the clergyman, "be assured, I shall most gladly improve every opportunity offered me for the welfare of your little Jennie. Bella used often to walk with me," continued he, taking the hand of the little girl, "will you sometimes join me as I ramble about these woods and hills? Perhaps we can find some pleasant things to tell each other when we are better acquainted."

[Pg 30]

Jennie's dark eyes sparkled, as she looked to her mother for her assent to the kind minister's proposition, and as Mrs. Dunmore willingly agreed to it, she sprang with a glad step to meet old Nannie, who had come to call them to lunch. Mr. Colbert declined joining them on the plea of extending his walk, and bidding them good morning, soon disappeared amid the trees.

One moment he lingered by the little grave, and gathering from it a bunch of violets, he followed the path through the woods to the road, and then turned toward his home. His way led through an avenue of maples, whose dense foliage quite obscured the sky above his head. On either side, stretched green meadows, enameled with the fresh spring flowers; and beyond him, in the distance, the avenue seemed to open into the pure blue heavens, athwart which the fleecy clouds were ever and anon flitting like angels busied in doing their Master's will. The scene was rich and hallowed, and called forth the sweetest and purest emotions. "If the pathway through life was ever thus tranquil and serene," thought he, "and if the eye caught only such visions of beauty and grace as are now before me, how like Paradise would this earth seem! But it can not be; I must tread a rough and sometimes disagreeable road, and engage in fierce and bitter conflicts, ere I can emerge into the glories of that better land of which the beautiful scene I now survey always reminds me!" and, as he mused, he reached the top of the hill, and leaving the silent avenue, seated himself upon a rustic bench that was placed beneath an old maple near his home. The quaint old mansion stood alone upon a slight eminence, and on every side luxurious meadows, and orchards spread themselves out, until they reached the mountains. From various points three lovely lakes were visible—one, half hidden by its green belt of forest trees, another glistening in the broad sunlight, and a third lying in calm and placid beauty.

[Pg 31]

All about, in the rich pastures, cattle were quietly grazing, or resting beneath the shadows of the old trees, or frisking in the glad spring-time. The light and shade played upon the fresh landscape, as bright and somber imaginings sweep over a youthful heart; and as the young clergyman drank in all the glory and loveliness of the scene, his soul was filled with a rapture, which none can ever know but the earnest Christian, who sees in every bud and leaf the evidences of a beneficent Father's love.

Long he sat reveling in that unbroken quietness and beauty, nor did he perceive the soft footsteps of his mother, until a gentle hand was laid upon his brow, and she said, "My son, I am glad you have returned; poor Sam Lisle has been twice for you to visit his daughter, who can not survive through the day. He seemed greatly distressed on not finding you, and begged me to send you immediately to them when I should see you."

[Pg 32]

"I can not stop, now, dear mother," said he, as she pressed him to remain but one moment for refreshments. "I fear I am already too late," and he turned quickly away from the contemplation of the glories of nature, and passed again through the silent avenue, and on to the village, to wrestle with the sorrows of this weary life, where there was poverty, and suffering, and death.

[Pg 33]

## CHAPTER VIII.

Who that saw the little Jennie on the first Sunday morning, in her summer home, would have imagined that but a few months before she was sweeping the dirty crossings of Broadway, a thin, meager, half-clad child, scorned by the passers-by, and loved only by two wretched ones, as pitiable and unsought as herself!

As Mrs. Dunmore, at early dawn, entered the pleasant room, once Bella's, but now appropriated to the newly-found, the child lay with her dimpled arms thrown over her head, upon the soft pillows, and her sweet mouth half parted with a smile at some innocent but illusive fancy that filled her happy dreams.

Old Nannie had stolen into the chamber, and stood peeping over the shoulder of her mistress at her young charge. She had put her finger upon her lip, as if to hush her to deeper slumbers, when, suddenly, a glad sunbeam shot from the east, and fell upon the sleeper's face. With one bound she freed herself from the bedclothes, and stood by the window, pointing toward the glorious vision that had so long been hidden from her sight. Never had she seen the blessed sun rise since a wee child of four years, in the home of her birth, which had almost from that early age been the possession of strangers, and now, as she stood in her simple night-dress, with her long curls loosened and floating in the pure breeze, she seemed some new-born spirit wondering at the display of the Creator's mighty power. Her face was flushed with a hallowed emotion, and as the sun stood forth above the horizon in its full splendor, she sank upon her knees, and expressed her gushing feelings in the simple yet sublime words first uttered by Divine lips, amid the consecrated scenes of the Holy Land.

[Pg 34]

Mrs. Dunmore instinctively knelt while the child poured forth her humble adoration, and she prayed most earnestly, that the deep feeling of reverence she had just witnessed in her adopted one, might never be displaced or blunted by contact with an impious and careless world.

Jennie had been so wholly absorbed in her joy at the beauteous vision before her, that she had scarcely noticed the presence of her mother, until Mrs. Dunmore approached her and said, "My darling is up betimes on this hallowed morning, and I am glad to see that she is not unmindful of Him who giveth us all our blessings." Then the little girl looked up with a happy smile, and giving her accustomed kiss, hastened to prepare for family devotions, and for the services of the village church. It was a pleasant little church, and in former years, many a good old saint had gone from its portals to the Church triumphant in Heaven; but now few came to her solemn feasts, and there was a languishing, sleepy aspect about it that often sickened the hearts of the little band of zealous ones who were striving to keep it alive. Many a time was its faithful minister almost ready to faint in his apparently useless labors; but on this day one little soul gazed earnestly on him, as if thirsting for the spiritual nourishment he was imparting, and his heart was revived and strengthened. In the afternoon was the funeral of poor Bessie Lisle, and as the small group of mourners moved away from the place of burial, Mr. Colbert, Mrs. Dunmore, and Jennie, lingered in the peaceful cemetery to gather lessons of wisdom for their own summons to another world. This cemetery was on a high hill overlooking the village. Here and there drooped a willow over some loved tomb, or a rose-bush bent to scatter its burden of perfume and petals. On one new-made grave—the quiet resting-place of a mother and her daughter, snatched from their friends by some sudden and terrible casualty—were strewn fresh and beauteous flowers, the fragrant offering of a gentle girl, who daily sought that sacred spot to weep over the loved and lost. Near this, beneath a shady yew, was the lowly bed of the poor man's daughter, whose remains had just been placed therein.

[Pg 35]

Mrs. Dunmore leaned thoughtfully against the tree, and sighed as she recalled her own bereavements, and her Christian heart was busy in suggesting some means of consolation for the stricken parents. Mr. Colbert was stooping by a distant tomb reading its epitaph to little Jennie, who listened with the deepest interest. There was no sound to mar the stillness of that peaceful retreat, the whispering winds went, dirge-like, through the waving grass, and the leaves rustled softly above the quiet sleepers.

[Pg 36]

Even the child felt the awful solemnity of the place, and crept nearer to the kind minister, as he told her of the dear lamb that was so early called away to the green pastures. The stone at her head was somewhat like that at Bella's grave, and violets grew all over the turf, too, and Jennie gathered a bunch of the sweetest and took them to her mother, who crushed them in her bosom and moistened them with her tears. Slowly and regretfully they left the spot so fraught with sad yet chastening influences, and sought their happy homes, yet not without leaving their prayers and their sympathies at the mourner's humble cottage.

[Pg 37]

---

## CHAPTER IX.

The summer went joyously on, and the minister and child roamed about amid the green things of the earth. All the loveliest haunts of that pleasant spot had echoed the grave, but gentle tones of the man of God, and the answering prattle of the little one who went tripping on by his side, sometimes thoughtful and earnest, sometimes merry and glad; and now the time had come for Mrs. Dunmore to return to her city residence, and they must bid their kind friends at the Rectory



good-by. Mrs. Colbert sat with her son upon the rustic bench, and the child was between them holding a hand of each. Mr. Colbert pushed her dark hair from her forehead, and said, as he looked in her tearful eyes; "Jennie is sorry to part with her old friends, but perhaps she will forget them before another summer?"

"I fear we shall not be able to return to — for several years to come;" said Mrs. Dunmore. "I have just received a summons from my husband's mother, who is in very feeble health, and as I shall devote myself to her during her life, I must forego the pleasure of my summer home for awhile. Jennie will be placed at Madame La Blanche's school during my absence, and my separation from her will be another pang added to that which I feel on leaving you all for an indefinite period." A shade passed over the face of the young minister; but it gave place to a smile as the child said, "But you promised that I should come back some day, and keep house for you in this good old place, and then you know"—she added, smiling through the tears that had bedimmed her eyes, "I should go away no more, but we could be always happy here together."

[Pg 38]

Jennie could not understand Mrs. Colbert's earnest manner as she pressed her fondly to her bosom, and said "God grant it, my sweet child!" but she returned the caresses so lavishly heaped upon her, and then jumped down to play with old Skip, the house-dog, who was leaping about her as if to share in the adieus. Mrs. Dunmore took the vacant seat, and the three friends conversed long and seriously upon the former years of happiness spent in each other's society, and the interval that might ensue ere they should be gathered again beneath the spreading maples; and as they conversed, one heart dwelt with greater than usual tenderness upon the little figure that was flitting about in the soft twilight.

The night came, the twilight had faded out, and the little figure, too, had vanished, leaving that one breast desolate, save when a lightsome shadow flitted across its ever-verdant memory. The summer cottage looked dreary, with its closed blinds, and the autumn leaves rustling about it in the bleak winds; but the little tombstone still gleamed in the sunlight, that cast a pleasant and warm halo upon it, and the birds and squirrels sung and leaped about in the beauteous grove as blithesome and glad as if life's rolling seasons brought no sad changes. The man of God walked quietly up and down the silent avenue, striving to think only of the blue sky into which it seemed to open. The gentle widow went out on her mission of love and mercy, to smooth the dying pillow of the sick and aged, and the child was again in the heart of the mighty city, not a penniless, uncared-for thing, but surrounded by a joyous group of happy children, and watched over by a kind and faithful teacher.

[Pg 39]

[Pg 40]

---

## CHAPTER X.

"Who will share a room with little Jennie Dunmore?" said Madame La Blanche, on the day of the child's arrival at school. "Who will set her an example of patience and perseverance in her studies, and aid her in her difficulties and trials? Who will help her to be obedient, and industrious, and good?" Many an eager hand was raised as the school girls looked upon the sweet face of the new-comer, who stood near her teacher, timidly glancing at the strange band before her; but Rosalie Moore sprung from her seat, and, throwing her arm around Jennie's waist, looked up so pleadingly at Madame La Blanche, that she said, "Remember, dear children, I give you to each other as kind and loving sisters, not to foster in each other the love of dress and show, not to uphold each other in acts of rebellion and sin, but to strive together for that inward adorning both of heart and mind, which is far better than any outward ornament, and to walk hand in hand, so long as your pathway shall be the same, toward that better land, where I trust we may all one day again mingle. To-day shall be a holiday among you, and to-morrow Jennie will enter upon her new duties, which I hope will be pleasant to her. I need not ask you to remember the basket of charity-work, which each will find in her room, since you all know how much happier you are in your recreations after some act of benevolence and kindness. Jennie will go with me on my round of visiting on Saturday," continued she, as the girls, with a hop, skip, and jump, left the school-room.

[Pg 41]

Rosalie was very proud to show Jennie their neat little bedroom, with its snowy curtains and white counterpane, and its pleasant view from the windows. There were two windows with wide seats, where they could sit and work, or study, and these looked out upon a beautiful garden, and the sweet odor of the flowers came up and refreshed them. It was so rare and delightful, in the midst of the city, to find such freshness and beauty that it was all the more appreciated, and Jennie felt that she could be very happy there. She and Rosalie got the stand with the basket of work upon it, and placed it near one of the windows, and both sat together there and worked on the coarse garments.

"Who are these for?" asked Jennie, "and what does Madame La Blanche mean by my going 'the rounds' with her on Saturday?"

"These are for very poor people," said Rosalie, "and every week our teacher takes as many as we can finish, and goes with one of us to carry them. Have you ever seen any poor people, Jennie? and do you know how dreadfully they suffer in the cold winters for want of clothes and food?"

[Pg 42]

Jennie did not answer, but she covered her face with both hands, and Rosalie could see the tears as they trickled through her fingers and fell upon her work. She thought it very strange; but she

said as she drew her closely to her and kissed her tenderly, "Never mind, we will talk about something else. I've been so much among them that I am used to their poverty now. What do you mean to study Jennie? I hope you will be in all my classes, although you are a great deal younger than I, I know, for I was eleven the day before yesterday," and Rosalie tossed her old head and looked at her companion in a very patronizing way.

"I was ten in April," said Jennie, "and this is October, so you see we are not very wide apart; but I do not know about my studies—mamma said that Madame La Blanche would direct them."

"Have you ever studied French?" asked Rosalie. "I am reading 'Corinne' already, and Hattie Mann, who is two years older than I, has but just commenced the language."

"I read 'Corinne' with dear mamma just before she died," said Jennie, "but I should like very much to read it with you again if Madame La Blanche pleases."

"Is your mother dead, Jennie? and is not that lady she whom you call mamma?"

"God took my own dear mother and father from me, Rosalie; but before they left, He sent the kind lady to them who made me her child, and they were quite willing to go, when they knew I should not be alone in the world."

[Pg 43]

"Did you live in a beautiful house when your father and mother were alive, Jennie, and were there birds and flowers all around it, and had you a nice little pony that you could call your own, and a dear little sister with golden curls? That is the way my home is," continued she without waiting for an answer, "and some vacation I am to invite any one of the girls that I please to go with me to my mother's, and I know who it will be, too, don't you, darling Jennie?" and she jumped up, and putting her needle in her work, she kissed the astonished child again, and went singing down the stairs as merry as a lark. Jennie sat quietly in the window, thinking of the contrast between her sometime home in the city and the one described by her happy school-mate, and she would have grown very sad over her solitary musings; but a gay laugh in the garden below diverted her from them, and looking out, she saw Rosalie, with a garland of leaves around her head, and in her hand a bouquet of fall flowers, which she was vainly endeavoring to throw up to her new sister. Her merriment attracted the other girls, and soon Jennie stood among them, with no trace of sorrow upon her brow, and the memory of the bitter past wholly swallowed up in the enjoyment of the bright and blessed present.

[Pg 44]

---

## CHAPTER XI.

Saturday morning was a busy time at Madame La Blanche's school. Little fingers stitched with untiring industry upon the coarse raiment that was to give warmth to many an otherwise shivering body, and by the hour appointed for the visits, the teacher was surprised at the great results of such tiny efforts. She smiled approvingly on her pupils, and summoning a servant to take charge of the weighty bundle, she took Jennie by the hand and left the house.

Out through the pleasant garden, past the magnificent mansions of the rich they went—on, and on, amid throngs of the gay and fashionable, till the streets grew dingy with a motley crowd of the miserable and ragged, who seemed to herd together, as if thus to hide their degradation and shame. Some looked upon them, as they walked along, with a bold and impudent stare; but others shrunk from their observation, and drew their tattered shawls more closely around them as they moved hastily away. There were some bargaining at the markets for withered or decaying vegetables, and others purchasing, at a diminished price, stale bread from dirty bakeries, and many a one loitering along in his filth and squalor, with no object nor aim save to dawdle away the time that hung too wearily upon him. It was a sad and loathsome sight, so near the gorgeous thoroughfare of this mighty city, to see the pitiable objects of unmitigated want; but there they were, and in all that teeming mass but two ministering spirits were visible, gliding on with their offerings of kindness and mercy.

[Pg 45]

Down through a dark alley, whose fetid odors were quite sufficient to deter the dainty from penetrating beyond—they went, and into a miserable room where was scarcely space for them to stand, so huddled was it with broken furniture and ragged children. A fire was burning in a shattered grate, and an untidy woman stood ironing by a table whereon was the remnant of their meager dinner. Her husband crouched over the coals as if the day was not warm and sunny. His clothes hung about his limbs in large folds, and his sunken eyes told that disease was making fearful ravages upon him. Madame La Blanche opened her bundle, and, handing him a comfortable dressing-gown nicely quilted, said, "I am sorry to find you so low, Michael, but God's will be done, perchance He means to deliver you from the pinchings of a bitter season. It is but little I can do for you," she continued, as the grateful man smoothed down the warm garment, and thanked her with tremulous lips; "my children made it for you, and this little one I have taken with me that she may learn to be the more thoughtful of those who have a scanty supply of the good things of this life, and the more thankful for the blessings of abundance and health bestowed upon her."

[Pg 46]

"Ah! yes, miss," said the old man, running his lank arms into the nice garment, and wrapping it closely about him; "'Blessed is he that considereth the poor, the Lord will remember him in the time of trouble.' Many's the time I shall think of the little hands that sewed on this for the sick old

man, and I'll pray, miss, that you may never know what it is to suffer want nor sorrow in this weary world, and that you may all be sure to go to a better when you die."

Madame La Blanche read a chapter to him from her pocket-Bible, and with a few words of advice and comfort to the woman, and a picture-book for the children, she went from the unwholesome room up a crazy staircase to one a shade better, because kept with some degree of cleanliness. A young man arose and gave chairs to the lady and the child, and his mother welcomed them with a joy which the poor never feign toward a true friend. "How is John's cough?" said Madame La Blanche. "It seems to me he has failed since I saw him last; but perhaps it is because I have not been here for some time that he looks thinner than usual to me."

"Oh! no, ma'am, 'tisn't that," said the mother; "poor Johnny's going fast. He coughs so o' nights, it fairly makes me ache for him. It puts me so in mind of Aby, I can't hardly bear it."

"I wish he was like Aby," said the lady; "Aby was a perfect example of faith and patience, and he died as a Christian should die, with a firm confidence in Him whom he had trusted. John knows that he can not live long," continued she, "and I hope he is not afraid to die. He has the same heavenly Father to go to for support in these last hours that Aby had."

[Pg 47]

"Aby, was a good boy," said the mother; whose heart seemed constantly to revert to her dead son. "He'd a been twenty years old next month if he'd a lived, and John won't be till March; but I don't expect he'll live to see that time, John won't live to be twenty year old, John won't," and the afflicted woman turned away her head and looked from the window to hide her grief. Jennie stood all this time looking around upon the meanly-furnished apartment, and upon its thinly clad inmates, and as she saw a young girl looking wistfully at a pretty scarf which she wore, she whispered earnestly to her teacher, and then untying it, she put it around the neck of the poor girl, who seemed almost beside herself for joy. The kind lady then left some money to procure something for John's cough, and some woolen waistcoats from her pack, and, promising to go often to read to the sick boy, they departed; but the breath of their kindness lingered upon the hearts of those forlorn ones, and cheered them in their struggles for life.

[Pg 48]

---

## CHAPTER XII.

The air in those loathsome streets was scarcely less unwholesome and impure than in the close and crowded rooms, yet the lady and the child kept on still further from the cleanly portions of the city, to seek out other objects of pity and benevolence; and as they walked, they saw a woman running up the street, and heard her say to a respectable-looking gentleman: "Doctor, if you have time, won't you please to stop at our house?"

Madame La Blanche observed the physician more attentively, and found that it was one of her old friends. He, at the same time, turning from a poor man to whom he had been talking, recognized her, and on learning her errand, he asked her to accompany him to see one of his patients. "It is a melancholy case, madam," said he, "the girl is afflicted with a species of hysteria, induced by constant pining for a worthless lover, who ran away, not long since, with another woman. She is in a terrible state, weeping incessantly. I think, perhaps, you may be able to comfort her a little; you know we of the sterner mold have not much power in such emergencies. There it is," said he, as they reached a dusky building, at the entrance of which stood a strange group of idlers, torn and dirty. The sick girl lived on the second floor, with her grandmother and one sister, and as the strangers entered, she shrunk still further back into the corner where she was sitting. A strip of faded calico lay upon her lap, and now and then she would put a stitch in it, but oftener she raised it to her face and wiped away the tears that were constantly falling. Her grandmother seemed troubled and sad as the doctor looked thoughtfully upon her, and when he asked "If she had been any worse, and why they did not send for him before?" she replied, "Why she seems about the same, doctor; we sent her into the country to see what change of air and scene would do for her, but she isn't much better for it. She seems to be in a study all the time, and sits still and cries a great deal. We try to rouse her, and to make her take notice of things, but she falls back into one of her studies again."

[Pg 49]

"Come here, Jessie," said the doctor, "and sit in the light where I can see you. Does your side pain you any now?" The girl moved languidly from her dark corner and stood quietly by the window, but she answered the doctor only in monosyllables, and appeared uneasy while out of her accustomed retreat; and so soon as he turned to ask her sister some questions about her she glided noiselessly back, and sunk into the old seat, wiping her eyes again with the faded cloth. Madame La Blanche drew near to her, and talked to her in a calm and soothing manner, and Jennie seemed really distressed, as she vainly tried to divert her from her grief by emptying the treasures of her pocket before her. The room was as clean as it could possibly be, and the persons of its occupants neat and tidy, but every thing betokened severe and pinching poverty. The bed for the three was in one corner, and this, with one table and a few chairs, comprised all their worldly goods. The healthy girl was washing for those who never knew how many a tale of want and woe their finely-embroidered clothes could tell. A line was stretched across the narrow space, and there hung the fine linen and muslin, streaming out the death-mist upon the weakened lungs of that wretched girl in the corner; and the old woman, with her tremulous hands, was smoothing out the robes that were to rustle amid scenes of pleasure and folly, while the wearers never bestowed a thought upon the lowly ones who helped to adorn them.

[Pg 50]

"There is a prescription for Jessie," said the doctor, as they rose to go; "it will cost you a dollar, for the medicine is a valuable one."

The old woman took the paper and looked vacantly upon it, while her thoughts dwelt upon the many comfortable things that one dollar would buy for the approaching winter. Jessie's life, to be sure, was most precious to her, but to what purpose would it be saved, if, after all, the poor child should suffer for the necessaries of life. The medicine must be got, but oh! there were so many other things indispensable!

[Pg 51]

How her heart was lifted up, as the kind physician said, "You may send to the dispensary for it, however, and it will cost you nothing!"

"Oh! thank you, doctor," said she with a beaming face, "times is so hard; we don't mean to complain, but a dollar goes a great ways with poor people;" and then with a cheerful step she followed her visitors to the door, internally blessing the benevolent physician, and the glorious dispensary; but her cup of joy was full to overflowing when she turned back again into the room, and found the nice suit for the sick girl, and a new cap and warm sack for herself. "This will be so grand to go to the pump with," said she, as she laid it carefully away in a box which she drew from under the bed. "Come cheer up, Jessie, better times is coming, and it seems ongrateful-like to sit there moping when there is so much good fortune in the house."

[Pg 52]

---

## CHAPTER XIII.

As the little party reached Broadway again, they met some officers leading a man who had been detected in some dreadful crime, and the doctor offered to go to the city prison with Madame La Blanche, that they might show Jennie where wicked people were confined. The stout high walls looked very cheerless and gloomy, after the splendor and brightness of Broadway, and the child dreaded to enter them; but she kept close to her guides, and as they stood within the yard where was a green park, and a pretty fountain playing, she thought it much pleasanter than the brown and loathsome places she had just left. Madame La Blanche seemed to read her thoughts, and said, "This is very pretty and nice, my dear; but you shall tell me what you think about prison life when we reach home again. We have yet much to see within these high walls; very few are allowed to walk in this pleasant yard." Then the prison physician went with them inside and they wandered up and down the long corridors, and looked through the iron doors at the criminals, and Jennie shuddered as their guilty eyes looked out upon her through the gratings.

[Pg 53]

Here and there, at the different cells, were wives, or sisters, or mothers, talking through the massive bars. The cells were capacious, and neat, and the prisoners looked careless, and indifferent to their punishment; but Madame La Blanche and Jennie both felt that however light-hearted and cheerful they might appear in the broad day, with their friends all about them, in the darkness and silence of the night, terrors must take hold upon them, and almost drive them mad.

In the female department, they saw only those who were committed for vagrancy and drunkenness; but as they observed a woman stretched out upon a bed in one of the cells, lost in the deep sleep of the inebriate, they thought that no measures for the abolishment of so beastly a vice could be too strenuous. Sitting in the door of a cell was one with coarse features, bloated, and ugly, hugging to her depraved bosom a delicate and lovely child. Madame La Blanche stopped to give the weak mother a few words of wholesome advice, and she spoke to her of the little creature in her arms, and plead with her, for her sake, if from no higher motive, to put away her sin. The woman seemed touched, and hiding her face in the child's neck, she wept. The little blue-eyed thing looked sadly weary of the dull walls, and Jennie longed to lead her away from the lonesome place to a home as bright as she had found. She stroked her silken hair, and caressed her as if she had been a sister, and giving her a few toys from her rich pocket, she hurried on to overtake her teacher who was descending the stairs that led to the lowest corridor, and thence to the yard.

[Pg 54]

The night was coming on, and husbands and wives, mothers and sisters, were leaving the prison walls with a burden of grief and shame for the loved yet lost ones within; and as Jennie and her kind teacher, one hour later, entered the peaceful abode of innocence and joy, the light had wholly departed from the long corridors of that gloomy building, and the doors were closely secured upon the shuddering inmates of those dismal cells, who crept into their beds, and covered their heads with the thick clothes to shut out the demons that were hovering about them in the polluted air.

[Pg 55]

---

## CHAPTER XIV.

"Rosalie," said Jennie, as she tossed to and fro upon their soft bed that night; "I can not sleep for the thought of those poor creatures we saw to-day. Come closer to me and put your arm around me, every time I close my eyes some of those miserable objects are before me with their pinched and haggard looks. I can not go with Madame La Blanche again, for it takes away all the pleasure and beauty of my life, and it can do them no good since I have so little power to relieve them."

"But," said Rosalie, "Madame La Blanche says 'it is our duty to visit them, even though we have nothing to offer them but our sympathy, and kind words are often better to the poor than costly gifts.' I felt as you do when I first went among them, but I don't believe our teacher would ever excuse us from going since she thinks it right. I should think," continued Rosalie, twining her arms lovingly about her companion, and drawing as near to her as possible, "that what you have seen to-day would make you enjoy this pleasant room, and these nice comforts all the more."

[Pg 56]

"But, Rosalie," said Jennie, "how can I sleep when there are so many sick and weary ones down in those dirty streets who have no resting-place for their tired bodies, although they need it so much more than I do? It makes me uneasy and troubled. Don't you think we should be a great deal happier if all the people in the world had an equal share of the comforts of life?"

"Sometimes I think so, Jennie, but Madame La Blanche says 'it is God that makes us to differ; that He gives to some poverty, and to others riches, and that if we only have contented minds we shall be happy, whether we are rich or poor.'"

"That is not exactly what I mean, Rosalie; you know I am rich now, but I am sad about others, and don't you suppose that people who suffer for things that they need feel badly when they see others with more than enough for their wants, so that they even waste it or throw it away."

"I don't know, Jennie, I suppose they must. It does seem strange to me, sometimes, that some have so much more than is necessary to their comfort, while others lack even their daily bread; but Madame La Blanche, says 'we must never allow ourselves to raise such questions, even in our own minds; but that we must feel that whatever God does for His children is right, even as we feel that our earthly parents will do every thing for our best good, though they may do many things that we can not understand, and withhold from us much that we earnestly desire.'"

[Pg 57]

"Well, Rosalie, it is a comfort to have a higher wisdom than our own to depend upon! that's what my own dear mother used often to say to me, and the very day she died—I never can forget that!—she put her hand upon my head, and said 'Remember, my Jennie, God is to be all your wisdom and strength, all your wisdom and strength.'"

Poor child! in her own strength what perfect weakness; even while repeating the word she sunk into a calm and peaceful slumber, and this weary world, with its burden of sorrows and woes, faded away from her mental vision also, giving place to hopeful and cheering dreams. Madame La Blanche entered the room, as was her custom before retiring to her own couch, and as she looked upon the gentle sleepers before her, and contrasted them with the pitiable ones who, perchance were even then wakeful and sinning, her heart went up toward the Dispenser of all blessings, in earnest supplication that the objects of her love might be ever preserved unblemished in purity, and those of her compassion be brought from their blackness and stain unto the fountain of all goodness and cleansing.

[Pg 58]

---

## CHAPTER XV.

Three winters passed rapidly and profitably in the busy school-room, and Jennie's thirteenth spring-time found her, with her friend Rosalie, riding about the lawn upon the pretty pony, or playing with her golden-haired sister.

"Jennie," said Rosalie, one lovely morning as they were amusing themselves upon the lawn; "would you not like to go to the old Buttonwood and swing? All the girls meet there, and we have such nice times!" To the old Buttonwood was quite a pleasant walk from Rosalie's mother's, and they went merrily on, leading the little girl, and chatting busily, when a silvery-headed old man on a seat within a garden near, attracted Jennie's attention, and she asked her companion who he was.

"Oh! that's my 'grandpa,' as I call him," said Rosalie—"he isn't my grandpa, you know, but he likes to have me call him so, and since it makes him happier, why shouldn't I?—mamma says she has known him for several years, and that he had once a darling daughter who married against his will, so that he would never receive her to his house again, and one day, when he heard that she was dead, he lost his reason; but he will not harm any one. He loves children dearly, and we often go in to sit with him and talk. Poor old man! let's go in now, Jennie, perhaps he will be glad to change the scene a little"—and the three girls went and stood before the old gentleman, who at first looked vacantly at them.

[Pg 59]

"It's me, grandpa. Don't you remember your own dear little Rosalie? Jennie," continued she in an under tone, "you stand a little behind me, and then he will see me alone;" but the old man caught the words, and a flash of intelligence for one moment illumined his eyes as he said,

"Yes, that's it—Jennie, dear little Jennie! come back to your old father, my darling. All day long has he sat by the gate watching for you. Did you think he was angry with his own precious child?"—and as he spoke he drew Jennie to his bosom and held her there while he murmured constantly in tones of endearment, "Call me father, my pet child; nobody shall take her away again; little Jennie, dear little Jennie!" and he looked around with a sort of menacing air, as if some one was near who would seek to rob him of his treasure, and then smiled fondly on the young girl, caressing her with the deepest tenderness.

"I haven't seen him smile so for many a long year, miss," said the old butler who was near them. "Will you come often to speak to him? It does my heart good to see him so like old times. It's the name miss, it's all the name."

[Pg 60]

Jennie was somewhat frightened by the old man's eager manner, but when she said softly, "Let me go and swing awhile, dear father, and then I'll come to you again," he gently relaxed his embrace and kissing her, again let her go.

His Jennie used to go so often to the "old Buttonwood"—it was all natural to hear her speak of that; and then it was so pleasant to have her come again with elastic step, and rosy cheek, to spring into his arms for her welcome kiss! Oh, yes! he was willing she should go to the "old Buttonwood;" but as her slight figure vanished in the distance, he seemed sad and uneasy, and the old expression came again, and it staid through the long day. That night as the old butler stood in his master's room, and looked upon a lovely portrait that hung at the foot of the old gentleman's bed, he kept repeating to himself, "It can't be all in the name; the likeness is amazin'! amazin'!"

"Rosalie," said Jennie the next day, "Let's go and see the old gentleman again. What's his name?—you know I promised to return to him."

"His name is Halberg."

"Does he live alone in that pleasant place with only the servants to care for him?"

"Oh, no," said Rosalie, "he has a married son who lives there with him, but he has gone to Europe with his wife and three daughters, and grandpa stays alone until their return. Mamma says they are expected next month, and Carrie Halberg is to go to Madame La Blanche's school—that's my friend, Carrie; she's such a dear good girl! You'll love her, Jennie, I know! But there's grandpa watching for us."

[Pg 61]

The old man stood at the gate, leaning upon his cane and looking intently down the street toward the "old Buttonwood." He had taken his hat from his head and was shading his eyes with it, and his thin locks were scattered carelessly over his brow. He seemed eager and expectant, and as they approached the gate they heard him say, "Simon, you'd better go to the swing for little Jennie; perhaps she's fallen and got a hurt."

"Here she is, sir," said the butler, and the old gentle man dropped his hat and cane and opened his arms to the little girl, who sprang into them and nestled there as if it were her happiest resting-place. There was something so child-like in the old man's tenderness toward her, that she returned it as if he had been one of her youthful playmates. The wandering of his intellect had robbed him of that dignity and superiority which the young stand so much in awe of, and although the children respected him, they felt that their amusements were suited to his capacity—therefore they crowded around the seat in the garden, and every day Jennie would sit beside him and read or sew, while he wound her curls over his thin fingers, or the three would play beneath the old trees, while he would gaze at them as contentedly as if it were the chief end of his existence.

It was sad to think of separating them, but Jennie must return to her school, and the poor old man be left to his weariness and vacancy. On the day of the child's departure, he looked vainly for her appearance until the time of her usual coming was passed, and then, with a low moan and a pitiful face, he sank back upon the bench. Old Simon tried to arouse and interest him, but he only shook his head, and looked about him with the old air of melancholy, and murmured, "Little Jennie—dear little Jennie."

[Pg 62]

[Pg 63]

---

## CHAPTER XVI.

"Simon," said Mrs. Halberg, as they were alighting from their carriage at the garden gate a few weeks after, "how has the old gentleman been during our absence? Does he seem any thing like his former self?"

"Oh! he's very bad, very bad, ma'am, since the young lady that was visiting Miss Rosalie left. He took wonderfully to her, and seemed as happy as could be while she was here. I thought, perhaps, 'twas the name, but the likeness was amazin'!"

The lady did not hear the latter remark, but she merely said, "What was the name, Simon!" scarcely heeding his reply, as she went up the avenue to the house, stopping one moment to say "How d'ye do" to the old man.

"Oh! 'tis so pleasant to be home again!" said Carrie, the youngest daughter, and springing lightly from the carriage, she ran up to the old gentleman, and, throwing her arms around his neck, she kissed him again and again, saying "'Twas cruel to leave you so long alone, dear grandpa, wasn't it? I wouldn't give any thing for all Europe in comparison with this blessed home and one pleasant day beneath these old trees; and I've missed you so, grandpa. Oh! 'tis too pleasant to be at home again!"

[Pg 64]

"Do save your raptures, Carrie, until we are free from observation," said her sister Ellen, as she

went sauntering up the walk, followed by her other sister, neither of them bestowing more than a glance upon their afflicted grandfather.

A group of village boys were peeping through the fence, evidently much interested in the arrivals and the affectionate greeting which Carrie bestowed upon the old man.

"Nobody will ever suspect that we have traveled if you are so unsophisticated in your feelings and expressions," continued Ellen; but observing that her reproof received no attention, she and Mary went into the house, leaving the sweet child with the pure breath of nature all around her, and her own heart as fresh and uncontaminated. The old man returned her caresses, and smiled upon her as he said, "My Jennie! dear little Jennie!"

Carrie was so delighted at her grandfather's apparent joy on seeing her that she cared little for the name, yet supposing he had only forgotten it, she said, "Carrie, grandpa—Carrie;" but he only murmured still, "Dear little Jennie! dear little Jennie!"

"What does it mean, Simon," said she; "doesn't he remember me?"

"'Twas a nice young lady that was called Jennie; she was here with Miss Rosalie, and your grandpa, miss, was so happy all the time she staid. He has been very low, miss, ever since she left till you came. Maybe he thinks 'tis she come again; you're not unlike her, Miss Carrie."

[Pg 65]

"Well, I'll be called Jennie, too, since you prefer it, grandpa. See what I've brought you! 'way across the blue waters, from Scotland! Isn't it a bonnie plaid?" and she held out before him a real Highland shawl, and, folding it, threw it around his shoulders. "'Tis so nice to wear out here, dear grandpa, when it is chilly."

The old man looked at the bright colors, and felt of the soft wool, and then his eyes rested fondly upon his grandchild, who was scattering sugar-plums among the little group without the gate. Eagerly they gathered them up in their greedy hands, and went scampering off to their homes to exhibit their treasures, while Carrie went to the house accompanied by her proud father, on whose arm the old gentleman was feebly leaning. That evening, as the newly-returned party was seated around the center-table, Carrie stole quietly to her grandfather's room, and leaning her elbows upon his knees, looked wonderingly up into his mild eyes, while he muttered softly, "Dear little Jennie! dear little Jennie!"

[Pg 66]

---

## CHAPTER XVII.

Rosalie came betimes to see her young friend, and as they walked together around the garden, they had much to say about the long journey, and the many strange things that Carrie had seen and heard, and then they came back again to home events, and to the school that Rosalie had just left, and that Carrie would soon enter, and this led them to speak of Jennie, who was to be Carrie's roommate.

"Has she no other name?" said Carrie to Rosalie; "I hear nothing but 'Jennie, Jennie,' all the time."

"Oh! her mother's name is Dunmore—that is, her adopted mother. Her own mother is dead; but isn't it strange, I never thought to ask her what her real name is! You can not help loving her, Carrie, I know. In the first place, she's beautiful, and that goes for something, I think; and then, she's as good as she is pretty. Why, Carrie, I do believe you are a little like her! There, throw your hat back, and let your hair fall about your shoulders, so—'tis strange! I should think you were sisters."

"Well, well, Rosalie, I should like to put my hat on when you have done admiring me; I suppose I shall see this paragon of a Jennie on Monday, if I live."

[Pg 67]

"She will not seem a paragon to you, Carrie, but a simple, loving, truthful girl, and before you know it, you'll have your arm around her neck and your lips to hers as if you had been friends all your life."

"What do you think of Madame La Blanche, Rosalie? Shall I be much afraid of her?"

"Afraid of her! Why, Carrie, she's as kind as my own mother, and many a time, when the girls are sad or home-sick, she sends for them to go to her pleasant room, and there she amuses them with pictures and curiosities until they forget all their sorrows. She doesn't seem like a school-teacher, Carrie, but like some dear affectionate relative."

"Well, it is very pleasant here in my own lovely home, and I dread leaving so soon again; and then, there's grandpa, I can not bear to be away from him. Nobody seems to cheer him as I can—can they, grandpa?" and the dear child sat down beside the old man upon the bench which they had just reached, and looked thoughtfully upon the bowed figure near her.

"You'll come every day to see him while I am gone—won't you, Rosalie? and try to keep him contented and happy? It seems so sad," continued she, "to have no real comfort in life excepting one little gleam, and then to have even that taken from you! Never mind, grandpa, Jennie will come back again, soon."

The old man picked up, one by one, some white petals that had fallen upon his knees from a tree near them, and, letting them drop again, said, "Don't stay long, dear little Jennie. Simon, is the swing safe? You'd better see that it is tied firmly to the branches."

[Pg 68]

"Yes, sir," said Simon; "I'll attend to it, sir. It is well, miss," he added, "that we have the old swing to fall back upon. Every day while you were gone, when your grandpa seemed uneasy about you, and asked often for you, I'd have to say, 'she's down to the old Buttonwood, sir—only down to the old Buttonwood;' and then he'd rest easy like. The time seemed weary and long to me, miss, as I put him off from day to day; but a year and a day is all the same to him, miss—all the same."

"Well, Simon," said Carrie, "I'm so glad you are here with him; I should never take a bit of comfort if you were not. Even in those strange countries, where there was so much that was new and beautiful to interest me, I could not forget the dear old figure beneath the trees at home, and the thought that you understood him and could cheer him was all that kept me contented and happy."

"Ah, miss, it's a dreadful bereavement!" said the old butler, shaking his head. "Such a noble-looking old gentleman as your grandfather was before this came upon him! I used to watch him as he walked up and down these avenues with Miss Jennie, that's dead and gone, upon his arm, and a prouder father I never saw. He's only a wreck now, Miss Carrie, a pitiful wreck!" and the good servant drew his coat-sleeve across his face, and turned hastily away.

[Pg 69]

---

## CHAPTER XVIII.

Meantime frequent communications had passed between Mrs. Dunmore and her daughter, and now came glad anticipations of a speedy return to the home and child of her love. Her mission was accomplished. "The silver string was loosed, the golden bowl broken;" and the old and wearied body laid away for its long and peaceful rest. For months had she soothed its pains, and rendered its pathway to the tomb easy and pleasant, and now that the green earth covered it, and its repose could be no more disturbed, her heart yearned toward the child of her adoption, and the hours lagged heavily that must intervene before they could meet again. Business transactions in connection with the possessions of the deceased still required her presence for awhile, and she must yield to the demands of duty. Jennie would have been quite impatient, had not Carrie Halberg's arrival reconciled her to another school term before rejoining her mother in their delightful home.

"Rosalie has told me so much about you," said she, as she ushered her into their cosey room. "I feel as if I quite know you already. It would be strange if we did not know each other, when we have the same grandpa, wouldn't it?"

[Pg 70]

"Oh yes, Rosalie told me how fond grandpa was of you, and I'm sure I owe you a great deal of affection for going so often to see him while he was alone. Simon said he was sad indeed after you came away, and that he would stand for hours by the gate looking down the street toward the old Buttonwood for you. I never knew him to fancy any one but Rosalie besides me, before; but Rosalie and Simon both think we are alike, and I suppose he thought you were me."

"Very likely," said Jennie; "but Carrie, what made him fancy the name so? I heard Simon say 't was all in the name."

"Oh! that was the name of my aunt that's dead; she was an only daughter. Didn't you see her portrait hanging in my grandfather's room?"

"I was never in the house, Carrie, for there were none but servants there, you know, and then the garden was so pleasant! Was your aunt pretty?"

"I never hear any one but father speak of her, and he often visits her portrait, and never leaves it without weeping—it is very beautiful! But you shall see it, Jennie, for my father promises me you shall return with me to my home. He is so delighted to add to my grandfather's comfort in any way. Isn't it dreadful, Jennie, to be in this lovely world with so much around you to charm and please, and yet the sense of enjoyment gone, and brightness and beauty all the same as if it were brown and sere? You'll find me a dull companion, I fear, Jennie, for I've grown old and thoughtful by seeing so much of poor grandpa."

[Pg 71]

"Perhaps I am made thoughtful, too, by past troubles, Carrie! It doesn't need age to bring sorrows upon us."

"What griefs can have bowed those youthful heads so early, my darlings?" said Madame La Blanche, who had softly entered the room and caught part of Jennie's sentence. "It is better to recount the many mercies of our lot, rather than to dwell upon the ills of life! Indeed, our very sorrows often prove blessings to us if we will but permit them to work the effect designed;" and sitting down in one of the wide windows, she drew the young girls to her and placing one on either side, there, while the shadows were lengthening in the beautiful garden, and the night came creeping silently on, she talked to them as a gentle mother would, of the great object and aim of this mortal life, and the high destiny which all may attain if they only so far desire it as to strive after it, and as the evening stole upon them, and the stars came quietly out in the mild heavens, she kissed them tenderly and left them to the sweet influences of the calm night, and of



their own subdued thoughts. For a long time the two girls sat gazing earnestly upward, while one heart dwelt lovingly upon the old figure with silvery locks, and the other upon the spirits of her departed parents that seemed even then hovering about her.

[Pg 72]

## CHAPTER XIX.

"Only three weeks more to vacation," said Mary Halberg, as she entered the parlor one morning with an open letter in her hand.

"What does Carrie say about her young friend?" said her father, looking up from his newspaper. "Has she prevailed upon her to accompany her home?"

"Oh! yes, and you know that rich widow Dunmore, whom we met at the Springs? Well, she's coming to remain in — while Jennie is with us. It seems she has carried out one of her eccentric whims and taken some foundling to be her own child, and we are upholding her by admitting the girl to our house on an intimate footing with Carrie."

"I don't see," said Ellen, "what good all our advantages of education and travel will do us, if we are to mingle with all sorts of people, and, as to Carrie, she is quite careless enough now in her choice of associates, without our seeking those of the lower order for her."

"No good, my daughters, will either your knowledge or your position do you, if they are to exalt you so far above your fellow-creatures as to render any of them contemptible in your estimation," said Mr. Halberg; "I rejoice that the heart of your sister is, as yet, only susceptible to warm and kindly emotions, and I trust you will both treat with politeness the young stranger who—whatever her former station in life may have been—is, as the adopted child of Mrs. Dunmore, entitled to every attention and courtesy from us all."

[Pg 73]

Mary looked abashed as her father arose and left the room; but her sister only muttered. "I'm sure it makes no difference to me whether she comes or not—'tis precious little I shall trouble myself about her. What do you think Rosalie told me the other day?" continued she, addressing Mary; "why, that this Jennie used to sweep the dirty crossings of Broadway, and herd with vulgar beggars, and that Mrs. Dunmore took her from this vile condition to her own house, as her own child. It came pretty straight, for one of Mrs. Dunmore's servants told old Jimmy, Mr. Mann's coachman, and so it got to Hattie, who is at Madame La Blanche's school."

"I thought Rosalie was as much in love with her as Carrie," said Mary.

"Well, so she is; but she did not know any thing about this until Hattie Mann wrote to her the other day. I don't suppose it would make any difference to her, however, for she says that Jennie is more lady-like, and further advanced in her studies than any of the girls, and that she would choose her for a companion rather than any of them, even if she had once been a street-sweeper."

[Pg 74]

"Spoken like my own good sister," said Henry Moore, thrusting aside the vines that shaded the window where the young ladies were sitting. "Pardon, mademoiselles! I was not intentionally an eaves-dropper; but hearing your voices in this direction I came to seek you, and thus heard that little heroic of my pet Rosalie."

"Why, Henry, where did you come from?" said Mary; "I thought you were still safe within college bounds."

"Oh!" said Henry, "I left my Alma Mater in disgust yesterday morning. Did you suppose even her kindly embrace could keep me away from — during these pleasant months? My motto is 'recreation as well as labor.' But come, Nellie, lay aside that embroidery, and go with Mary and me to Blinkdale—the sun has dried the dew, and the birds are having a perfect concert among the old trees—Rosalie is waiting for us at the gate."

"Grandpa's going too," said Rosalie, as her brother and their two friends reached her; "you must lead the way, for we have to walk very slowly you know," and, taking the old man's hand, she led him as gently as if he were a child; and when they found the pleasant dale she arranged a nice seat for him in the shade, and lifting his hat from his head she fanned him with it until he seemed cool and comfortable, and then joined the little group near. Henry had watched her with a heart full of affection, and Mary could not help being moved by her quiet and natural kindness; but Ellen laughed heartily as she said "You are a capital nurse, Rosalie; if old Simon should happen to drop off some day, we shall know where to look for a substitute."

[Pg 75]

Rosalie blushed as she caught her brother's earnest eye, but she only said "I'm always happy to wait on grandpa. Isn't Carrie coming soon? and Jennie, too," continued she. "I can scarcely wait much longer to see them!"

"Three weeks will soon vanish, and then I suppose you'll have a merry time together," said Ellen. "Carrie writes in high spirits, and one would think from her delight at returning that there was no place in the whole world equal to this stupid village."

"I don't consider it stupid at all," said Rosalie, with some spirit; "I am sure I would not exchange it for any place I ever saw!"

"Oh, well, Rosalie, we all acknowledge that your means of comparison are very extensive," replied Ellen; "I don't care to quarrel with my native place, but I must confess it has not so many attractions for me as you seem to see in it."

Rosalie did not exactly understand Ellen's sneer, but the remark disturbed her serenity, and she moved softly away from the sisters and sat down beside the old gentleman, weaving garlands for him to pull in pieces, and thinking of the happy time, so soon coming, when she could once more be with her young companions.

"Who is this Jennie that my sister talks so much about?" said Henry.

"She's a *protégée* of Mrs. Dunmore's, and manages to win the love of all who know her, I should think, from all I hear concerning her," said Mary. "She visited Rosalie while we were in Europe, and my grandfather took a great fancy to her because of her name, and my father insists upon her coming home with Carrie to spend the vacation. Perhaps there'll be another heart missing when you see her, Henry."

[Pg 76]

"In that case," said the young man, "it will be hardly safe to extend my term of absence from my studies until the arrival of your guest. I don't see what I am to do among such a bevy of you girls," continued he, as they strolled leisurely homeward; "it will be rather a dangerous position."

"Not at all so, unless we catch you eaves-dropping again," said Mary, laughing, as he bade them good-morning, and turned to assist Rosalie in the care of the old man. It was pleasant to see them walking up the village street—the strong and vigorous youth lending itself to the support of that tottering frame, and the child-like, rosy girl giving her sweet care and sympathy to his withered, dependent age.

[Pg 77]

---

## CHAPTER XX.

Signs of life were again visible about the great house in the avenue. The blinds were thrown open, and the rich drapery hung gracefully by the open windows. Grocers' and butchers' boys were hurrying in through the gates to empty their heavy baskets, while little beggar-children emerged from them with theirs richly laden. The passers-by looked gladly up, rejoicing that the long-deserted mansion was once more occupied. The walks were neatly swept, the lawns well trimmed, and the shrubs carefully trained. A little fountain leaped joyously in one of the grass-plots, pet canaries warbled from their cages among the green vines, and every thing around the place betokened the approaching return of its refined and tasteful mistress. The expectant servants ran hither and thither from window to door, and from door to window, thrusting out their woolly heads at every sound of carriage-wheels. Never lagged the time so wearily, and never was house more joyous than that, as the waning day brought the loved ones beneath its roof.

Mrs. Dunmore lay upon the couch in her pleasant boudoir, weary and travel-worn, yet not insensible to the delight of being once more at home. By her side, on a low ottoman, was the child of her adoption, her hand clasping that of her mother, whose eyes were fixed upon her with tenderness and love. Both hearts were almost too full for utterance; the mother seemed content to watch the varying emotions as they played upon the face of her sweet child, and the young girl betrayed her earnest, affectionate feelings in frequent but silent caresses. It was such a mercy to be spared so many years to meet again, and to find each other all that they desired—the one the same kind, devoted, Christian mother, and the other as warm-hearted as ever, repaying all the care and regard lavished upon her by a corresponding improvement, and by an unmeasured gratitude and esteem. It was such a happiness, too, to Mrs. Dunmore to feel that, in braving the world's opinion and taking to her bosom an outcast and deserted one, she was so fully compensated by the companionship of the graceful and beautiful girl who was now competent to sympathize in all that pleased or disturbed her. What was all her wealth, what were the elegances and luxuries that surrounded her, what the fashionable friends who crowded to welcome her, compared to that one fresh, trusting, loving heart, that clung to hers with such strength and ardor of affection!

[Pg 78]

Many a time during their long separation had her spirit gone yearningly out toward the child, and now she was beside her again with deep eyes beaming earnestly upon her, and red lips pressed ever and anon to her own with an overflowing fondness.

[Pg 79]

The twilight was in the room, and through its dimness the little portrait on the wall was visible, no longer shrouded in somber weeds, but in its brightness and simplicity gazing down upon the two loving ones beneath it, and seeming to share in their deep and hallowed joy.

The young girl bowed her head until it rested softly upon the bosom of her mother, as she said, "It is so sweet to be here, dear mamma! Often have I walked past this desolate house, with the feeling that it might never again open to receive me, and it seems so like a dream that I am here once more, with the cold world wholly shut out from me, and your warm, warm heart beating so close to mine again!"

"Has the world indeed been cold to you, my darling," said Mrs. Dunmore, "and have you found no kind friends to make my absence less weary? I had hoped that Madame La Blanche would prove a

fond and faithful mother."

"And so she has, dear mamma, but thoughts of the past would sometimes come up to trouble me, and then I needed you to help me bear it, and to bring sunshine and peace from it all. This was at first when I felt quite alone in the world, after you had gone; but I tried afterward to do as Madame La Blanche said was the better way—to put every thing bitter from me, and try to think only of the good that was all around me. When we were gloomy or dispirited, she would say, 'I know it is very trying, my children, to be separated from your parents and friends; but you must remember that so long as you are with me, I stand in the same relationship to you all; and that my heart will be cast down and pained if you fail to come freely to me with all your little burdens and sorrows.' She said too, that 'we were as one dear and pleasant family, and that each of us must strive to bring as much brightness as possible into our little household, and then we could not help being happy.' Nobody could be kinder nor better than Madame La Blanche, and Rosalie and Carrie were as sweet sisters to me; but there were some things I could never speak to them about, and I am so glad that you who know me so truly are here again! I shall have nothing now to ask excepting that you go away from your poor child no more."

[Pg 80]

"Never fear, my darling," said Mrs. Dunmore, "nothing shall again come between us so long as God permits us to dwell upon the earth; but we must not forget to prepare for a severance that must one day come, so that we may be reunited where all partings shall forever be over."

Jennie clasped still tighter the hand of her mother, as she thought how severely that long separation would try one or the other of them; but she said nothing, for her heart was busy with the memory of the loved ones who had gone before her to the home above, and she felt that she had indeed many incentives to struggle for the same blessed inheritance.

The twilight went out into thick darkness, leaving the mother and child to their happy communings in the boudoir, amid the blest associations of a cherished past.

[Pg 81]

The hum of the streets was hushed. Few sounds came from without; but the silence that had so long reigned in the mansion, was broken by the gentle tones of loving and glad voices.

[Pg 82]

---

## CHAPTER XXI.

"Well, Henry, how shall we kill time this evening?" said Fred. Burling to Henry Moore, as the two colleagues sauntered up and down the gallery of Mr. Moore's house.

"If by killing time you mean spending the hours pleasantly, I think we had better go and chat awhile with Mr. Halberg's pretty daughters," replied Henry; "I believe you consider yourself quite a connoisseur in beauty. Perhaps we shall both find our beau-ideal there to-night. Mary told me they were expecting a visit from a young friend who is skilled in captivating hearts, and Rosalie says she arrived this morning. Have you seen her, Rosalie?" continued he, addressing his sister, who appeared at the door as they were walking past it.

"Why, Henry, there are so many *hers* in the world, and even in our own little village, that it would take a better clairvoyant than myself to decide which you mean," said Rosalie, glancing upon him with a sparkle in her merry eye.

"I supposed," said Henry, "your mind would be so full of your friend that she would immediately occur to you as the object of my inquiry."

[Pg 83]

"I hope you don't mean to insinuate that I have but one friend!" answered the sister, with another roguish twinkle of her mischievous eye; "because, dear brother, I have a great, great many, I flatter myself; but to tease you no longer, I *have* seen *her*, and she is just as winning and lovely as ever."

"Well, Fred," said Henry, "if it does not appear too formidable to your susceptibility, we will venture to meet the young ladies. Get your hat, Rosalie," he added, as his sister moved away; "we need you to enliven our walk."

"I am afraid you will scarcely appreciate so brilliant a companion," said Rosalie; "but no matter, I'll go, I may glean a few bright ideas by contact with a certain classical duo that I wot of;" and the blithe young girl hastened away, and soon returned equipped for their stroll.

"Miss Rosalie," said Fred, as he drew her hand within his arm; "tell me all about this friend of yours. I believe that is sufficiently definite to distinguish the new comer, is it not?"

"Oh, yes," said his companion, "I was only bantering Henry a little; but, really, Mr. Burling, I have nothing to tell you concerning Jennie, excepting that we were schoolmates for a long time, and that in consequence we feel a great deal of fondness and affection for each other."

"I thought," said Fred, "there was some mystery about her birth and history—so Henry says."

"And so there is to me," replied Rosalie, "but I can not attempt to solve it, since she was never communicative with regard to her early life; there was a good deal of gossiping among the girls at school, on account of a report which came through an old servant of Mrs. Dunmore's that she was of very humble origin; but she was so lady-like, and so much beloved by us all that we quite

[Pg 84]

discredited the story, although, for my own part, I don't care a straw what her parentage was, since she is worthy and refined."

"You will perceive," said Henry, "that this little sister of mine is a very independent young lady, and founds her likes and dislikes upon her own opinions, rather than upon the prejudices and conventionalities of society."

"It is well," returned Fred, "that there are some who make merit or demerit the distinguishing marks instead of rank or wealth. I confess that my own notions wholly accord with those of Miss Rosalie. What! are we here so soon?" continued he, as they reached the entrance to Mr. Halberg's grounds.

"I should think we were in the region of the Dryads!" said Henry, as several white figures were visible amid the trees. "Who's eaves-dropping, now," added he, as Mary came suddenly upon him from behind a neighboring shrub.

"I plead, not guilty," said Mary; "but, Henry, where are your offerings? you should not come into the presence of deities without suitable gifts."

"Permit me to present to you my friend Mr. Burling, Miss Halberg," said Henry, as the young man approached with Rosalie and Ellen.

[Pg 85]

"You see I have not forgotten the custom to bring some propitiatory sacrifice."

"A very acceptable one in these days of dearth," said Mary, blushing. "We are a very secluded race," continued she, addressing Mr. Burling, "and the arrival of friends is quite an era in our quiet life."

"It is a wonder that we do not wholly vegetate," said Ellen. "Do not you think, Henry, that we are in danger of dissipating too much, now that our coterie is so greatly enlarged?"

The young man looked thoughtfully upon her for a moment, and then replied "There needs not an increased circle, nor the seductions of a fashionable clique, Nellie, to lead us to excess; the soul may run riot, and indulge in vain repinings for the follies and vanities of life, even in the remotest solitudes. But come, let us go to the piazza, I see your youngest sister there, and wish also to make the acquaintance of your guest."

Just then Carrie and Jennie espied Rosalie, and, running forward, met her with the warmest manifestations of delight, and seizing upon her, they hurried her on to see grandpa, who sat in his arm-chair on the piazza, with the cool breeze refreshing his fevered brow.

It was a beautiful sight, the three young girls just bursting into womanhood, with their earnest and pure natures, ministering to the faint old man who was fast wasting away from this earthly being. Henry and his friend were deeply impressed by it, and dreaded to disturb so charming a picture, but as they advanced to greet Mr. and Mrs. Halberg, Carrie sprang to meet her old friend Henry, and leading him to her grandfather's seat, introduced him to Jennie, and placed a chair for him by her side. The young girl looked up with a sweet smile as he asked her some question concerning her escape from school, and shaking back the heavy mass of ringlets that shaded her forehead, she replied, "School was any thing but a prison-house to me, yet I love very much to be occasionally free from a fixed routine of duties, especially when I find so pleasant a retreat as this, and so dear a charge as grandpa. We all have a care for him," she added, taking in Carrie and Rosalie with her fond glance.

[Pg 86]

"Grandpa's shoulders ought to be very broad to support so many descendants," said Ellen, looking scornfully at their beautiful guest. "Henry, why do you not aspire to so distinguished a relationship?"

"People often aspire to that which they can not attain," said Henry, with a look of quiet but deep earnestness at Jennie, whose eyes sunk under his gaze, and whose heart swelled with emotion at the thought of her own isolated fate. "No father, no mother, no kindred," felt she, "and even the love of this weak old man grudged me by one who has all!" She said nothing more while the visitors remained, but sat with the palsied hand in her soft palm, dreaming of the time when she should be gathered into the bosom of a ransomed family, and her spirit grew calm with the thought, so that when Rosalie and the young men arose to leave, and asked her to join them in a little excursion on the morrow, she answered them with a beaming and glad face.

[Pg 87]

"Fred," said Henry, as they left the gate, "I never can forget that face. Did you see how almost heavenly it was as she stood by old Mr. Halberg when we left?"

"It was indeed a lovely picture," said Fred; "the old bowed head with the evening's breath moving the gray hair, and that delicate girl, with her white dress glistening in the moonbeams, and with the seraphic expression on her brow!"

[Pg 88]

---

## CHAPTER XXII.

"Eleanor," said Mr. Halberg to his wife, after the young people had retired to rest, "there is something very singular about that girl. She is so like our departed Jane that she awakens my

deepest interest. Did you notice her manners, at once so child-like and so mature? I must inquire more particularly about her of Mrs. Dunmore; it strikes me she is no common child."

"I paid no especial attention to her," replied the wife; "she is sufficiently long under the influence of a refined example to overcome all taint of birth and early habit, however."

"I tell you, wife," said the husband, "there's an innate pride and dignity about the girl that no training could effect. I watched her all the evening, and could detect nothing but the most perfect ease and grace. Her face, too, haunts me. Do you remember how pure and earnest the expression of Jane's eye was? Well, there's the same look in that young girl's, so that I longed to take her to my heart and call her sister. If we had not learned with such apparent certainty about the death of the child I should say this was she," soliloquized he, as his wife left the room for one moment, and resuming the subject as she returned. "Why, Eleanor, how long is it since my father lost his reason?"

[Pg 89]

"About four years, I believe," replied Mrs. Halberg.

"And our poor Jane had been twelve years away, and her little one was born three years after her marriage, and this child is—how old did you say, wife?"

"I'm sure I don't know, Frank; but what possesses you? Have you any idea that Jane's child is still living? and if it were so and we should ever find it out, are you not aware how materially it would affect our own children's share of their grandfather's property?" said Mrs. Halberg, blushing for very shame, as she encountered her husband's searching and grieved eye.

"Eleanor," said he, "my sister was bitterly wronged! God only knows how and what she suffered, not only from the neglect and desertion of her kindred; but from the stern pinchings of want. For my own part," continued he, leaning his head upon his hand, and sighing deeply, "I would be willing to forfeit *all* the inheritance if by that means I could make some reparation for the cruel past!"

"Well, well, Frank, it can not be helped now! Since it is all over, why not let it go without troubling yourself with vain regrets?"

"Those are not vain regrets, Eleanor," said the husband, "which purify the soul. My father has been spared the agony of remorse for the one great error of his life, by a merciful Providence which has made the sad past oblivious to him; but my heart would be hardened indeed, if it should cease to feel an intense sorrow for the wrongs committed against the patient and sainted one."

[Pg 90]

Mrs. Halberg was touched by her husband's unfeigned grief. He had never spoken so fully to her before, on a subject which, by common consent, all the family had avoided, and she knew not until now how weighty had been the burden of his secret repinings. Before the world he was unbending and reserved; but now as he sat in the solitude of his chamber, with only his wife's eye upon him, save that of the Omniscient, the proud man yielded to a long pent-up emotion, and wept like a child. "Eleanor," said he, as he felt the tears from other eyes mingling with his own, "tell me that if it is ever in our power to make restitution for the sins of other years, you will aid me with all your power, even if it were to our own pecuniary loss?"

The wife placed his hand fondly upon the heart that was beating for him so truly, and kissing him tenderly, murmured, "My husband, I promise!"

"If," continued he, "it should prove upon thorough investigation—which has been already too long delayed—that the child of my sister was spared, and is even now living, will you take her to your home and cherish her as one of your own children, so that she may feel no want of sympathy and love?"

With the hand still upon the life-spring, the affectionate wife earnestly answered, "My husband, I will. But why," said she, after a moment's hesitation, "do you doubt the truth of the report, that you have hitherto considered credible?"

[Pg 91]

"It never occurred to me," said Mr. Halberg, "that it might be false, until to-night; but Eleanor, presentiments come sometimes upon us with all the force of a certain conviction, and my conscience will never be easy until I, make some effort to find out, beyond the shadow of doubt, whether my sister's child is wandering upon the earth, yearning for kindred and home, or is gathered to the home which is brighter than any this world can afford. What first awakened these thoughts within me, was the sight of a gipsy woman to-day. She stopped me in the street to beg a few pennies, and by the hand she held a gentle little creature of five or six years old, which I was confident could not be her own. Visions of a bereaved and mourning family, and of the future of the delicate child, troubled me, and the feeling that one bound to me by a dearer tie than that of humanity, might be roaming amid the vicious and low, smote me with such cruel misery that I have not since been able to regain my wonted calmness, and the coming of this beautiful child, so like my sister, has excited my anxieties and fears still more."

"I doubt not but that it is all a fantasy of the imagination, Frank. You had better take a composing draught, and to-morrow will find you more cheerful," said the wife.

"I know of none more soothing," replied Mr. Halberg, as he prepared for his night's repose, "than a spirit at peace with God and man."

[Pg 92]

---

## CHAPTER XXIII.

"Jennie," said Carrie the next morning, "come with me and we'll get a peep at the portrait. I saw father go into the room a moment since, and grandpa's out on the piazza. We'll step softly just inside the door, for father never likes to be disturbed when he's there."

With their arms about each other's waists the two friends went skipping along, until they reached the apartment appropriated to the old gentleman. The door was partially open and they could see through the crack the dark figure of Carrie's father standing with his back toward them. The room seemed very bright and cheerful, and the rich colors of a gay carpet, and the elaborate carving of the massive and antique furniture rendered it still more pleasant and attractive. As they were about to cross the threshold, and Carrie had her hand against the door to push it open still further, Jennie whispered, "Stop a minute, Carrie, my heart beats so!—I'm afraid your father will not like it if we intrude upon him now! You know there's something very sacred in one's sorrow!"

Mr. Halberg, meanwhile, had withdrawn the black veil which had obscured the portrait since his sister's marriage, and stood thoughtfully gazing upon the lovely features, and comparing them with those of the young girl, whose image filled his mind. "It is very strange," murmured he; "the same waving mass of hair, the same beautifully-arched brows and long lashes, and the liquid eyes, melting one with their subduing pathos; the very expression so like, too! It is very wonderful! very wonderful!" and he wiped away a tear that betrayed the depth and earnestness of his feelings.

[Pg 93]

"Come, Jennie—father will not see us," said Carrie, gently pulling her within the door, "he gets so absorbed!"

As Jennie entered the room she raised her eyes to the place where Mr. Halberg stood. That moment the sunlight came through the windows, casting a bright gleam upon the beautiful portrait, and, stretching out her arms toward it, the young girl faintly cried, "My own blessed mother!" and sunk senseless to the floor.

In one moment Mr. Halberg was beside her, and raising her gently he placed her upon the bed, and with a face as colorless and rigid as her own, awaited her return to consciousness, applying the proper restoratives with a calm and skillful hand. Carrie had loosened her dress, and as she did so, a miniature fell upon the bed. Her father looked eagerly upon it, and with tremulous fingers pressed a spring upon the back. It was indeed his sister's likeness, placed beyond dispute by the convincing inscription, "Jane Halberg, to her beloved daughter, Jennie Grig!"

This, then, was the child of that precious one who had roamed with him through the sunny paths of infancy and youth, but whose maturer years were overshadowed by adversity and gloom! God had sent a pitying heart to her in the hour of her saddest need, and had gently led her back to the home whence her mother had been cruelly banished; that mother He had received into more beautiful mansions, but the child was left, to fulfill a noble and glorious mission among those who had hitherto deemed her as helpless in the grave! Strangers had proved better than those of her own household to the outcast and orphan, and had nurtured and cared for her while they were contenting themselves with the report that she had gone where no earthly care avails. Only the evening before had she sat in the midst of her relatives, with a sad feeling of isolation—now they were gathered about her with evidences of an awakening love and tenderness. It was pleasant to shut her eyes and open them again upon so glad a revelation! So thought Jennie as she gazed upon her new-found connections, who crowded around with exclamations of surprise and affection. Carrie, then, was her own cousin! and the great heart against which she was so fondly pressed was warm with kindred blood? Grandpa, too, had fondled and caressed her idolized mother, and even his wandering faculties had detected her lineage, so that he had clung to her for some better reason than an impulsive and wayward fancy!

[Pg 94]

"Speak not now, my darling," said Mr. Halberg, as Jennie made an effort to say something to him, "but put your arms around my neck, and let me feel by this mute expression that the past is forgiven; I am not yet able to bear one word from the child of my deserted sister."

[Pg 95]

The young girl's lips were still parted, but the loving arms twined closely around her uncle, and although no verbal absolution came, he felt that the past would never again haunt him with its spectral figure, but that his sister's blessing would come to him through the child who now lay so fondly upon his bosom.

[Pg 96]

---

## CHAPTER XXIV.

Three more years had mingled with the past, and yet Mrs. Dunmore and Jennie, who had now developed into a mature and perfect beauty, lingered in the vicinity of the Halbergs. Not that they had any idea of sundering the ties that so closely united them, or of claiming a place for the orphan in the home of her newly-found kindred, but the old man clung with such touching fondness to his beloved grandchild, and grew so frantic if she left him, even for a few days, that it

seemed a sacred duty to give themselves up to his few remaining years; and as from month to month they perceived a manifest dawning of light upon his bewildered intellect, it became rather a pleasure than a sacrifice to forego all those amusements and comforts that interfered with his peculiar fancies or desires. Mrs. Halberg would remonstrate, and Ellen would sneer, as the young girl denied herself the companionship of her youthful associates in order to be with and cheer her aged relative; but Jennie would place her hand gently upon his silvery head, and say, in her quiet, subduing way, "It will not be very long, dear auntie!"

[Pg 97]

Nor was it very long, for every day the tottering knees grew more and more feeble, until at length the old seat in the garden was altogether abandoned for the pleasant room; and there, by the window, in the warm sunlight, would the shadow of a majestic being crouch, shivering through the summer days, while a soft and low voice read and chatted away the otherwise weary hours.

But the old figure stays not long in the sunlight, for the messengers have come for him, and the hour of his departure is near, and prostrate upon his bed he awaiteth the final summons. It was Jennie's sixteenth autumn, and as she sat beside her grandfather's couch with his shriveled fingers in her warm clasp, the old man turned his head upon his pillow, and, looking intently upon her, said, "My child, I have been dreaming. I have slept a long, long time; but I am wide awake now, and I know it all. It has come to me slowly and painfully, and I shall not forget it again."

"What is it, grandpa?" said Jennie; "you are weak and ill now, and must not talk, I am your little nurse you know, and Dr. Wright says 'I must keep you quite still if I would have you get well again.'"

"Isn't your name Jennie Grig? and is not that your mother?" continued her grandfather, rising upon one elbow and pointing to the portrait at the foot of the bed. "You was a young thing when she died, Jennie, and I meant to find you out and bring you home; but I could do nothing while the strange dream was upon me. It was just as well, for she brought you to me with her angel hands, and that made the dream pleasant to me;" and the old man sunk back upon his pillow. He lay quietly for some time, and Jennie thought he was sleeping, but as she motioned Simon to take her place by the bed, and tried gently to relax her hand from that of her grandfather, he tightened the pressure, and spoke again in a feeble tone. "I shall not get well again, Jennie, I'm going to your mother; but I can not die yet. Call your uncle to me, and leave us for awhile, I must make it right again." Jennie was more surprised and frightened at her grandfather's calm and rational manner than she would have been by any strange or frenzied actions; but she had heard that reason often wholly resumes its throne as the hour of dissolution approaches, and, thinking that life might be fast ebbing, she hastened to summon her uncle, who was soon in his father's presence.

[Pg 98]

His heart leaped for joy as soon as he saw that the old gentleman was sufficiently sane to alter his will, which had been made in a moment of passion, and had cut off the inheritance from his daughter; and both seemed relieved of a sore burden when the papers were re-executed and the child was made sure of her rightful portion.

Her grandfather tremulously affixed his signature as Jennie returned to him followed by her aunt and cousins.

A peaceful smile was upon the dying man's face as he looked upon the little group that surrounded him, and said, with a solemn emphasis, "My children, be kind and forgiving—forgiving." Then closing his eyes, he murmured "dear little Jennie! dear little Jennie!" and slept to awake no more to the pains and ills of life.

[Pg 99]

[Pg 100]

---

## CHAPTER XXV.

Henry Moore had been a frequent visitor at Mr. Halberg's during Jennie's sojourn there, and so lovely a character as hers could not fail to awaken in his bosom a deeper feeling toward her than that of friendship; yet so calmly had the time glided away that they had spent together, and so far from his mind had been the idea of a separation, that he was scarcely aware of the nature of his emotions until she announced to him her approaching departure from her uncle's.

They were standing together in a little summer-house in the garden, a few weeks after the old man's death, and Carrie was with them, when Jennie looked sadly out upon the old seat that had been left vacant beneath the trees, and said:

"Don't let them remove that, when I am away, Carrie, darling. You know it is all that restored to me my relatives."

"Are you going to leave—, Jennie?" said Henry, with a sudden start which made both the girls gaze eagerly at him. Jennie did not perceive the deep flush that overspread his face; but Carrie observed it, yet thinking it better to appear as if she had noticed nothing unusual, she picked an autumn bud, that had obtruded itself within the trellised window, and quietly handing it to him, said,

[Pg 101]

"Every thing that we love seems to be going from us at this dreary season, Henry. Even that last bud would have faded from me with the next few chilly hours. Perhaps it is well," she continued,

"that we can not have the good and the beautiful always around us, we might forget our unfading inheritance!"

Henry did not answer, for he could not trust himself to speak just then; but Jennie turned to the window that overlooked the village churchyard where her grandfather's grave was made, and repeated, in a low voice, that beautiful hymn of Mrs. Heman's, "Passing Away." As she came to the verse,

"Friends! friends! oh, shall we meet  
In a land of purer day,  
Where lovely things and sweet  
Pass not away?"

her voice faltered, and she did not attempt to finish, but sinking upon a bench near her, she wept unrestrainedly.

"Quite a tragic scene! Whose benefit is it to-day, Carrie?" said Ellen Halberg, who that moment approached the summer-house.

"No wonder Jennie feels some sorrow at leaving a spot where we have spent so many happy hours," said Carrie, "one must have no heart, to break away from friends without any manifestation of regret."

[Pg 102]

"Oh! I can easily conceive of its being a great grief to leave a place where she finds so many attractions as here," said Ellen, looking significantly at Henry, who was mentally contrasting the two girls so nearly allied, yet so unlike.

"Doubtless your cousin has emotions which you can neither understand nor appreciate, Miss Ellen," said he, with somewhat of sarcasm in his tone. "There are minds so constituted, that wherever they dwell they form attachments which are not easily loosed!"

"Oh! I fully sympathize in Jennie's distress," said Ellen, mockingly holding her handkerchief to her eyes.

Not for worlds would she have committed that one thoughtless act, had she known how contemptible it would make her in the estimation of him whom she most cared to please! Henry Moore of all others was the object of her especial regard. From their childhood they had been thrown constantly together, and, until the coming of her cousin among them she had appropriated him to herself as a lawful and undisputed right. All the villagers had looked upon their union as a "settled thing," and no doubt Henry would gladly have fulfilled their prophecies if Ellen's maturer years had verified the promise of an earlier age; but as he saw her give way to petty envies and jealousies, and to an uncontrolled and vindictive temper, he turned from her to the study and contemplation of her sweet and gentle cousin. No wonder he became a worshiper of so pure an image, rather than pay homage to a distorted object. Jennie meanwhile, was wholly unconscious of the interest she excited. So completely had her mind been occupied in contributing to her grandfather's comfort, that she sought no other affection, and so long as her friends looked kindly upon her, she was too happy to question their feeling toward her. One only sorrow had she experienced since her restoration to her kindred, and that was in her cousin Ellen's continued ill-will and hatred toward her. Perhaps she might have succeeded in winning her to an opposite feeling, by the little acts of courtesy and love so constantly shown, if the demon jealousy had not insinuated itself into Ellen's bosom.

[Pg 103]

Was it a crime to beget in another a love so deep and holy, when she herself was free from all design, and even unsuspecting that she was regarded with more warmth than were her cousins? So Ellen must have thought, or she would not have taken every opportunity to thwart and tease her orphan relative, and to detract from her merit when in the presence of her friends.

On this day especially she seemed to feel a peculiar malice and spite toward her. She had seen—herself unobserved—the emotion of Henry when Jennie's departure was spoken of, and her own heart told her that no light or common feeling produced it.

As she removed the handkerchief from her face, she perceived that she had gone too far, for even the unresentful Jennie, unable to bear the ridicule of her most sacred sentiments, had arisen to go to the house. She did not escape, however, before Henry had whispered the request, that she would go with him to Blinkdale on the morrow.

[Pg 104]

"To-morrow is Sunday," said she, quietly, "and I shall accompany uncle to church."

"Well, the next day; I will call for you," said Henry. "You can not refuse to take one last walk with me?"

"I have no disposition to refuse," replied Jennie, as she turned slowly and sadly from the spot.

"Ellen, how could you!" said Carrie with flashing eyes, "so short a time as Jennie is to be with us, and yet you make her miserable?"

"She shall not come between me and happiness with her soft and hypocritical ways!" said Ellen, snapping off the leaves of a twig near her, and looking upon the retreating figures of her sister and cousin, who were going up the avenue. Then turning to a point where she could see in the distance the dim form of Henry Moore, she took the seat that her cousin had vacated, and gave

[Pg 105]



---

## CHAPTER XXVI.

"Come, girls," said Mr. Halberg, as the young ladies descended from their rooms equipped for church, "the bell has been tolling for some time, I fear we shall be late. Where's Ellen?" he continued, casting his eyes over the group and missing his eldest daughter.

"She is not well to-day, papa, and prefers remaining at home with mother," said Carrie. "Nothing serious," added she, observing her father's anxious and troubled look. "She said she would try to sleep, and perhaps that would banish her head-ache so that she would be able to go with us this afternoon;" and the party left the house, and calling for Mrs. Dunmore and Rosalie, they all proceeded to the church.

The walk was rural and quiet, through green lanes that were seldom disturbed except when the house of God was open. A little footpath was worn upon the verdant turf, and the green was unpressed elsewhere, save where some passive burden was silently borne to its lowly bed; there the somber wheels crushed down the blades that lifted up their heads to the glad sunlight, as if it were wrong to live and grow on while death was moving over them.

[Pg 106]

There were recent traces upon the grass that recalled to every mind the venerable and stricken old man who was now resting so peacefully beneath the church's shadow, and as Jennie's eye perceived them, she leaned heavily upon her uncle's arm and sighed.

"My darling," said he, in a low and gentle voice, "we shall miss you very much—more than I can tell! Your love and care for your poor grandfather, notwithstanding all the past, have endeared you more and more to my heart, so that it is a bitter trial to think of parting from you, and one which I should strive to avert, were it not that too much of your young life has been given up to seclusion when you might have been deriving both happiness and profit in the world. Your self-denial, dear child, will be rewarded, if it is not already giving you a rich harvest of peaceful and self-approving thoughts!" Jennie could not reply, even had she desired, as they were at the church door, and her uncle was accosted by the senior warden:

"We have a stranger to preach for us to-day, sir," said Mr. Brown, after the accustomed salutations had passed between them.

"Ah! where is our own rector?" asked Mr. Halberg.

"I suppose he is supplying this young minister's pulpit," returned the warden. "It is seldom that we have an exchange, and they say that this stranger is uncommonly eloquent."

"We shall have an opportunity to judge for ourselves," said Mr. Halberg, as he turned from his friend and entered the church with his niece. The service commenced, and as the rich deep tones of the minister fell upon Jennie's ear, there rushed upon her mind a tide of joyous memories that transported her to a sunny home amid the mountains, and a little tomb, and a quiet avenue, and a bench beneath the old maples, where she used to sit and listen to a calm and gentle voice that seemed to reach her even now; and then her thoughts came back to her hallowed employment, and as she raised her eyes to be sure that it was not all a dream, they fell, not upon a strange minister, but upon the same kind friend who had beguiled her childhood's hours.

[Pg 107]

How many years had passed since she had roamed with him among the hills, not a gay and sportive child, as one who had known nothing of trouble or poverty; but a young being whose gleesomeness had been crowded down by premature cares and sorrows, so that it seldom gushed out as a little child's mirth should always do. Will he recognize her now? She must be so changed! She would scarcely know him but for the voice, and the broad pale forehead that seems to have been expanding all these many years, so wide and high does it appear.

He does not see her, he is all absorbed in the solemn worship, as she too should be—now he is in the pulpit, and as he glances around upon the congregation, his eyes meet the earnest soul that once beamed upon him in his own parish church.

There is no mistaking it. For many a weary hour has it cheered him in his labors. It was but a child's soul, but it was an eager one, on which the seed fell availingly—and now it is a woman's soul, and the good fruit has been nourishing the faint old man who needs it no longer. The minister knows nothing of that, he only sees that it is before him, as desirous as ever of spiritual nourishment, and the people wonder at his zeal and fervor, little thinking of the power there is in a thirsting spirit to awaken the energies of him who dispenseth to them of the waters of life.

[Pg 108]

The service is over, and Mrs. Dunmore and Jennie meet their old friend, who scarcely dares even to press the hand of the child he used to caress so fondly. Time and absence strangely change us!

"May I see you to-morrow," said he, "before I leave?"

"We shall look certainly for you," replied Mrs. Dunmore as they left the vestibule.

"Pardon me, dear mamma," said Jennie; "but I must leave you, uncle wished me to join him in the churchyard. It may be our last opportunity alone;" she added as she moved away.

Mr. Halberg was leaning upon the gate at the entrance of the burial-ground, gazing intently upon the many mounds that filled the spot, and wondering when his own tomb would be pointed out by others, when Jennie lightly touched his hand to remind him of her presence.

He started, and, opening the gate, they were soon within the sacred inclosure. "You may wonder," said he, "why I choose a place fraught with so many saddening associations for a little quiet conversation; but it suits my mood, and there are so few who frequent this somber place that we are sure not to be disturbed."

[Pg 109]

"The precincts of the dead, dear uncle," said Jennie, "are any thing but gloomy to me; the lessons of my childhood were too full of solemn realities to foster in me a shrinking from the entrance to a purer and more beautiful existence."

"It is of your early life I would speak, my child," said Mr. Halberg, with an effort at composure. "I have never trusted myself to ask of you your history previous to your adoption by Mrs. Dunmore; but the time has come when I wish to know it, and, however painful the details may be, you must no longer hide them from me."

"But uncle," replied the niece; "why not bury the past, and look only to the happy present and the promising future. Is it well to exhume the mouldering remains when the sight would bring only suffering!"

"It is for the moral, Jennie; your uncle has hitherto been so selfish that he needs awakening by some stirring appeals, and what can be more sure to arouse him than the recollection of his beloved and only sister's trials!"

"I feel that I have so little to tell," said Jennie, trying to evade the subject; "the time spent with you has been so pleasant, that it quite banishes the bitterness of my younger days."

"And yet," said Mr. Halberg, "there must have been intense anguish on your mother's part, as she felt herself given up by those who should have clung to her, and her very means of subsistence failing her!"

[Pg 110]

"I never heard my mother complain," replied Jennie, "There was one time when our miserable room was quite cheerless and cold, and we knew not where to look for fuel or food, then my poor father seemed almost frantic with grief for my mother and myself; but I well remember her holy smile, as she calmly said, 'My husband, trust in the Lord, and verily thou shalt be fed.' I never met with a firmer confidence in the love and over-ruling providence of God than my mother possessed," continued Jennie. "Her example is ever before me, and yet how difficult to attain to!"

"Were you often in so desperate a condition, my child?" asked Mr. Halberg; "and did your mother's patience never fail her, so that she would speak accusingly of her relatives?"

"There was seldom a day," replied Jennie, "after my father's illness, that we knew how to provide the necessaries of life; and the only time I ever surprised my mother in an outburst of sorrow was when I took my broom for the first time, and went out to sweep the crossings. That day she called me to her, and tying back my curls, so that none of them could be seen beneath my hood, she clasped me convulsively to her, and wept until I ran away to escape the agony."

"Were you not afraid in the crowded streets?" inquired the uncle, as Jennie paused.

"Oh, yes! very often, dear uncle—that is, of the ugly wheels; but there seemed a guardian presence around me and few ever spoke rudely to me; and I was never injured, excepting on that blessed night when God's time had come to help us through my physical hurt. Don't let us think any more about it," continued she, looking up at her uncle, and perceiving how deeply he was moved; "it was all right, and if it had not happened we might have been wicked and thoughtless instead of feeling that our heavenly Father's will is always better than our own."

[Pg 111]

Mr. Halberg arose and walked around on the other side of the church, and on his return to his niece he said, in a calm yet earnest tone, "My child, you must pray for your uncle—his life will be weary indeed without you!" and pressing her fondly to him as they stood by the old man's grave, he too murmured "Dear little Jennie!" and they left the spot to the breath of the winds and the twittering of the birds that hopped about upon the willow branches.

[Pg 112]

---

## CHAPTER XXVII.

Meantime Ellen lay upon her couch, tossed with many conflicting emotions. Her better nature reproached her for her injustice and cruelty toward her innocent cousin, and almost persuaded her to cease her persecutions, and even to strive to imitate her winning virtues; but the remembrance of the scene in the summer-house, and of Henry's contemptuous look as he left her, without even a parting salutation, awakened the bitter thought that she had fallen in his estimation, perhaps beyond the power of retrieval, and she resolved to keep up the semblance of a pride and indifference which she was far from feeling. For her cousin's opinion she little cared, nor was she influenced by the thought of an invisible yet heart-searching eye. No wonder, then, that she clung to her perverseness, and moved about on her restless pillow with no sweet or refreshing sleep to quiet the throbbings of her heavy brow.

The noonday sun was streaming through her window making the autumnal air seem warm and cheery, when a gentle rap was heard at her door, and her cousin entered. Her countenance was serene and peaceful, and her voice soothing and mild, as she said, "I have come to bathe your head, dear Nellie, Carrie told me you were ill, and I could not feel easy nor happy until I came to you."

[Pg 113]

"I am better alone," said Ellen, with a repelling motion of the hand. "If I need any thing, I will ring for Meggie; she is quite accustomed to my headaches."

"But, Nellie," said her cousin, in a beseeching tone, "something in your manner tells me that you do not love me, and yet I am not conscious that I have offended you. I can not go from—, without being at peace with everybody. The sermon was so full of mercy and kindness this morning!"

"I do not feel like hearing a sermon to-day," said Ellen, "and you will oblige me, Jennie, if you will leave me to myself, it is decidedly the best way to relieve me."

Jennie said no more; but arranging her cousin's shawl closer about her, and darkening the room, she placed the cooling liquid which she had prepared near the bed, and softly left the room. There was a slight shadow upon her brow as she entered her uncle's study, but it was banished by his welcome kiss. Her aunt and two cousins sat in a bay-window facing the south. Here they had always assembled on Sundays, until there came to be a sort of consecrated air about that quiet room, and something hallowed in the lovely view seen from the window.

"Here is your nook, Jennie, we have been expecting you for some time!" said Carrie, "there'll be such a sad vacancy next Sunday! I don't believe I shall love this room any more after you are gone, dear cousin!"

[Pg 114]

"I am glad if my presence makes it happier to you, Carrie," replied Jennie; "but you forget that uncle, and aunt, and Mary, and Ellen will be left to you besides the pleasant associations that cluster about all these familiar objects, while I shall be deprived of every thing but dear mamma."

"But every body will love you, Jennie," said Mary, "and you have the power to draw around you whoever you wish, so that your life will be sure to be sunny wherever you go."

"Not every body, Mary," said Jennie, looking thoughtfully upon the glorious view that was spread out before them, "if so, my heart would feel no weight upon it to-day. It is not well," she continued, "to have too much sunshine; else the storms would never be permitted to come; I don't believe we should truly appreciate and love this bright landscape if the shadows were not often flitting over it, thus making the glory more apparent!"

"You are right my child," said Mr. Halberg, "the trying dispensations of our life are wisely ordered, and who of us would dare to wish it otherwise!"

"And yet it seems," said Mary, "as if sorrow never came to some people, they glide through the world so unruffled and cheerful!"

"How little can we judge!" replied her father. "Every heart knoweth its own bitterness, and the outer surface is not always the index to the inner emotions or passions."

"Do you think, dear uncle," said Jennie, "that one can ever learn so to bear the ills of his lot, as always to present a cheerful and happy exterior to the world?"

[Pg 115]

"Not always, my child," said her uncle, "there is often a weakness of the flesh, when the spirit without its depressing influence, would be strong to endure; yet we may cultivate such a feeling of confidence in the will of God as never to murmur at His decrees, and even to welcome His chastisements, as blessings in disguise."

"That seems so difficult," said Carrie, "I am afraid I could never learn to welcome a sorrow."

"Not simply as a sorrow, my dear child," returned Mr. Halberg; "but as a means to a future good which could not be attained without it; there is a great deal that is hard for our sinful natures to comprehend; but there are spiritual aids of which we may all avail ourselves. Do not let us slight them, my dear children," continued he, rising from his seat, and gathering the three in one embrace as they stood by the window. The golden light was sprinkled upon the landscape, and the whole face of nature seemed to glow with an unusual radiance, as that little band of loving hearts beat in such grateful and perfect unison. Yet was there a sigh in the midst of it all, for the absent and sinning one:

Worlds like to this  
Mingle sorrow and bliss.

[Pg 116]

---

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

Mrs. Dunmore and Jennie were busy in talking over the past, and forming plans for the future, when Mr. Colbert was announced.

"I trust you will excuse my early call," said he, as they arose to greet him. "I have to leave the

village at noon, which is my only apology for intruding upon your morning hours."

"We are always at home to our old and valued friends," replied Mrs. Dunmore. "I hope our long separation will not make us strangers to each other."

"Miss Jennie reminds me that a long interval has come between us," said the clergyman, glancing at the graceful and womanly figure before him; "I have been accustomed to think of her as the child of my pleasant rambles, so that I am scarcely prepared to meet her in another form."

Jennie had received him with that timid cordiality so common to early womanhood, a kind of shrinking from the advances of a new and not wholly defined stage of being, and, as he alluded to the days of her childhood and the hours spent together in his hill-girt home, a slight blush tinged her face, and she said, "the long interval has changed you too, Mr. Colbert, so that there needed early memories to aid me in recognizing you."

[Pg 117]

"Time has dealt very differently with us," replied her friend, as the mirror opposite enabled him to contrast his sunken and pallid features with the round and healthful face of the lovely girl. "There are many things, however, that encourage me in the hope that we are none the less friends than formerly, and that we still have the one great sympathy in common;" added he, recalling her devout manner in church the day before.

"Are you not well, Mr. Colbert," asked Mrs. Dunmore; "or do you trespass upon the hours necessary to your repose and recreation that you are so much thinner and paler than you used to be? I fear I must usurp your prerogative and turn preacher if you are really destroying your health by too great devotion to your duties."

"I have been quite a sufferer for the last few years, my dear madam," returned the minister; "but not from the cause you assign."

"Perhaps you need change," said the widow; "it is not well to confine one's self too constantly to one locality."

"I feel confident it is so," said Mr. Colbert, "since even so short a journey revives me materially; but how comes it," he asked, "that you are here, and apparently settled?"

"Jennie must explain that to you," replied Mrs. Dunmore, "as it was through her that our present arrangements were made."

[Pg 118]

"Ah! do you find a rural life so much more congenial than your city home that you have adopted it altogether?" said Mr. Colbert, addressing Jennie.

"It is not that," she replied, "the city was the scene of my happiest, as well as my saddest days, and we are soon to return to it; but this village is the home of my nearest relatives, who were restored to me a few years since through a singular Providence, and my grandfather's infirmities rendered it expedient that we should remain here until now."

Mrs. Dunmore seeing the tears that dropped upon her child's work at mention of her grandfather, took Mr. Colbert aside, and gave him a brief history of all that had occurred during the years of their severance, and when she had finished her relation of the old man's derangement, and of Jennie's devotion and love toward him, the minister arose, and walked backward and forward in the room with an absorbed and meditative air, and then stopping so suddenly before the young girl as to startle her, he said abruptly: "Will you give me one moment in the garden? I have a single word to say to you alone." Jennie laid aside her work, and as they stepped from the colonnade into the garden of their lodgings, she opened an adjoining wicket that led to her uncle's grounds, and, motioning Mr. Colbert to follow, she passed through and entered the little summer-house.

"Are we quite free from intrusion?" asked her companion, as she seated herself upon a bench near the window.

[Pg 119]

"I believe I reign sole monarch of this sequestered nook at this season," replied Jennie. "My cousins care little for such solitude now that the breeze is chilly and the flowers have vanished."

"Jennie," said her friend, leaning against a pillow as if for support, "if you knew that all my suffering for the last few years had been for you, that this change, and pallor, and thinness, were all occasioned by the fear that the time might never come when I could tell you that I love you, you would pardon such a hasty declaration of my feelings toward you. You were but a child when first we met," he continued, placing his hand upon her head as he had then been wont to do, "but how closely your young being had woven itself with mine my subsequent weary life will prove. Were you ever sundered from the object you had learned to prize most on earth, Jennie?" said he, as the drooping lashes were lifted, and the pensive, earnest eyes met his inquiring gaze, "and was there utter desolation? Then do you appreciate fully all that I would say to you of my own sorrow when bereft of the only mortal whom my heart had ever cared to cherish. I ask you not to bind yourself to me in an irrevocable vow, but to think of me as your truest friend until you have seen more of the world and of men. If then you can turn away from all to the heart that will never beat for another, and call me husband, God be praised—my only earthly prayer will be answered."

[Pg 120]

Not another word was spoken, but silently as they came so they went back, through the little wicket into the presence of Mrs. Dunmore, and Mr. Colbert made his adieus and departed—but alas for Henry Moore!

[Pg 121]

---

## CHAPTER XXIX.

The afternoon was charming—one of those mellow, hazy atmospheres that make the autumnal season so pensive and dreamy, and Jennie felt its influence as she and Henry Moore sought the bright path to Blinkdale. Not richer nor more sparkling could the emerald, and the topaz, and the amethyst, and the sardius be, in their gay and beauteous variety, than were the changing leaflets in the sun's burnishing rays. The birds were singing merrily amid the brilliant foliage, and the fresh winds played among the branches, tossing them to and fro, and blending the bright and the somber in one glorious commingling. A streamlet crossed their pathway, moving placidly and gently along, but as they followed its windings, gurgling and foaming over the rocky obstructions, and almost drowning their voices in its noisy course. "How beautiful" exclaimed Jennie, seating herself upon a mossy stone on the river's bank, and looking to her companion for sympathy in her enthusiastic delight.

"I would rather look on a sweet face," replied Henry, as his eloquent eyes met hers. Blushing deeply, Jennie turned away and remained thoughtful and still, listening to the din of the waters and the wail of the autumn winds as they swept through the tree-tops, and her quiet reverie brought the old expression of early maturity and care, for her thoughts had been roving all along her past life, and had left her amid her childhood's sorrows in the narrow dreary room, with the weary and forsaken ones, and none else to love and cheer her.

[Pg 122]

"Jennie," said her companion, noticing the bitterness that passed over her young face, and wishing to dissipate any mournful musings, "do you know why I asked you to come alone with me to Blinkdale to-day?"

Aroused thus suddenly, the young girl started from her lowly seat, and patting its mossy side with her foot, replied, "How should I, Henry, unless it be that it is always pleasanter to have one companion who can understand and appreciate your love of nature, than to be surrounded in your walks by many who care only for merriment and chatting. I could spend the whole day in these solemn old woods with nothing to amuse me but my own thoughts."

"And yet, I doubt if your pensive musings would be profitable to you," said her companion; "there is something dirge-like in the music of nature that begets a morbid sort of feeling in a mind like yours, Jennie, and too much of such solitude would injure you. Pardon me," continued he, as he caught her half comic inquisitive gaze; "but your character has been my study for a long, long time."

"Not more profitable to you than my solitary reveries, I fancy," said Jennie.

[Pg 123]

"But more delightful to me than any study," replied Henry, and seating her again upon the bank near him, he told her all—how he had watched her growing graces both of heart and mind, since the first time they had met beneath her grandfather's porch; how he had striven in his profession for her sake; how he had suffered his whole soul to go out toward her in a hallowed and sincere affection; and how cold, and dead, and sad his life must be if she reciprocated not his tenderness; and then, with a flushed and anxious face, he awaited her answer.

Oh! how weary was the walk home! The woods were dark and dreary, and the steps of the young man heavy and listless, as he sauntered on beside his silent and suffering companion. Life had gained a new and somber aspect to her too, since she was the cause of a crushing sorrow to one who had lavished upon her his heart's breath. Why could he not be content with the sisterly regard she had ever felt toward him? It is so terrible to see him in his manly grief, and to feel that she may avert it! And yet, how can it be otherwise, since there is ever before her a pale face, with its spiritual eyes fixed on her soul calling forth all that she has to bestow.

[Pg 124]

---

## CHAPTER XXX.

Standing alone that evening in the bay-window of her uncle's study, Jennie gazed out upon the peaceful moonlit scene, trying to derive from it a tranquillity which the day's events had banished, when a loving arm was wound about her, and a low voice said, "May I share your thoughts this evening, my child?"

"It is you, is it, uncle!" said Jennie; "your step was so ghost-like that I did not hear you enter."

"I came very softly that I might not disturb you," replied Mr. Halberg; "you seem quite absorbed."

"And so I was, dear uncle, endeavoring to gather somewhat of serenity from the quiet and beauty of nature."

"What disturbs you to-night, my darling?" said her uncle, looking fondly upon the sweet face that was upturned to his, and wishing that his own soul could look forth as calm and pure in its simple truthfulness as that young and guileless one's. "There is naught but sin that should mar our peace, and I trust you are constant in your efforts to be clean from that."

"Is it not a source of sorrow, dear uncle, to occasion grief to others, even though the infliction

involves no sinful motive?" said Jennie, with suffused eyes, and a tremor in her voice.

[Pg 125]

"Truly so," replied Mr. Halberg, instantly conjecturing the cause of his niece's self-reproach; "but the ills that we are unable to avoid we should not dwell upon. If a person seeks that which we know we can not conscientiously bestow, it is a sacred duty to refuse it him, even though we are sensible that it will give much pain, and when the duty is performed in a Christian manner it will leave no lasting sting, but will itself prove a healing balm to the wounded one."

"You comfort me much, dear uncle," said Jennie; "I have been so sadly depressed this evening that the quiet and solitude even were overpowering, and your presence is so soothing and cheering. It will be a great loss to me to be deprived of so precious a guide—and a great cross too!" she added as her uncle bent to kiss her brow.

"We are all called upon to bear our cross in this life, dear child," said Mr. Halberg. "This will be a heavy one to your old uncle, but it is for your good, and he therefore cheerfully submits to it. I am not afraid to confide you to One who will guide you unto a perfect rest and peace. Come in, my children," said he, as a tap announced his three daughters. "Where's mother? we must have our circle complete to-night since Jennie will leave a vacant space on the morrow," he added with some emotion.

"Here I am," replied Mrs. Halberg, hastening toward them from an adjoining apartment; "it is really very delightful to have you all gathered once more about me! Nellie has been a sad truant of late, and Rosalie has quite monopolized the other girls."

[Pg 126]

"I did not flatter myself that I should be missed," said Ellen; "and as for the girls, Mr. Moore's house seems quite as attractive as their own home to them."

"His is indeed a complete and charming household! my daughter," said her father; "such perfect unison and harmony reigns among its members. I know of no fitter examples for my children, and am only too happy that they are on such an intimate footing there."

"It would be more agreeable to some, perhaps, if the connection were still nearer," answered Ellen, with an unmistakable glance at her cousin, whose increasing color showed that she applied her meaning. This then solved the mystery. Had she penetrated her cousin Ellen's feelings before, how much hatred, and malice, and spite, might she not have averted.

[Pg 127]

---

## CHAPTER XXXI.

"May I come in, Nellie?" said Jennie, as her cousin answered her gentle rap by half-opening the door and peeping out to see who the intruder was at that late hour. "I have a great deal to say to you," continued she, as Ellen gave her an ungracious permission to enter.

"Well you must hurry and say it, Jennie, for I am uncommonly sleepy, and feel a stronger inclination for my bed at present than for any communications," replied Ellen, throwing herself languidly down, and motioning her cousin to be seated.

"Nellie," said Jennie, placing her small white hand upon the one that hung over the arm of the sofa, "to-morrow we part, and God only knows when and where we may meet again. Be that as it may, to-night we have the opportunity to understand and love each other, another evening's shadows may stand between our hearts if they are not earlier united. You think that I love Henry Moore; will it make you happy to know that he will never be aught to me but a kind and affectionate brother, and that the most sacred place in my heart is reserved for another occupant?"

[Pg 128]

Quite ashamed and almost like a guilty thing, Ellen sat, while the color rushed over neck and face, mounting even to the brow, and deepening as it rose until it seemed too painful to endure, then rising from her seat, and opening the window upon the balcony she stepped forth into the night air, and kneeling by the balustrade, remained, motionless as a statue until a soft kiss upon her forehead assured her that she was forgiven. The stars looked down with a brighter twinkle, and the autumn wail grew into a sweet harmony as the two reconciled cousins stood with clasped hands gazing upward.

[Pg 129]

---

## CHAPTER XXXII.

"Good-by, uncle; good-by auntie; good-by girls," said Jennie, as she was pressed to the bosom of her relatives at the parting hour. "Simon, don't forget the dear old seat," continued she, putting a coin in his hand, and turning tearfully toward the carriage where Mrs. Dunmore was awaiting her, and then springing back to give one more kiss to her uncle, and to whisper something in Carrie's ear that sent the warm blood quickly to her face.

Henry and Rosalie were there to bid her adieu, and golden-curled Minnie, too, with a bunch of autumn leaves in her little hand, which she had gathered on the way as a parting gift, and which she now held up beseechingly to Jennie, who stooped to embrace her, and taking the withered

tokens, hastened to hide her emotion in the furthest recess of the carriage that bore her away from the home of her kindred. It seemed to those who watched the receding travelers, as if a blight had fallen upon their pleasant things; as if the winter had suddenly come and frozen up all the springs of pleasure and delight, for that young girl's presence, though unobtrusive in its influence, had diffused warmth and gladness all about her, and now that she was gone the warmth and gladness had also departed, and a mournful group turned back into the house with a mournful feeling, almost as if the grave had swallowed up one of its inmates. Old Simon betook himself to the seat beneath the trees, and with his knees crossed, and a dolorous motion of his gray head, he muttered,

[Pg 130]

"I thought it couldn't be all in the name! the likeness was amazin'! amazin'!" And forth from the stilly air seemed to come to the good old butler's ear, "Dear little Jennie! dear little Jennie!"

[Pg 131]

---

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

Six years have passed, and beneath the old maples sits Nurse Nannie, wrinkled and bent, with a wee babe upon her lap, while a girl of two years and a half plays with her doll upon the lawn, now and then looking up to catch mamma's smile, or to wonder why dear papa looks so grave when Grandmamma Dunmore tells him about the sick man in the cottage at the end of the lane, and his motherless children. And now she spies cousin Henry and Carrie coming from the avenue in the road, and springs to meet little Harry, who takes her hand and marches off with her, saying, he "isn't afraid of tows," and brandishing a wisp of a stick as if there were a mighty power in it. Sally brings more chairs out upon the green, and the mammas and papas talk busily together, while the little ones run about enjoying their own infantile prattle; and just as Harry and Jennie are the happiest, with their pinafores full of buttercups and daisies, and their little faces flushed with exercise and joy, nurse comes to take them to the house, for the dew begins to fall. Then Mamma Colbert proposes that all go to spend the evening with Fred Burling and Rosalie, who occupy Grandmamma Dunmore's summer home.

[Pg 132]

Thus the days pass until the summer is gone, and the snow comes and drives them all to the city.

Mamma spends only a month away, for papa can not leave his parish, and she takes them to see Grandpa and Grandma Halberg, and Aunts Ellen and Mary, who pets them very much; then they go to the great house in the avenue, and every thing is so new and beautiful, that the time goes very pleasantly; only sometimes as they drive through Broadway, and stop near the crossings, a little ugly-looking creature, with a broom, gets upon the steps of the carriage and asks for pennies, and when Jennie shakes her tiny hand at her, and says "go 'way, bad girl," mamma speaks kindly to her, and puts a great silver bit into the poor girl's hand, and when she has gone, tells Jennie that she must pity and be good to the little street-sweepers, for dear mamma was like that poor girl once. Then Jennie puts up her wee mouth, and says, "No, no, mamma," while she makes an ugly face at the vision of the child with the broom, and revolves in her bewildered mind what dear mamma can mean!

[Pg 133]

---

## NANNIE BATES,

### THE HUCKSTER'S DAUGHTER.

---

## NANNIE BATES.

---

[Pg 135]

## CHAPTER I.

It was little comfort life had ever brought to her, what with harsh treatment from a cruel father, and the woman's work that came upon her young shoulders, while her mother traveled up and down the streets with her basket of small-wares, trying to get the wherewithal to keep soul and body together. The lazy husband droned away the hours in the dram-shops, gulping down the hard earnings of his busy wife, or he staggered home with his reeling brain, to vent his ill-nature on the little pale thing that kept the house. It was "Nannie, do this," or, "Nannie, do that," or, "Nannie, mind the baby," all the live-long time, when he was sufficiently sober to know what was going on about him; and if the tired little feet loitered at all at his bidding, a wicked oath or a villainous blow hastened her weary steps. "What was she born for, any way?" She looked down upon the face of the sleeping babe whose cradle her foot was rocking, but it gave her no satisfactory answer. It was not a bright rosy-cheeked thing such as she met every day just round the corner, where she went to the pump for water! She must have been just so white and sickly,

[Pg 136]

for the bit of a looking-glass that she picked up from an old ash-barrel in the street gives her back no round and healthy cheeks, but the reflection of a meager, sad-looking face, that nobody can care to look upon! And they must always be so, both baby and she, for one of her teachers in the Industrial School told her that nothing could be strong and healthy without the sun, and there was never a single ray in that dreary basement.

Oh! no, they needn't be weak and sickly! A thought has occurred to her—she wonders why she never had it before! Perhaps father wouldn't like it if he should come home and find her away. But love for baby is stronger than fear of father, and so she tidies herself up as well as she can, and wrapping the little one in a piece of an old blanket, takes it out where it is the brightest and sunniest, and there she sits on the broad stone-steps of some great house, watching the merry children who play upon the walk, and wondering if she can ever hope to see dear little Winnie as joyous and happy.

"Look at that poor girl," said one of the gay children, stopping her hoop and touching her brother upon the back with her stick; "she's got a little baby in her arms just as big as sissy—hasn't she Willie? And only see what an old ragged blanket it has on! Haven't you got any nice clothes for the baby?" said she to the young girl, who had heard her, and was moving off with the wee child hugged closely to her breast—"because sissy has a great many, and I know mother can spare you one," and with that she ran up the steps, and pulled the bell as hard as she could.

[Pg 137]

"Oh! mamma," said she, all out of breath with haste and excitement, "there's a little bit of a baby out there, just like my sissy, and it hasn't any thing on its feet, and the old flannel rag can't cover it half over; won't you let me give it that one you put in the mending basket? It is so much bigger and nicer than that!" and the tiny arm was thrown caressingly around the gentle mother's neck, and the little lips were touching her cheek.

"Blessings on her swate heart!" said Biddy, rising, by her mistress' permission, to get the blanket. "'Tis never the like of ye'll come to want, so shure as my name's Biddy Halligan, an' ye so free in your benivolence. But where's the baby, faith?" said she, as she went down the steps holding the little girl by the hand.

"Oh! Biddy, what shall I do? she's gone, and now I can't give her the blanket!" and the disappointed child wiped her eyes upon her pinafore, and stood still upon the walk, while her nurse looked down the length of the street.

"Maybe that same is she," said Biddy, "with the brown bonnet upon the head, as is going round the corner by the the big grocery."

"Oh! yes, that's she," and little May brightened up, and walked as fast as she could to overtake the poor girl. They reached her just as she closed the door of the basement after her, and May hung back at first, half frightened as she looked into the dismal place; but Biddy encouraged her, so that she just ventured within the door, and handed the small parcel; then she would go home, for a vague feeling of evil haunted her timid mind in that dark and lone spot.

[Pg 138]

Nannie opened the bundle, and her eyes glistened as she saw the great square of soft flannel with a pretty silken border worked all around it. "They can't be bad people all of them that live in grand houses, as father says," thought she, "or they wouldn't have sent me this pretty thing!" She is so glad to get home before he comes, for now, perhaps, she can escape a scolding, and, common as cross words are to her, she shrinks from them. She will go out every day at this hour when it is pleasant, and then she will not be missed at home. "'Tis so nice to have that comfortable covering for Winnie, for now she can hide her scanty apparel, and she will look quite respectable and neat;" for Nannie has some idea of neatness, and really tries to better the condition of the family. She learned a great many good ways at the school, and she does not forget them, although she has not been since baby's birth, and they will tell greatly upon the whole of her life. There was a time when she did not care if the floor was all covered with heaps of dirt, and she would go out into the street with the rags flying all about her, and her hair in masses of thick tangles, and her face quite black and ugly. Now she scrubs up the room very often, and you never see any of the streamers hanging from her garments, for she mends them as well as she can, and she makes free use of the nice water that is a blessing of such magnitude to the poor. Her hair too is always glossy and smooth—no matter if she does have to wear a coarse frock, and an old and faded bonnet, they are whole, and that is far better than rags or dirt. She isn't a bit ashamed of them nor of her bare feet, for they are so white that the blue veins are plainly visible, and things are so much better than they used to be.

[Pg 139]

"This is a very pleasant morning, what with the nice little girl, and baby's new blanket!" and she went to fold it up and lay it in a safe place for the next day, when a rough hand caught it from her.

"What have we here?" said her drunken father; "embroidered, eh! that's good luck, indeed! I'll take it, child, it's just the thing, it will bring a good price!"

"Oh! don't, please don't sell Winnie's blanket, father!" pleaded Nannie; "it is all she has that's decent, and a good little girl brought it on purpose for her, please don't take that, father!" But the man was gone, and while the girl sat sobbing over her loss, he was greedily swallowing its price as he had done that of many a nice article before.

[Pg 140]



## CHAPTER II.

"Matches? shoe-lacings? buttons? only a penny a dozen, ma'am!" and the foot-sore woman presses her face to the basement windows, and holds up her wares with a strange pertinacity, even though the mistress of the mansion shakes her head many times, saying, "not to-day;" and turns to discuss some trifling subject as if there were not starvation and misery in the tones that are dying upon her ear. Heart-sick and desponding, the poor woman turns away, and renews her entreaties at the next neighbor's, perchance to be spurned again and again; for the cosy tea-hour has arrived, and husband and children are all gathered around the well-spread board, and it is annoying to be disturbed by beggars, now.

The pleading voice, and scanty raiment, and woe-begone expression, jar sadly upon the glad home-circle that is teeming with content, and plenty, and cheerfulness, and it is easier to send such forlornities off, and trouble yourself no more about them, than to break away from your own beloved and blessed ones to inquire into their condition with a view to comfort and relieve.

"For the love of heaven will ye buy something, sir," says the half-frantic creature, addressing a benevolent-looking gentleman who had cast a pitying glance upon her. The stars are hidden by dense black clouds which every moment threaten to pour out their fury upon the earth, and the quick tread of the people seeking the shelter of their homes awakens the wretched woman to a last effort, and she touches the arm of the stranger in her eagerness to secure his attention. "I have sold nothing this day, sir, and the two children at home waiting for the morsel that I have not to carry them—oh! buy something, sir, and the blessing of the poor be with ye!"

[Pg 141]

"Where do you live, my good woman?" asked the gentleman, half inclined to doubt her. He has so often been deceived by tales of sorrow and want which had no foundation; yet there is something in the present case that banishes his suspicions, and he follows her as she designates her abode. She hesitates, as they near the spot, for fear her husband would be at home in one of his abusive moods, for her woman's heart would fain cover up even her bloated and loathsome husband with its loving and forgiving mantle.

Was it best to tell him, or to persist in her obstinacy, and lose the chance of supplying her children's need? A mother's affection prevails, and with a sigh, she descends the steps, and opens the door of her miserable dwelling. Her husband has not returned—that is well; but what is the matter with Nannie? Leaning over her cradle and sobbing as if her heart will break, the girl sits, while the darkness and want are only made the more visible by a small bit of an offensive tallow candle that is stuck in a potatoe for a candlestick.

[Pg 142]

"Is it the child that is sick, my girl, or what has come over ye that ye moan and take on in that manner?" said the woman, advancing and holding the candle close to the infant's face—then perceiving that nothing ailed the babe, and supposing that the father might be the cause of the girl's grief, she said no more about it; but bade Nannie hand the stool to the gentleman who was standing with his back to the door while the poor woman scrutinized the child.

"And is this your home?" asked he, glancing around the damp, unwholesome apartment, and shivering even in the middle of the month of August. "Have you no husband, and do you depend upon what you sell daily from this basket for your living?"

If she told him that she had a husband, he would question her, and find out his degradation; therefore she said she was a widow, turning around to cross herself as she muttered softly, "the Lord forgive me the lie!"

"You must be but lately a widow," added he, looking at the tiny baby before him.

"Faith, sir, ye must pardon me, an' I will tell ye all, since it's ye would be taking the trouble to inquire of a poor body like me. Jim's been enticed away by bad companions until it's every thing we had has been pawned for spirits, and how could I tell ye 'twas my own husband that was once so good and kind to me, and he not so much to blame as the poor wretches that deal out to him the dreadful stuff!" and the afflicted woman hid her face against the wall and wept for very shame that the stranger should know her husband's folly. She was interrupted in her grief by the object of it, who stumbled into the room, kicking at the cradle-rockers as he came near tripping over them, and doubling up his fists with a show of fight as his eye fell upon the stranger.

[Pg 143]

"Isn't it m'own house I'm in, Molly?" said he, "and what business have you t' be taking in lodgers, and me the masther here!" and with that he made a dive at the gentleman, who arose and stepped quietly aside.

"Oh! Jim," said the woman, "'tis a kind friend who is aafter helping us, when I could sell nothing the day."

"Who talks of help? A'nt I able t' s'port m'own fam'ly, I'd like t' know?" muttered the drunken wretch, as he fell a loathsome heap upon the straw in the corner of the room.

The stranger gave a compassionate glance at the wife, who seemed ready to sink from mortification and sorrow, and putting some money into her hand for their present necessities, called Nannie to him, and looked steadily into her face one minute, and left without a word. The girl was in his mind, though, as he took the way to his solitary lodgings—for Mr. Bond was a bachelor.

She was not pretty, nor very prepossessing; but her expression showed depth and character, and she was worthy a better training. At any rate she must not be left to the tender mercies of that brutal man. He will help her to make her way in the world, not by a mistaken charity, but by teaching her self-reliance. She must be looked after. If Betty Lathrop had not been taken from him so early in life, there might have been a "Nannie Bond" to care for and teach, and perhaps Providence meant this for his charitable and acceptable labor. And Mr. Bond rubbed his great hands together, and sprang up the stairs to his chamber with a boyish step and a light heart. He had found something to do.

[Pg 144]

[Pg 145]

---

### CHAPTER III.

There was a neat carpet upon the floor, and two comfortable rocking-chairs in the room, one at each window, with nice plump cushions in them, and by a center-table, that had upon it a large family Bible, a copy of "The Pilgrim's Progress," an almanac, and the "Daily Times," was Mr. Bond's easy-chair. Nobody ever occupied that chair but himself, and sometimes a sleek, gray cat, that once belonged to Betty Lathrop, and would have had a joint ownership had Providence spared the mistress. Now it was his especial care, and he would sit motionless by the window for hours, rather than disappoint the favored puss of one tittle of her nap. There was a picture of a young woman over the mantle, which Mr. Bond thought a master piece of art, and which was the constant theme of his contemplation. It had a round, ruddy face, and upon the head was a sort of coiffure which our modern critics might eschew; but which Mr. Bond believed the very perfection of elegance. It was composed of loops of muslin disposed on each side over a profusion of brown curls which distended the head to an enormous width, and upon the top was visible a high back-comb which quite "capped the climax." The dress of the lady was black silk, sleeves "*à la mouton*," and a collar of muslin with a deep frill that reached nearly to the elbows. This was fastened with a yellow glass pin, the gift of Mr. Bond on his promised possession of the fair maiden who was to adorn herself with it. Before this portrait was many a moment spent in vain regrets that it was only the image of that which, but for an inscrutable wisdom, might have been his. A couple of glass lamps, and a thermometer formed the mantle ornaments, and a mailed figure of some Roman general in bronze, and a "Samuel" done in plaster, completed the luxuries of the apartment.

[Pg 146]

It was a cosey place to the Bachelor though! the sun had free access through the curtainless windows, and a merry time of it, it had playing upon the benevolent features of the good man, until many a little freckle stood out, as witness to its audacity. There was not a leaf in his neighbor's garden just below his windows, that was unfamiliar to him, and the three little girls that came out there to play beneath the trees, were always glad to see the kind face above them, for many a paper of sugar-plums fell from a capacious pocket that emptied itself upon the grass, and many a pleasant word floated downward, to make them happy. Oh! his was a nature to make a Paradise of any spot! so full of love toward every living thing! What if his landlady was fidgety and exacting, and called after him every time he entered the house, to wipe his feet, and when she went to make his bed, would go around shoveling up the dirt from the carpet muttering all the time about "some people's slovenliness?" What if his fellow-lodgers always managed to get his seat at table, and to eat up all the toast and muffins, before he was once helped, leaving him only the dry bread with which to satisfy a morning's appetite? What if the neighbors did torment him by continually stoning his poor cat every time she took a walk in the garden to breathe the fresh air, so that he was obliged to turn sentinel over the animal's pedestrian excursions? It wasn't any thing to grumble about, and so the peaceful man kept a sunny expression and a blessed and good heart, and his oppressors only heaped upon themselves disagreeable traits without moving him to a single murmur.

[Pg 147]

Mr. Bond did not seem to think it incumbent upon any body else to be kind, or attentive, or good. He had his own way of living and doing, and it mattered little to him if all the world went in an opposite direction, he kept straight on in his bright and pleasant path, and it brought him abundant joy and blessedness.

His cosey room was unusually beautiful and attractive as he returned from his visit to the lowly basement, and it was with a feeling of peculiar satisfaction that he seated himself by a window, with his feet on the sill and his arms crossed upon his breast, while he watched the vivid lightning as it glided swiftly about amid the blackened heavens. Oh! how the rain descended, as if to drown the very earth in its pouring fury. No wonder the good man heaved a sigh for the inmates of that dreary room, and fancied himself back in the dismal place, with the cataract of waters rushing down, until baby, and cradle, and stool were all afloat as upon the great deep. He could not bear it any longer, and so he took one of the lamps from the mantle, and struck a light, and lost himself in his newspapers.

[Pg 148]

[Pg 149]

---

### CHAPTER IV.

"It won't do, it won't do, Nannie," said the poor woman, wildly, as the accumulated drops streamed like a rivulet down the steps of their cellar; "we must manage to arouse your father, or

the morning'll never see him alive!" and she pushed and shook the inanimate clog that lay in the corner, while the torrent still flowed on, until fear for the child's safety made her quit her efforts with its father, and snatching the infant from the cradle, and bidding Nannie follow her, she rushed hastily out to seek help in order to remove her miserable husband. Not a creature was stirring, for the bitterness of the storm had driven every breathing thing under shelter. Still undaunted, she moves on, folding her thin and drenched garments around the babe, until a watchman stops her with a rude demand as to what calls her forth in the pitiless night? She heeds not his roughness, but pulls him by the coat, while he vainly endeavors to shake her off, and entreats him to aid her helpless husband.

"Where is he, woman? and what do you want?" asks the besieged man, as she continues to drag him along with a maniac's strength.

[Pg 150]

It is a long time that has elapsed since she left her threatened home, and the waves have found their victim. They are not affrighted at the hideous spectacle of a brutish and disfigured one, but they leap caressingly about him, gliding over his pillow and hushing him into a deep and lasting sleep. The empty cradle, and the stool, and the rough board table with the flickering light upon it, float above the flowing tide as the watchman enters the dismal cellar with the agonized woman and her children. She springs to the corner, and while he feels for the heavy mass with his club, she raises it with her tender hands, and supports the drooping head upon her loving breast, while a cry of anguish goes out from the heart that could never spurn him, even in his lowest moments.

It is not of any use to chafe the cold temple, nor to try to bring back the departed life! You'll be better without him, poor soul, though it is dreadful to feel that he has gone hence in his sins! No wonder Nannie shrinks away as the watchman, with the aid of one of his fellows whom a spring of his rattle brings to the spot, bears their father out on their way to the dead-house. He had never been kind to her since she can remember, and his coming has occasioned only a terrible fear and dread from day to day, yet she sobs out of sympathy for her mother, whose grief is fearful to witness.

They follow the corpse, and all night long the poor woman keeps her widowed vigils around the place where they have deposited her husband. She thinks not of the child upon her bosom, nor does she heed nor resist Nannie as she takes it gently away and runs back to the region of the overflowed cellar. The morning has dawned in serenity and loveliness, but there are signs of a late devastation all about. Broken limbs of trees are strewn hither and thither, while now and then one wholly uprooted lies prostrate across the street. Busy men are working hurriedly to extricate a poor family whose house a land-slide has quite buried. The mother and father have escaped the catastrophe, but their boy and girl are crushed in the fallen ruins. Deep gullies in the hill above her home show Nannie how fearful was the storm, and a mass of stones and rubbish that fill the sluice, that should have turned the water from their door, tell her the reason of their dreadful inundation. She is trying to think whether it *is* dreadful to her or not, when a kind voice accosts her. "What's the matter here?" says Mr. Bond; "and what are you and the baby out for in this soaking condition? Isn't your mother in the house, and haven't you a dry rag to put upon that poor child? 't will get its death, and you, too; come in here, quick, and let's see what can be done."

[Pg 151]

"If you please sir, father's drowned in the rain last night, and my mother's up by the dead-house, and me and baby haven't any home any more to go to, nor any dry clothes to wear," said Nannie, wringing the little frock that clung to the shivering infant, and following her friend half-way down the steps to the cellar.

"Just as I feared!" said he, looking into the room and quickly retreating; "the poor wretch has met a sudden and awful doom, the Lord preserve us all!" and, telling Nannie to keep up with him, he led the way to a higher and more healthy quarter of the street, and stopped at a tidy-looking house, where a neatly clad woman answered his rap. "You have lodgings to let?" asked he, glancing with an evident pleasure upon the white floor of the entry that showed no spot nor stain.

[Pg 152]

"Why, yes, sir," returned she with an uneasy look at the forlorn child and baby on the step; "there's a room and bedroom in the attic to let to respectable people as has no followers, nor drinkings, nor carousings, nor such like about 'em."

"Let me see them, my good woman," said Mr. Bond; "I'll make all right if they suit," and he went puffing up the three flights of stairs, while Nannie pattered after him with the infant, drabbling her wet garments over the clean floors, to the no small annoyance of the landlady. "These'll do, these'll do," said Mr. Bond, with a gleesome tone, as he looked from the windows upon the blue waters, where the boats were gliding busily back and forth, and whence the pure fresh breeze came up even into the rooms, giving them a healthful air. "This is to be your home now, Nannie, and you may be sure I'll help you to be somebody if you'll help yourself;" and, turning to the woman, he told her the reason of the child's pitiable condition, and payed her in advance a quarter's rent, giving her also some money with which to procure a dry suit for the children; and then he departed to send the few articles of furniture from their former abode, to which he added a bedstead and bedding, a nice cooking-stove, a couple of chairs, and a few other conveniences.

[Pg 153]

Nannie was almost beside herself for joy as she surveyed the snug and cheerful apartment, and the new goods as they stood in their respective places. The chairs were by the windows, and the stool occupied a prominent position before the new stove; the old table was covered with an oil-cloth, and a brass candlestick and snuffers were upon it. There was a pound of crackers, and a loaf of bread; and a pint of milk, and a new tin cup and pewter spoon for Winnie, and Nannie

hastened to give the starving child some of the fresh milk, while she sat beside the pleasant window wondering if Mr. Bond was one of the angels that her teacher used to tell her about—and then she laid the baby upon the soft bed in its cradle, and put a new blanket over it, and peeping into the bedroom again to see if she hadn't been dreaming there was a real bedstead there, all nicely furnished and dressed, she went off to seek her mother, locking the door carefully after her as her kind friend had directed.

[Pg 154]

---

## CHAPTER V.

It was hard to hurry him off so and to cover him up from the face of his own wife, even if he was a loathsome drunkard! But they couldn't keep him there long, for new victims were constantly arriving, and he must give place to them, and so they hustled him off in a deal box, without pall, or procession, or priest, and they did not mind the woman and child that followed on and stood side by side at the place of his burial; but they covered him over with the damp earth, and never a prayer above his head; and so they went away again, perchance to repeat the office for another miserable one.

"Mother," says Nannie, as the hardened band moved away leaving the one mourning heart by itself, "mother, come home now, 'tis no use staying here, and baby'll be crying for ye, ye know."

Baby!—oh! what a link to earth was that!

"Where is the child?" said the mother, with a frantic start, as if just awakened from a frightful dream. "Isn't she dead, Nannie? Didn't they just bury her with your father?" and she cast herself upon the moist turf, and tore her disheveled hair until the very wildness of her sorrow calmed her. Then she suffered Nannie to lead her away. It was a long distance; but they reached it at last, and the mother rushed quickly up the stairs, not seeming conscious of the change, as she heard the child's cries; for the poor little thing, unused to such long neglect, made all ring again with its screams.

[Pg 155]

"Did you say this was home, Nannie, or is it heaven, child?" said the woman, as her babe was hushed, and she became somewhat awake to her new position.

The sun was streaming upon the floor, and wall, and the snowy curtains were fluttering in the pure breeze, and the blue waves were dancing and sparkling in the bay, and white sails were moving rapidly about, and from the windows two beautiful islands were visible with their summer verdure, and the bewildered mother pressed her hand to her forehead, as if trying to unravel the mystery, when Mr. Bond's fat and merry face peered in at the door.

"All right," said he, with a glad smile, "how are you getting along here, eh? Rather better than the old cellar, isn't it, Nannie?" and helping himself to a chair, he took the baby from its mother, pinching its cheeks and chirruping to make it laugh, until even Mrs. Bates was forced into a more cheerful mood. But the tears would not stay long away, and as the memory of her loss came from her from time to time, she burst forth in a bewailing strain to her kind benefactor,

"Ye's too good to me, sir, and it's thankful to ye I am for it all; but it's my own husband that's taken suddenly from me, and ye'll not be minding the grief."

[Pg 156]

"I know all about it, my good woman," said he, the muscles about his mouth quivering with emotion. He was thinking of a green grave afar off, with a maiden name upon it, and a true heart moldering beneath. "But don't tell me any more, think of the living that have got to be cared for, and you'll have no time to lament the dead," and he chuckled the baby under the chin, and dandled it upon his fat knees, as if he had been used to it all his life.

"It's the Lord will reward ye, sir, for looking after the fatherless and widowed," said the woman, as she cast a thankful glance about the cheerful room, and then upon the benevolent face before her. "There'll be three witnesses for ye if ever we get to the blessed land, and sure ye'll not need them either, I'm thinking!"

"Never mind, never mind," said the kind man; "I like to help them that are trying to get up in the world, and you'll know where to find a friend whenever you are in trouble—I'll look in upon you once in a while to see how the children get on," and he handed her a card with the number of his lodging upon it, saying as he went out the door,

"Don't forget to send for Peter Bond, when you need any thing."

"Blessings on his big soul!" says the poor woman, as his retreating footsteps die upon the stairs. "It is like taking away the light, to lose sight of his merry countenance!"

[Pg 157]

---

## CHAPTER VI.

"Wake up, child," said the mother, giving Nannie a gentle shake; "the sun's high in the heavens, and it's lazing we are in our blessed bed."

No wonder they pull the nice spread over them, and sink down again upon the soft pillows, feeling that there could be no greater luxury on earth. "But it must not make them idle," Mrs. Bates says, and so Nannie jumps up and dresses the baby, while her mother prepares the breakfast.

Was there ever stove like that! There's a pleasant smell to the polish as it burns off, and the wood has such a crackling, cheery sound; and the hot steam from the Indian cakes sends forth an inviting odor as the brown sides are turned upward.

Never mind if it is midsummer! the windows are open, and the superfluous heat escapes, and the fresh air mingles with and tempers the warmth of the room, so that it is nice and comfortable; it is so much better and more wholesome than the damp, dark basement. There is a slight tinge upon baby's cheek already, and Nannie doesn't look quite so pale and sickly as she stands before the little mirror to brush her hair. "Oh! an attic's the place, mother! isn't it?" says she, as she danced about the room with Winnie. "We can breathe better up here, and Winnie'll grow stout and healthy, for the sun comes in here," and she smoothed her tiny palm over a bright beam that lay upon the child's head, and kissed it as if it were a living, grateful presence. Winnie, too, crowed, and jumped, and twisted her wee fingers in the warm rays, and seemed quite conscious that something great and good had happened to her. The mother participated in the joy, but as they sat down to a comfortable breakfast, and she missed the red features that had so long been opposite, her knife and fork dropped from her hands, and the food was salted with bitter tears.

[Pg 158]

"Mother," said Nannie, putting down her untasted cake, "ye'll be breaking your heart for the dead father, and then what'll Winnie and me do? I'll not eat a morsel till ye dry your tears and help me!" and she folded her hands and sat gazing upon her mother, with the drops in her own eyes, until she saw her make an effort to eat. It was a quiet meal, though, and soon over, and the child was left to tidy the house, while the mother went forth to sell her wares. She did not mind so much being repulsed now, for even if she failed to profit by her day's labor, there was a willing friend to fall back upon, so that there was no fear of starving; so, with a light step, she trudged along, and the people wondered what had come over the poor huckster woman.

[Pg 159]

There was such a winning, cheerful sound in her voice as she tapped at the window and said, "Any thing to-day, ma'am?" they could not let her go without purchasing something—a piece of tape, or a few pins, or a bunch of matches. It did not matter if they were at breakfast, father could wait a minute for his coffee, and mother would write an excuse for the children to take to school, so they open the window, and make their bargains, and hand out the pennies, and the happy woman goes tripping along, lighter both in basket and heart, and the breakfast has an uncommon relish, so all think as they gather around the table again. Charity is a capital seasoner.

[Pg 160]

---

## CHAPTER VII.

Mr. Bond sits beside his center-table with his legs crossed and his eyes fixed upon the portrait. He wonders what Betty Lathrop would advise him to do about the poor girl if she could speak. He hears a great deal about spiritual manifestations and communications, but he has no faith in them, and even if he had he wouldn't be guilty of disturbing a departed soul unless for something of great moment.

He thinks he reads her approbation of his conduct, thus far, in the mild eyes that seem to look encouragingly upon him. Good old man, it would puzzle the saints to find fault with any of thy pure impulses!

He wonders if Nannie ever went to school, and if she has read the Pilgrim's Progress? He'll take it round there some day, her education mustn't be neglected, and she can't be spared from Winnie to go to school now. He hasn't any body to care for, and why shouldn't he make those children his especial charge! Puss rises slowly from the rug, where she has been lying curled up this long time, shakes herself, and puts her two fore paws on Mr. Bond's knees, as if to remind him that he has something to care for and cherish, and then walks back again and puts herself in the old position, while her great orbs are rolled up at the master.

[Pg 161]

"It will not make any difference to you, puss," says Mr. Bond, leaning over and stroking the warm fur; "there's milk enough for you and Winnie too, and she'd have done it, I know," pointing upward to the portrait, as if the cat understood it all; then he took his hat and cane in his hand and went down stairs, stopping at his landlady's room to tell her "if a poor little girl with a baby should come to see him, not to send her away, but to let her go to his room and rest."

"Pretty piece of business!" said Mrs. Kinalden, as he left the house; "tisn't any beggars' brats I'll have tracking the dirt up my stair-ways, I'll warrant ye!" and she flourished her soup-ladle as if in defiance of all such encroaches upon her blessed domain.

Mr. Bond didn't hear nor see it, though, for his elastic step was away down the street, and if he had he would have thought it only Mrs. Kinalden's way, and would not have taken offense at it. There was so much that was bright and good in his own heart that he could not feel the ill that was in other people's natures, and his life passed as smoothly as if he were not continually subjected to petty annoyances from those about him who imposed upon his forbearance and amiability.

Earth was beautiful to him, and so was life; there had been but one dark spot in his whole existence, and that was when Betty Lathrop twined her young arms around his great neck and told him she must die.

[Pg 162]

Her grave was very green, though, and there were roses of his own planting around it, and a pure white lily; and there was a holy light always visible to him just above it, as of an angel with glorious wings hovering. He didn't feel as if she had departed wholly from him because he could not see her bodily presence, for he knew that the love was still with him, and this it was that shed such a halo all about his pathway, and there can not be sadness nor gloom where such a consciousness exists.

There are not many Peter Bonds in the world though!

[Pg 163]

---

## CHAPTER VIII.

Oh! what a gleesome time Nannie had all the long summer day up so near the blue heavens! There was a rapturous sort of joy in watching the fleecy clouds as they played in the pure ether, and, while baby slept, she would kneel down by the window with her head turned side-way upon her arm, and look into the depths of the sky until she fancied she saw the spirits beyond; and then her little soul would try to dream out the mystery of being and immortality. She didn't think so much of this in the damp dark cellar—every thing there seemed to draw her earthward; but it was exalting, and refining, and purifying, to be up so near the angels, and the change was manifested even in her face, which grew more spiritual, and was really quite winning now.

Her happiness was almost perfect as she contrasted the sad past with the bright present. There was only one thing more to long for, and that was books. She could read very well, but all the literature she possessed was Robinson Crusoe, which one of the ladies at the school had given her, and that she had learned almost by heart, so that she sung page after page to Winnie as she lulled her to sleep, and now she craved something more. She was thinking so earnestly about it that she did not hear Mr. Bond's knock, nor perceive that he had entered the room and seated himself by the other window, until he touched her shoulder with his cane across the table.

[Pg 164]

"Nannie," said he, as she started and asked his pardon for not noticing him, "I've brought a book to lend you; would you like to read it?"

A book! Who could have told him that of all things in the world that was what she most desired?

"Oh! thank you, sir," said she, as her eyes glistened for joy; "I'm so glad of it, sir!" and she turned the leaves and looked at the illustrations, while he watched her with a deep interest.

"She would know all that she need to know when she had read the Bible and Pilgrim's Progress." So Mr. Bond thought. He had not noticed that there was no Bible there. He forgot that there could be a person in the world destitute of the precious Word of Life, and he would have gone off without finding out Nannie's great need, if she had not reminded him of it as she turned to the explanation of the allegory appended to the work in her hand. "Oh! it tells about Heaven! doesn't it?" said she, looking at her kind friend with a sparkling eye.

"Haven't you a Bible, Nannie?" asked he, seeking vainly for one about the room.

"No, sir," replied the child. "We haven't had one for a long time. Miss Earl gave me one at the school, but my father took it."

[Pg 165]

Poor soul! no food for thee, while the world is teeming with the blessed Book! Tear off the gilt clasps, and the velvet bindings, and scatter the healing leaves that are hidden within, all about among the people. Let not one hungry one perish for lack of Heaven's bread while there is enough and to spare lying all about useless! "Her father took it!" What for? to learn the way to Paradise? Ah! no—to pawn for the hot liquid that must drown him in perdition. And the dealer in the dreadful traffic took it—dared to snatch from his fellow man the comforting words sent unto him by a loving God, and to substitute instead the poisonous and damning cup! Even Satan himself must loathe him! Mr. Bond sees it all—he knows where the Book has gone. But Nannie shall have another, and she must promise to study it every day.

"I'll send you one, Nannie," said he, "and a little stand to keep it on—d'ye hear?" and the kind man hurried off to get the holy volume. To think that he had not seen to that before! It was a moment of penitence to good Mr. Bond.

[Pg 166]

---

## CHAPTER IX.

It was nice for Winnie to sleep so sweetly! Now Nannie could look over the book. It was far before Robinson Crusoe! She went with Christian every step of his journey, and experienced the same joys, and suffered the same terrors. Oh! it was so good of Mr. Bond to lend her this book! She sat by the cradle with one hand upon it, so that if Winnie stirred she could hush her; and she did not see the long shadows in the room, nor remember that the fire must be made, and the

table prepared for tea, and the water brought, before her mother came, until it was too dark to read any longer. Then she started up and got the pail. She was almost afraid to go to the pump, for there were some very rude boys in its vicinity, and she had never ventured out so late before. But she must go; she was very wrong to put it off so, and she ran as quick as she could with a beating and timid heart.

"That's the new gal, as lodges in Mrs. Flin's house where the fat man goes so often," said a rough-looking lad to a ragged and dirty group, that huddled about the walk.

[Pg 167]

"Let's have at her," returned another, and suiting the action to the word, he flew along the street after the frightened child, with the whole troupe following him.

The little thing tried hard to out-run them; but 'twas in vain; they were close upon her, and one had kicked the pail from her hand, while another was about to tear the string from her neat sun-bonnet which he had snatched from her head.

"Be off, or I'll bate the life out of every mother's son of ye, an' my name's Pat Rourke," said a tall Irish boy who came up that moment, laying about him right and left among the little brutes, who scampered in every direction, not without a few wholesome bruises as witnesses to Pat's bravery. "Come on, my little girl," added he, taking Nannie's trembling hand, "I'll get the wather for ye;" and taking up the pail, he filled it, and carried it quite to the child's room. "It's a purty place ye have here," said he, looking from the windows, "and a nice little sister," as Nannie took the waking child from the cradle. "Here let me make the fire for ye," continued he, seeing the awkwardness of working with a baby in her arms, "and don't go to the pump again, Pat Rourke's the boy as'll get the wather, when he comes from the coal-yard o' nights; ye may put the pail down by the door in the enthy, an' its quickly ye'll find it filled;" and the noble-hearted boy stubbed out of the room, with his heavy boots clumping down, down, down.

"Every body's good to me," thought Nannie, the ill usage of the moment before quite forgotten in the joy at finding so kind a champion.

[Pg 168]

The room looked nice and cheery when Mrs. Bates returned. The new stand was in the corner, with the new Bible upon it, and the table was spread with a frugal, but wholesome meal; and Nannie seemed so bright, and the baby so sprightly and well. Besides she had sold all her wares, at a good profit, so that she was free from care for the time, at least. Nannie had a great deal to tell about Mr. Bond, and the book he had brought her, and of Pat Rourke, her manly protector; and the mother began to think the bright days were dawning upon them indeed! She didn't forget the sorrow that had so lately come to her; but there was a joy in the children that was infectious, and her smiles were more frequent than her tears.

[Pg 169]

---

## CHAPTER X.

Mrs. Flin seemed to her new lodgers to be a quiet kind of body, keeping her own house without minding much about her neighbors. The truth of it was she held herself a good deal above them, for she was well to do in the world. Besides she visited in the next street at the large white house with green blinds, where they kept a hired girl, and to be sure she didn't care for the people that took one or two rooms of her, and lived in a small way, save for the money they paid her; she was pretty sure to make them all a call once a quarter at least, and woe betide them if the rent-money was not forthcoming! She didn't call herself a hard-hearted woman; but she must look out for her own rights since Mr. Flin was off at sea the greater part of the time, and there was nobody to take the responsibility from her.

One thing troubled her considerably, and that was that such a gentlemanly-looking man as Mr. Bond should lavish all his favors and visits upon her poor lodger's children. She thought he might as well stop sometimes on the first floor and notice her little Sammy; but he never did—although she often met him in the entry, and invited him to walk in and rest before going up the long flights of stairs—but went panting upward with his gold-headed cane in his hand, and the ruffles to his shirt rising and falling at every ascent.

[Pg 170]

Sammy was a sad little rascal, and would throw apple-skins on the entry floor, and lay round pebbles on the lowest stair, hoping to trip the old man up as he came in or went out, and Mr. Bond caught him at it, so that he was always careful afterward to keep an eye to his feet. But the boy stood in his own light, for there were no favors for him after that. Mr. Bond never patronized wicked children.

His mother would manage to stand in the door, whenever she saw the gentleman coming, with Sammy by her side, and she would ask him if he wasn't fond of children, and tell him what a good boy Sammy was at school, and how well he got on with his lessons; and then Sammy must speak his last piece to Mr. Bond. But it would not do; he stood it all very patiently, and when she had the grace to leave space enough for him to pass her, he would make his bow and walk gravely on, glad to reach the shelter of the pleasant attic. Mrs. Flin laid it up against him, though, and threw out many an innuendo concerning his frequent visits to the poor children, when gossiping with her friend of the white house, and so it reached his landlady, Mrs. Kinalden, who knew Mr. and Mrs. Airly very well.

"A strange how d'ye do it is," said she to Mr. Bond, one evening on his return from Nannie's, "that I must keep my doors open till half past nine o'clock, for you to be out on your untimely visits to a poor widder! It isn't any sich doings Susan Kinalden'll countenance, you'd better believe!" [Pg 171]

Mr. Bond did not think her worth one moment's excitability, so he calmly told her she could find another occupant for his room if she was dissatisfied with his conduct, and he would seek a home elsewhere.

It was wonderful how changed she was when he went down to breakfast the next morning. There were hot eggs beside his plate, and a dish of warm toast, and the landlady was full of her compliments. "She didn't see how Mr. Bond managed to look so fresh and young! She was on the sunny side of fifty, and anybody would take him to be her brother!" and when he asked her what time he should remove his furniture, she wondered he had lived so long in the house with her and never yet found out her jesting propensities. She's sure she couldn't desire a nicer or more circumspect boarder than Mr. Bond! And so the matter passed over. She knew her own interest too well to venture on forbidden ground again. And he had got attached to the room, and did not care to leave it. The portrait had occupied that same space for more than ten years, and there was a sacred sort of feeling about the place that he could not find elsewhere. Puss liked her quarters too, and it was not worth while to seek a change so long as she didn't complain. Mr. Bond thought himself very foolish to have proposed such a thing, and he went from his breakfast and settled himself in his chair by his center-table, with a self-gratulation that he hadn't got to move after all. As for Mrs. Kinalden, she could scarcely forgive herself for incurring the risk of losing one of her best and most permanent boarders, and her night had been spent in bitter self-reproaches and regrets. The morning, however, compensated for the night of grief, when she felt that Mr. Bond—good soul!—overlooked it all, and was willing to stay. "It stands you in hand to mind your tongue, though, Susan Kinalden," soliloquized she, as she wiped the last dish and stood it up end-wise in her pantry. "It isn't the first time you've come nigh biting your own head off!" [Pg 172]

[Pg 172]

[Pg 173]

---

## CHAPTER XI.

"Come in, Pat; mother'll be glad to see ye," said Nannie, as he put the pail softly within the door, and was about retreating.

"Faith and that I will," said the woman warmly, opening the door wide, and setting a chair for the boy, who seemed nothing loth to enter.

It was pleasant to find a clean spot to sit down in after his day's labor, and the happy faces in that room had haunted him as a dream, too good to be real, since he had first seen Nannie and Winnie. His home was a disagreeable, shabby place, and his mother did not care to make it otherwise, and Pat felt it a great privilege to go occasionally to see his new friends. "It wasn't for nothing," thought he, "that I did the good deed by the girl; it's many a pleasant hour I've had here since that blessed night!" and he drew his chair up to the table where Nannie had the big Bible open reading aloud to her mother.

"I'll keep right on here where I was reading, Pat," said she, "because it's so beautiful," and she finished the description of the new Jerusalem in the Revelation of St. John. [Pg 174]

[Pg 174]

"That isn't for such as me, Nannie—is it?" asked the poor boy, who had sat with his chin in his hand listening intently while the child was reading.

"Oh! yes," answered Nannie; "you should hear Mr. Bond talk about it, Pat. I couldn't believe that any of us would ever live in such a beautiful place; but he says 'tis just as we have a mind; that if we are good in this world, and do every thing that we know to be right, and try to keep from what we feel is wrong, and love God, we shall go there when we die; and I'm sure it is worth trying for —isn't it, Pat?" and Nannie closed the Book, and placed it reverently upon the stand in the corner.

Her mother had been busy getting the supper, but she heard the words of the blessed volume, and wiped away a tear with the corner of her apron as she thought of him who could have no part in that glorious city. But she mustn't let the children see her weep, so she put away her sorrow, and stirred about, talking cheerfully the while, and Pat felt that there was no place in the world like that neat cosey attic, and that Nannie Bates's lot was one to be envied indeed.

He didn't know how long she had pined in the damp and dreary cellar with nothing bright nor pretty near her, and how bitter all her days had been until just before he had befriended her—after Mr. Bond had provided her new home—for she had never told him any thing of the past. Indeed she scarcely ever dwelt upon it herself, for there was so much gladness for her now that she forgot all about any other time, and so her cheeks grew round and ruddy, and nobody would have thought her the same child that sat upon the steps of the great house in — street one sunny day, some time before, with a pinched-looking little baby in her arms. Pat thought her the prettiest girl he had ever seen, and she fairly worshiped his great Irish face and the yellow hair that hung straight over his forehead. Winnie, too, would cling to him, and lay her little soft cheek to his red coarse face, and clasp her tiny arms about his neck, and play with the yellow locks as if they were the sunbeams themselves; and then she would jump and crow as he played bo-peep [Pg 175]

[Pg 175]



with her, and stretch out her wee hands and cry as he turned away and went tramping down the stairs. Pat knew how to win young hearts—there was always a cake of gingerbread in his pocket, or a stick of candy for Winnie, or a new rattle or something for Nannie, and both learned to watch for his coming with glad emotions.

He brought a rose-bush and a petunia for Nannie, and made a shelf for them by the window, and the beauteous buds came thick and fast, shedding out their fragrance in the sunny room, and making it still more delightful to Nannie. She would sit where the breeze wafted the pleasant odor to her, and, closing her eyes, fancy herself in Paradise, and she would watch the sun that she might catch every one of its warm rays for her plants.

She had never dreamed of getting so high up in the world as to have real flowers blooming in their own room. She thought such things were only for the rich; but she had yet to learn that there are many comforts and blessings that all may freely enjoy if they have only the taste and disposition, and that the poorest habitation may, at least, be made to bring forth the precious blossoms of hope and joy at the will of its inmates.

[Pg 176]

[Pg 177]

---

## CHAPTER XII.

"Oh! there's the poor girl with the baby, that lives in the cellar, Biddy!" said little May Minturn, a few weeks after she had given her the blanket. "See how fat the baby's grown!" and the child ran after Nannie, who was walking at a quick pace to avoid her, for she would gladly have hidden from her the fate of her gift; but May was not to be shunned, and she pulled at Nannie's shawl as she came up with her, and said, "Don't carry the baby away, I want to see her. Oh! she looks more like my sissy now, for she's got a little pink in her cheeks; but what have you done with the blanket? this isn't half so pretty as the one I gave you," and she looked inquiringly at Nannie, who had seated herself upon some steps to rest, and pulled aside the flannel that enveloped the babe, thus exposing its naked feet.

"Don't be offended, miss, and I'll tell you what became of it," said Nannie; "before Winnie had time to wear it once, some one took it from her and sold it. I sorrowed for it a great deal, but that wouldn't bring it back, and now Winnie must wear this one; 'twill keep her warm, but I know it isn't pretty."

[Pg 178]

"Are not you afraid in that dark room?" asked May, sitting down on the step beside the girl, and taking hold of the baby's hand.

"Oh! we don't live there now," said Nannie, in a gleeful tone. "We have a beautiful home way up close by heaven!" and she gazed up into the sky and felt how much further off she then was than in her new home.

"May I go there to see you?" said the little girl, "and will you go with me to heaven to see my brother a little while? Mamma says he's there, and I'd like so much to play with him!"

"But we can not go there till we die," replied Nannie. "I look up from my window sometimes until I think I see the angels, and then I almost want to fly right away to them; but Mr. Bond says God will take us when he wants us, and that it is wicked to be impatient."

"Did you see my Georgie up there?" asked May, drawing closer to Nannie, and looking still more earnestly at her. "He had on a white frock, with a satin ribbon around his waist, and he had curls just like mine and sissy's. If you say Georgie, Georgie, perhaps he'll answer you as he used to mamma. Don't you think God will take us pretty soon?" continued she, patting the baby's head, and leaning over to kiss its brow, "I'm all ready to go, and Georgie wants me, too."

"Shure, and the child'll be an angel before long, I'm thinking!" said Biddy, as May arose and took her hand to go home; "the mistress would be greeting sair if she heard all her little prattle."

[Pg 179]

Nannie gazed after the wee figure as it went up the street beside the nurse, and then she looked at the baby that was nestling its tiny head upon her bosom, and she felt that there was a sort of mysterious link between Winnie and the sweet child whose kiss was fresh upon her forehead. The feeling made her shudder, and she hugged her little sister closer to her breast, as she thought,

"Mayhap both may soon be wanted above!"

Home did not look so bright to her that evening. Something seemed to be threatening evil, and she sat listless and abstracted, when her mother came home, looking from the window. She did not even see her mother, until she put a hand upon each of her shoulders and asked her "if she was napping?"

"Oh! no, mother, I'm not dozing, and I'm not ill; but there's something coming to Winnie, I know there is. It isn't long that she'll brighten the house!" said Nannie, trembling with emotion.

"Don't be foolish, child," said her mother, after she had ascertained that her precious babe was sleeping sweetly in its cradle, "Winnie's growing stout and healthy, and it's thankful we should be, instead of fretting for fear there'll be sorrow to come."

Nannie shook her head mournfully, and took her knitting from the table, but her heart was more

busy with its sad reflections than were her fingers with the young babe's sock. She did not even notice Pat much that evening; but merely took the great apple that he handed her with a quiet "thank ye;" and then relapsed into her silent and thoughtful mood.

[Pg 180]

Pat would not stay to sit down, for Nannie had not seconded her mother's invitation, and the disappointed boy only lingered to take one peep under the curtain of the cradle of Winnie, and then went home to his abode with a downcast mien, and a slow gait.

[Pg 181]

---

## CHAPTER XIII.

Mr. Bond had not been to see them for a great while, and the cold weather was coming, and there were hard times in store for them, if they did not manage to get some sewing, or something to do. It was the first of November, and the breeze was no longer soft and bland, as it came from the blue waters upward into the little room, but it was fresh and chilly, and had a mournful tone, and Nannie got cotton and stuffed the windows tight to keep it out. There was but little fuel in the house, and scarcely any money for their next quarter's rent, and Mrs. Flin had been up a day or two before to warn them that they must leave if the funds were not ready by a certain time. Mrs. Bates had fallen down stairs by means of one of Master Sammy's round pebbles, and lamed herself, so that she was no longer able to trudge about with her basket, and where she had applied for sewing, they told her there were more applicants than work, and so she did not know what to do.

"To-morrow's rent-day, Nannie," said she with a sigh, "and I have but a dollar put by toward the twelve. I shall have to send you round to see Mr. Bond, child, and it's me that's ashamed to do that after all he's done for us; but it can't be helped! It's unfortunate we've been the last month, and shure he'll not be blaming the Providence as brought it to us!"

[Pg 182]

So Nannie put on her old hood and cloak, and went timidly up to Mrs. Kinalden's door. The old lady's aspect was rather forbidding, as she answered the bell, and found only a beggar child had summoned her from her dinner-pot, and she was about to slam the door in her face, when Nannie said,

"It's Mr. Bond I'm wanting to see, ma'am, if you please."

Mrs. Kinalden would have been glad to send the child away; but she remembered the past, and dared not venture; so she told her to be sure and wipe her feet clean, and then she ushered her up stairs to the bachelor's-room. Nannie knocked softly, and as she heard a faint voice say "Come in," she opened the door and entered. One glance revealed it all. Mr. Bond had been sick—very ill—and she had never once been to inquire about him. He sat propped up in his easy-chair, with a flowered dressing-gown about him, and his head against a pillow, and there was a warm fire in the fire-place, and bowls standing about with bread-water, and gruel, and arrow-root in them—and labeled vials were upon the table, so that she felt he had really been in some danger. Besides, his face was thin and pale and wrinkled, and she would scarcely have recognized him as the fat jolly old man who used to have hardly a lap for little Winnie to perch upon.

[Pg 183]

"Oh! it's you, Nannie, is it?" said he, with the same pleasant tone as of old, and with one of his broad, beaming smiles that played over his hollow cheeks mockingly. "Didn't come to see your old friend all these three weeks, and he too ill to get off from his bed. He wouldn't have served you so, Nannie, that he wouldn't!" and he looked half reproachfully, half jestingly at the serious face of the young girl.

"And we were all the time wondering if ye'd deserted us, sir," said Nannie, as she stood by the table twisting her apron over her finger; "and never a word of your illness did we hear, or the days would not have slipped away and we not have been to ye! Maybe ye were needing somebody to nurse ye, and ye lying alone here with no hand to give the medicines?" and she looked inquiringly at him.

"Mrs. Kinalden has been as attentive as she could be with her cares, Nannie," replied the patient old man; "but the pillows would have lain a little easier if a little girl that I know of had come in sometimes to shake them up for me, and perhaps the bed would have been softer for making over once in a while." How quickly the old hood and cloak went off, and the nimble hands shook and beat the sick man's bed until it was as plump as a partridge—and she put on the clothes so smoothly that there was not a wrinkle in them; then she arranged the glasses and vials nicely upon the table, and washed the spoons, and warmed him some gruel, and she read a psalm to him, and then donned her things again to go; but she hadn't said a word about the need at home, and perhaps she would not have remembered it until she had returned to her mother had not Mr. Bond said, "Nannie, how are you getting along now? Let's see, to-morrow's rent-day, isn't it? and hard times, too. Hand me the wallet out of that desk there, child, I must see you through this cold weather," and he counted out twelve dollars and tied them in a corner of her handkerchief. "So your mother's not able to go out any more," said he, as Nannie told him of the trouble. "Well, we'll see what can be done; you mustn't suffer, d'ye hear? and mind you come every day to make my bed while I'm sick, 'twill save Mrs. Kinalden some work—and I guess 'twill suit me better," added he, as he glanced at the inviting-looking nest that had not before shown its proper proportions since his illness. "Here, take this orange to Winnie," said he, as the child moved

[Pg 184]

toward the door; "I'll be round there in a few days," and he looked brighter than he did a half hour before. "I wonder what there is in a child's presence to make things so sunny," thought Mr. Bond, as the young girl left the room. "Her little hands seem to have glossed over every thing they touched, and the gruel had a relish that that old woman could never give."

It was willing hands that made the difference, good Mr. Bond. A sick bed's a hard place for one who has no kind and voluntary attention. Call in experienced nurses and skillful physicians—pay them more than the half of your substance—send out for all the luxuries a diseased palate may crave—it won't do, Mr. Bond, it won't do; there needs a loving heart to anticipate all your wants, and a tender hand to bathe the fevered brow and smooth the uneasy pillow, and a low sweet voice to whisper soothing words in your ear; then it's a sort of pleasure to lie so languid and careless, and watch the gliding motions of your quiet nurse, and feel that you are getting on so comfortably.

[Pg 185]

Mr. Bond didn't need to be told all this; he felt it, as day after day, during his convalescence, the little feet came tripping up the stairs, and the child's glad hands ministered unto him; and, after she had made all tidy and had gone out and closed the door softly behind her, he would lie gazing at the youthful features of the bonnie lassie upon the wall, and wonder how many more times he should be so near her, and yet not be permitted to go. "Mustn't be impatient," that's what you told Nannie, isn't it, Mr. Bond? there's a great deal for you to accomplish yet in your master's vineyard before the reward comes; the walls are broken down all about, and there's many a tender vine exposed to the wild boar and the beasts of the field, and it is for you to help repair the breaches before you go hence to rest from your labors.

[Pg 186]

---

## CHAPTER XIV.

Pat had not seen his old friends for many days, for Nannie was a good deal out with the basket now her mother was confined to the house, and, somehow, her manner toward him the last time he was there made him feel shy, as if he was not wanted there any more. Still the pail was filled as usual, and stood beside the door, with many a nice and pretty thing for the baby. Mrs. Bates wondered why she never heard him come up the stairs now, and if he had got tired of playing with Winnie, and if his own home had grown more pleasant. She didn't know how often he had put his ear to the key-hole to see if he could hear one of baby's gleesome laughs, or the sound of Nannie's voice reading aloud, or talking to her mother. Nannie caught him this time, though, as she returned from her labors, and the boy's face grew redder still, as if he had been detected in some mean act, but her good-natured smile reassured him, and he found his tongue.

"It's listening for Winnie I am," said he, "and I've not seen her swate face the week."

"But, Pat, why haven't you been here this long time?" asked Nannie, opening the door and leading him in as if he were a child.

[Pg 187]

Pat felt that she would think him very foolish if he told her the reason of his absence, so he kept silent, but he was happier than he had been for many a day, as he sat in his old seat with Winnie snuggled close to his breast. Winnie reciprocated the delight, but her demonstrations were very violent; she slapped Pat's face with her rosy palms, and pulled his hair, and bit his fingers with her aching teeth, forgetting the while the painful gums that had made her so wearisome all the day.

Nannie was uncommonly cheerful, for all was right now, and Mr. Bond was well enough to visit them on the morrow, and Pat was back again, and they were to remain in the pleasant attic for another quarter at least, and mother had some work that promised a good profit, so there was no pressing want upon them just now. Mr. Bond had sent some shirts to be made against the summer. He did not like the common way of bestowing charity. He always required an equivalent for what he handed out. He would not have Nannie grow up with the feeling that she was a beggar, so he found something to be done, and paid good round prices for the work. Mrs. Bates stitched so busily, thinking he needed the garments all the while. She didn't quite understand Mr. Bond, though! It didn't matter to him if there were piles on piles of pure white linen in his great trunks. What if somebody did get the good of them after his death! he did not care to take his worldly treasure with him, but was quite willing to leave a goodly portion for the benefit of others; besides, many a worthy man owed his prim Sunday suit to those same heaped-up chests, and it would have done you good to see the broad ruffles bedecking the sons of Erin as they escorted their sweethearts to vespers. They would cross themselves, and murmur a prayer for the "masher," heretic though he was, and they knew they would get him out of Purgatory, if masses and penances would avail. As for Nannie and her mother, it was dangerous to say a word against their benefactor in their presence. Nobody had ever dared the thing excepting Mrs. Flin, and she would not encounter such a belaboring of tongues again for all the bachelors in the world. Pat, too, was his most enthusiastic admirer, for he had encouraged his going to spend his evenings in the neat attic rather than crawl to his own miserable abode to be contaminated with the fumes of rum and tobacco, and the scurrilous example of his abandoned parents.

[Pg 188]

It was a wonder to the good man that there could be a spark of virtue in the boy's character, and that he had been so far preserved from the taint of his vile home as to care for the purity of his gentle neighbor's. He did not remember how beautiful the contrast must be to Pat as he came

from his mother's den of infamy, where rags and dirt prevailed, to the neat and cleanly dwelling, and the pure, bright, happy faces of Mrs. Bates and her two children.

It wasn't his fault that the woman who had dared to take upon herself the sacred name of mother, had spurned the terrible responsibility consequent upon that assumption, and cast her children from her bosom out into the wicked world, with never a care, nor a blessing, nor a prayer; it wasn't his fault that his infant soul had been even more pitifully neglected than the uncared-for body; it wasn't his fault that the little hands were taught to fight and steal rather than lift themselves up toward a gracious father to invoke His love and blessing, or that the words of blasphemy were frequent on the lips that were made for prayer and praise. He could think of a time when his childish knees had bent before the good God, of whom a kind friend had told him, and his own mother—who should have been prostrate beside him in penitence for her sins both against him and her Maker—shouted her ribald songs even in his unwilling ears. No wonder Mr. Bond thought it strange that Pat had any yearning left for the good and the exalted. But his heart did heave mightily beneath the mass of corruption that his own parents had heaped above it, and he felt it gradually loosening, so that the Sun of righteousness gleamed upon it, though dimly. It was something to have even that faint light to show him the loathsomeness of his condition, and it helped him wonderfully in his efforts to cast the burden wholly from him. It was no mystery to him that "Christian" felt such a relief when it was quite gone, and that he hastened onward toward the end of his journey with a light and free step. It was not for nothing that the poor boy helped Nannie Bates in the hour of her need, the blessing was coming, life was just beginning for him.

[Pg 189]

[Pg 190]

---

## CHAPTER XV.

It was a bitter cold day, and the winds whistled through the cordage of the shipping and came moaning up, beating against the corked windows; but it was of no use they could not get in, for Nannie had stuffed the cotton in all the cracks as tight as she could, so that there was not even a crevice left, and they had to go whirling back again to play their old tricks among the rigging of the vessels. Oh! it was so pleasant to watch the dark waves as they tossed and foamed, while the boats bounded buoyantly over them. Nannie did not care for the frost, nor for the fresh chill breeze, for the stove was red with warmth, and she had not to go out that day. Mr. Bond was coming, and she had a holiday. Now and then her face grew a little long as she thought "perhaps it might be too cold for him to venture out;" but it was round and cheery again as the sound of his well-known step was upon the stairs.

"Heigh-ho, here!" said he, as little Winnie crept toward him and clasped her tiny arms around his leg; "hasn't forgotten its old friend, has it?" and he lifted the child up, seating it upon his shoulder as he moved toward a rocking-chair. "Not quite well, yet, ma'am," replied he to Mrs. Bates' inquiry after the state of his health. "This north-wester's rather too strong for me now;" and he panted, and put Winnie down while he took off his mufflers. "Had to wrap up well this cold day, you see, but couldn't disappoint these little folks;" and he patted Winnie's head and re-instated her upon his knee. She did not keep slipping off as she used to do before Mr. Bond's illness, but had a very comfortable seat now, and her hands remembered the full pockets they had so often rifled, and went rummaging about to see if the times were unchanged.

[Pg 191]

The goodies came tumbling all about the floor, and the old man was as merry as the children who scrambled after the sugar-plums—Winnie cramming her little mouth until they tumbled out again for want of room. "How do the shirts get on, my good woman?" said Mr. Bond, as he watched the needles flying through the snowy cloth.

"I'll have 'em for ye before long, sir," replied Mrs. Bates, hastening her stitches as fast as she could; "I'd spare the time from my sleep rather than ye should be wanting them, sir."

"Oh! never mind, never mind," said the kind man; "I'm not in any great need, only there's plenty more work when that's done. Where's Pat, Nannie?" continued he, addressing the girl who was minding Winnie; "does he come often to see you, and do you read to him, too?"

"He'll be here the day to see ye, sir," answered Nannie, with a joyous expression; "we've got most through the Progress, and we read in the Bible, too, every day, and Pat's as good a boy now as ye'd wish to see."

[Pg 192]

"He's got a sad home, Nannie," said Mr. Bond, "and his father and mother'll pull him down again if they can, but we must help him to stand upright. I depend upon you, Nannie," and he looked at her as if he thought there was great might in her aid.

"It's little I can do, sir, save the reading," said she, looking slightly grave, as if too much was expected of her.

"But you can keep him from bad associates," replied her benefactor, "and the half is done then. He loves this quiet place, and you can make it pleasant to him here, so that he will see how much happier it is to live peacefully and Christianlike than to be carousing and drinking as they do in his own home. Poor Pat!" continued he, gazing thoughtfully into the fire, "it's been a sad life to him, but the good is to come."

Nannie thought it had been a sad life to them all until Mr. Bond found them out, but she felt that the future would be bright enough if they might see his kind face once in awhile, and she did not trouble herself with the past now, that was all over, and the days were as merry as merry could be. To be sure her basket was heavy, and her feet weary almost every day, but what cared she for that so long as she could come to so glad a home, and have only kind words and loving faces about her. Mr. Bond did not worry much about Pat after he saw his frank face peering in at the door. "Come in, Pat," said he, as the lad shuffled forward to greet him. "I'm glad to see you, my boy!"

[Pg 193]

"It's much changed ye are with the sickness," said Pat; "but ye're the same in your heart, I'll ever believe."

Pat was greatly changed, too, his friend could plainly see that as he scanned the boy's features. He had grown so manly, and seemed to feel such a self-respect—not a bold, disagreeable assurance, but a sort of rough, unassuming dignity that was both pleasant and becoming. He did not sit down with his hat on, and his chair tilted backward, and chatter and jabber as if he were of quite as much importance as his benefactor, but stood respectfully, with uncovered head, and answered Mr. Bond's questions modestly and politely, and waited to be asked before he made himself at home in the presence of his superior.

A very pleasant time they all had in the nice attic, and they dwelt upon it for many days afterward with a peculiar pleasure. It was not often that Mr. Bond could come to see them now, for he was not as strong as before his illness, and the snow came early to keep him in also, and Nannie consoled herself by enumerating his virtues to Pat, who quite agreed with her that "he was fit to be a saint."

[Pg 194]

---

## CHAPTER XVI.

You need not step softly to-night, Pat, though the baby is sleeping. She will not hear your heavy boots, tramp they never so loudly up the stairs. Never mind the doll you have in your hand for her—her eyes will not open to look upon it. Lift the latch quietly, though, for there is grief in the room, and noise comes harshly and gratingly upon a sorrowing ear. Nannie can not look up to greet you, neither can her mother welcome you now, though your silent presence may be grateful to them both. Winnie does not spring up in her cradle, with her merry laugh, and stretch out her little hands toward you. She will not twine her wee fingers in your yellow locks any more, nor try to pick the big moles off your hard hands. She is lying very still upon her soft pillow. Her nicest white dress is smoothed down on her tiny form, and her hair is parted upon a marble brow. There's a little coffin on the table, and you know who is to occupy it; but it is too sudden, too dreadful for you to realize at once! Do not try to take her up, nor warm the cold cheek against your own burning face. The blood is quite chilled in the blue veins, and the limbs fall passively down. There's a bud from Nannie's bush in one hand, but she does not hold it first to your nostrils and then to her own, with her cunning little ways, as she used to do. Do not ask them how it all happened; how can they tell you, and their hearts almost breaking? They did not even hear the angel's wings as he came to bear away the sweet babe. All they knew was, that there was a convulsive movement of the little limbs, and then they were rigid forever.

[Pg 195]

There's a terrible gloom all about, and it oppresses them with its strange weight; but they hardly know that the baby is gone from them. Is she not there in the cradle, as she is every day at this hour, and are they not all very quiet for fear of disturbing her? Or, are they all dreaming, and is a horrible nightmare upon them, from which they vainly strive to arouse themselves? Pat can not see Nannie so listless, and so white, with the vacant stare, and not speak to her; so he goes round by the side of the cradle where she is, and hands her the doll. "It's for Winnie," said he, and the big drops fell from his full eyes upon her hand. There's great power in sympathy, and Nannie can weep now; so can the mother, and there comes a sort of peace over the group, that was not there before. Nannie gets up and gathers all the little playthings together and puts them away with the doll; but it is too much! it gives the place such a forlorn aspect; and she takes them out again and scatters them, as if it would bring Winnie back, too. The night is very sad, and so is the morrow; and the next day Mr. Bond comes with a minister. Winnie is lifted into the narrow coffin, and a fresh bud graces her breast. Mr. Bond stands a long time gazing upon her white, white brow, and he fancies he sees a hallowed impress there, as of a Divine hand. He can not help his strong emotion. Wasn't Winnie getting deeper and deeper down into his heart every day, and can he see the little head that lay so often upon his bosom, covered with the cold earth! The minister thinks her very lovely, as she lies there so free from spot of sin, and he almost wonders they can weep over her early release from a world of effort, and toil, and care; but he knows what a struggle it is to give up a parent's richest possessions, for there are little ones that used to call him father, now lying beneath the snow, and he weeps with the afflicted, as he reads the burial-service over their darling.

[Pg 196]

There needs but one carriage for the mother and Nannie, and Mr. Bond, and Pat; and the little coffin is placed on a seat in the middle. They can not leave it until it is hidden from their sight.

[Pg 197]

## CHAPTER XVII.

"Nannie must go to school," said Mr. Bond to himself the day after the child's burial. "It won't do for her to stay there moping and pining after little Winnie! The baby's gone, and it won't bring her back again."

And so it was settled that she was to begin the next Monday. Mr. Bond thought it better that she should go to the parish school immediately in her vicinity, and connected with the church which he attended—not that he wished to free himself from the slight tax demanded by private teachers, for many a comfortable donation ten times the worth of so small a pittance, found its way into the parish treasury from his liberal purse. Oh! no, that wasn't Mr. Bond's reason. He knew that the child would be under a good and religious influence there, for besides being well taught, she would be daily gathered with the rest of the little lambs into the consecrated chapel, and be made to feel that her moral culture was of still greater importance than the mental. Besides he liked to know that she was under the eye of some good shepherd who would lead her safely on to the great and ever green pasture. It would be so pleasant to him, too, to see the object of his benevolence and care Sunday after Sunday, pattering up the broad aisle to her seat, and joining in the solemn and beautiful worship. He didn't believe she had ever been to church in her life; he ought to have inquired into that before. Poor Mr. Bond! here was another subject for penitence. So much as he thought of such privileges and blessings for himself, too! He was afraid he was not fit for such a responsibility as the one he had assumed! Well, the minister would help him; that was a comforting thought.

[Pg 198]

Nannie was delighted at the idea of studying. She had a quick and inquisitive mind, and she looked at the little parcel of books that her good friend brought her with a glad eye, and when Monday came she took her satchel, and long before the hour, was on her way to school, with a quick step and a buoyant expression.

There was no task in getting her off to her books, as there is in many a case where advantages come more lavishly. She felt that the blessing was too great to be sufficiently estimated. Her teacher long ago had told her that whatever of knowledge was gained in this world would not be lost, but that if rightly applied, it would make her spirit brighter, and fit it for a continually increasing and glorious expansion in the life to come; and she had wisdom enough to know that every intellectual acquirement was adding to the talent intrusted to her, and thus honoring the gracious Giver. So she determined to strive earnestly to improve her new privileges, and thus repay her benefactor as well as adorn her own mind.

[Pg 199]

The morning was very beautiful as she tripped along in the pure snow. The flakes had fallen thick and fast the day before, and now lay in feathery heaps all over the trees and fences and trellises, and there was but just a narrow path for her feet to tread upon. Men and boys were all about with their shovels, busily working, and the pure mass was tossed quickly from the walks. Snowballs were flying at the peoples' heads, and many parties were already moving briskly over the smooth surface, and the bells were jingling gayly, and there was a healthful glow upon every body's face.

Nannie couldn't feel very joyous, for she thought of the little form that lay so still and breathless under the tiny mound; but the scene before her inspired her with cheerfulness, and she trudged on trying to be happy with the rest. She was just before May Minturn's door—she could not forget the house—hadn't she sat on those steps with dear Winnie, and hadn't little May spoken kindly to her, and kissed baby, too? It recalled her sister to her so vividly that the tears would not be stayed, and she let them flow. Just then the door opened, causing her to look up; there was a black crape tied to the bell, with a white ribbon, and she knew that either May, or the little sissy that she used so often to speak of, was dead.

"Is that for May," asked she, as Bidly spoke softly to her from the top step; and she pointed to the funeral emblems that were floating in the wintry breeze. "And may I see her, Bidly?"

[Pg 200]

"Shure, and that ye may," said Bidly, "and it's Winnie she was calling the day she died, jist before the life left her swate body; and how is the babby?" asked she, as Nannie followed her to the drawing-room.

"She's gone where May is," replied the sister, suppressing her sobs as far as she was able; "I knew they'd be wanted there!" and she stopped for the nurse to admit a little more light into the darkened room.

How beautiful little May was in her quiet repose! She lay upon the sofa with her soft curls falling over the calm forehead, and flowers covered the pillow, and her hands were folded upon her gentle breast as if they had done all their little work on earth.

Mrs. Minturn had seen Nannie enter the room, and she knew her as the child May had so often spoken about, and she went softly in where they were and stood beside the sofa, so pale and calm in her sorrow that Nannie was almost frightened. She noticed Nannie as she kissed the still sleeper, and smoothed down the silken hair lovingly, and she severed one beautiful lock and laid it in the poor girl's hand. Bidly had told her mistress of Winnie, and she had felt that the two children were as sisters in that Spirit land, and so she spared the precious curl. Oh! how Nannie treasured it. It seemed such a sacred thing to her to possess something that the finger of death had hallowed, and when she went home she folded it in a soft paper and put it within the cover of the big Bible, and often she drew it reverently forth, in after years, as she dwelt upon the two

[Pg 201]

## CHAPTER XVIII.

Mrs. Bates sat alone in the quiet room, sewing all the day, while Nannie was at school. It was so very still that it was oppressive to her. Winnie's cradle occupied the same spot as when the babe was in it—she could not put it out of sight; and the little garments hung about the room on the pegs in the corners. The wintry sun came faintly in and shone upon the pillow of the tiny bed, and the mother, ever and anon, cast her tearful glances to the spot that was consecrated by the sweetest of memories. A rag-baby, that had shared Winnie's affections as well as her pillow, still lay within the sheets, as the child's hands had often placed it. The tin cup and spoon were upon the mantle, and the playthings were gathered into an old willow basket, their wonted receptacle when Winnie was there to use them. How often had she pulled them, one by one, from their resting-place, and then restored them with an untiring interest, only needing occasionally an encouraging glance from mother to keep her contented by the hour together! It seemed to Mrs. Bates as if she must still look up from her needle to give the child some frequent sign of her care and love, but as her eye fell upon the vacant space, it was almost too much for the overcharged heart, and it required all her energies to master her grief sufficiently to keep about her accustomed duties.

[Pg 203]

The poor have little leisure to nurse their sorrows: there was Nannie left to toil for, and it was unfitting her for her necessary labors to give vent to the rising anguish, therefore she choked back the bitter sighs and tears, and plied her needle diligently, trying to think only of the mercies left her. She had still plenty of work. It was wonderful how many friends Mr. Bond had who could supply her with employment. There were little dresses, and pinafores, and numerous other small articles of clothing, always ready for her. She did not know how many a needy household owed its replenishing to this same stock of ready-made clothing which good Mr. Bond kept constantly on hand. He did not wait to see whether such and such a thing would be needed before he had it made, but wherever he found a ragged child he sent a suit from his well-stocked wardrobe, and an abundant blessing flowed back upon him, repaying him an hundredfold for clothing the naked and destitute.

Mrs. Kinalden once in awhile caught sight of the miniature suits through the brown paper envelopes that, somehow, got torn on their way to the batchelor's room, and her indignation knew no bounds.

"It's a shame and a disgrace," said she to herself, "that he should tarnish my house with such things, and then have the boldness to look me in the face!" But luckily for her, she only said it to herself, and Mr. Bond, conscious of his own integrity, kept on his even way, scattering blessings wherever he went, and never imagining that his very Christian deeds were the occasion of many an unjust query on the part of his curious and suspicious landlady.

[Pg 204]

She, poor soul! fumed and fretted inwardly until the gloss and shine were quite gone from her widowed cheeks, leaving them really sallow and wrinkled. There's nothing like a contented, happy disposition, Mrs. Kinalden, to preserve one's youth and beauty. You need not brush up your fading charms before your tell-tale mirror, and try to restore your lost luster by artificial means; it won't effect any thing. The fact is, the trouble is internal. You must cleanse first the inner man of the heart, and you will be surprised at the reflection of your own face then, it will change into such a mysterious winsomeness! Never mind Mr. Bond's actions—they can not lie at your door, but take care that your own are as free from taint as your inexplicable neighbor's. It is not for you to see the hidden motives that govern those about you; the best way for you is to think favorably of every body, and you have no idea how much peace and comfort it will bring to your own soul.

Mrs. Bates had never dreamed of questioning her benefactor's deeds, they showed their uprightness upon the very face of them, and she had no fellowship with her gossiping neighbors, to whose flings she could not always be deaf. Mrs. Flin began to be more social, much to her regret, for she had little sympathy with her loquacious guest. What was it to her if the Airly's did keep a span, and drive out every day? she was willing Mrs. Flin's friends should accumulate riches, and enjoy them, too, if she did live in an humble attic, and stitch from morn till night for her daily bread. What if Mrs. Airly had a new silk, spring and fall, and was getting in with such good society? It did not make her a whit the less thankful for her scanty yet neat wardrobe, nor for the few friends it was her fortune to possess. She didn't mind if Master Sammy was to go to a select school! She had all confidence in Mr. Bond's judgment concerning Nannie, and rejoiced that she could feel so easy as to the child's moral culture. She didn't care for Mrs. Flin's foolish prattle about her great acquaintances, and her own future anticipations of a higher station. It was not half of it that she heard; but if one sly innuendo was sent at the good man to whom she was so much indebted, there was a determined look that cowed the slanderous tongue before it could speak out its full meaning. Oh! what a relief was it to the poor widow to see the last of Mrs. Flin's bombazine gown floating out the door, and to be sure that she was free from a repetition of the annoyance of her company, for the day at least.

[Pg 205]

The thought of her angel child, and the solitude of her quiet home accorded better with her sad and contemplative mood, than the foolish clatter of her simple neighbor's gossiping member, and

---

## CHAPTER XIX.

"Oh! mother," said Nannie, throwing her hood upon the table and brushing the hair off from her flushed forehead, "school's so nice! Miss Coit's one of the dearest ladies; and she says I'll be one of her best scholars if I keep on as I've begun; and we have such beautiful singing, and Christmas is 'most here, and then we are to have a tree hung all over with presents for the children! Won't it be grand, mother?" and she laid her hand on her mother's arm to force her to stop working and attend to her.

"Yes, yes," said Mrs. Bates, "it's glad I am for ye, Nannie; but what's that in your hand, child?" taking the paper and looking upon the little curl within.

"Oh! mother," replied Nannie in a sad tone, "it's May Minturn's, she that loved our baby, and she's gone where Winnie is; and her mother's such a pale sweet lady! She gave me this, because she said May and Winnie are as sisters up in heaven."

That was such a pleasant thought to Mrs. Bates. She was too sensible a woman to wish to do away with the distinctions which are productive of much good in this life, but it was a happiness to feel that in the other world, the good and pure could all mingle as brethren; that despoiled of the external marks of roughness which make so much difference here, the spirit could appear in its real loveliness so that it would be neither loathsome nor repulsive. She did not expect those who were fitted by the advantages of education and refinement for a high position in life, to stoop to an equality with those whose more humble stations were wisely allotted them. She appreciated their self-denial and kindness in seeking out the lowly ones, and aiding them in their efforts to struggle upward, and no taint of envy or hatred toward those whom God had chosen to place above her in this world, ever found its way to her heart. So with a meek and contented mind she pursued her quiet way, never murmuring because of blessings withheld, but grateful for the unmerited favors so richly heaped upon her. She had a great deal to be thankful for! Nannie was in a good way, and Pat was just like a son to her, doing her errands, and helping her about the wood and water as if she were his own mother. He had come to board with them now, for it had grown so bad in his own home, and he had vainly tried to make it better—so he left them altogether, and Mrs. Bates had a rough couch constructed, and she covered it with neat print; and there in the outer room Pat slept. He was up betimes in the morning, and had the fire made and the kettle on to boil, and then he heard Nannie study, while her mother got the breakfast ready; and by this means he acquired the same knowledge himself, for Pat was ready to learn, if he had been kept down all his life with no culture nor teaching.

[Pg 207]

[Pg 208]

His board helped them, and their kindness and affection helped him more than he had ever been aided since his birth, for he came to think he was of some consequence to somebody, and this makes a wondrous difference to a person. It made Pat particular in his manners and neat in his dress, and it brought a peculiar joy to his heart to know that the house was a gainer by his coming to it. Mr. Bond had got him a situation as porter in the establishment of one of his mercantile friends, and his employer thought every thing of the diligent and honest lad, and gave him good wages, so that he had a trifle to lay up, besides providing his board and clothing, and getting an occasional present for Mrs. Bates or Nannie. It was altogether a very thrifty household now, and Mr. Bond felt no uneasiness about going awhile to leave them.

He had had a lingering cough ever since his illness, and the doctor ordered change of air and a warmer climate, and so he must go. It was very hard to leave his snug room, and to turn away from the silent face that was ever looking upon him, and it cost him many a serious pang to give up the care of his favorite puss to the tender mercies of Mrs. Kinalden; but it would be wrong to tamper with his health, and he must crush all regrets and disinclinations, and perhaps he might return sooner than even his physician had hoped. He waited but one moment—after the carriage came to bear him to the boat bound for Cuba—to take his farewell of the objects of his deepest regard, and then went more gravely down stairs than was his wont.

[Pg 209]

Mrs. Kinalden felt a sort of sorrow as she closed the blinds of his room, making all dark, and then turned the key in the lock, while puss preceded her to her own sitting-room, and she bestowed sundry endearing epithets upon the animal, even patting her back in a friendly sort of way as she stooped to smooth the rug for her to lie upon. It was something to miss the step that for years had been heard in the house, and to see the place that he had so longed filled at table occupied by another.

Mrs. Kinalden had a heart after all, so you would have thought had you seen how often the silk handkerchief was applied to her eyes in the course of that day.

[Pg 210]

---

## CHAPTER XX.



Christmas came and went, and there were merry times in the parish school, and in Nannie's home, too. Her stocking was filled to overflowing by her mother and Pat, and there was a nice present from her kind teacher, too; but they did not have the tree until Epiphany, for that the minister said "was the Gentile Christmas, and he thought the good things and presents upon the tree would help the children to remember the great and glorious gifts that the Saviour's birth and manifestation brought to them all."

The little things could scarcely sit still during service in the church, but kept turning and twisting upon their seats and looking toward the chapel where the tree was. At last the moment came when they were to walk in procession around it, so as to have a good view of its beauty and promise before the articles were distributed.

The minister headed the procession with the parish children, and Nannie felt her importance materially increased as he took her hand and moved down the aisle. She had never seen any thing so pretty as the brilliant scene that had met her gaze when the doors were thrown open, and the illuminated star and bush appeared to her delighted gaze. "Oh!" thought she, "the parish school's the school for me;" and she gave little Sammy Flin, who had come in out of curiosity, an exultant glance as she passed the pew where he was perched up to get sight of what was going on about him. "She didn't believe they had such times any where else, or that the minister led them along before so many people, just as if they were his own children." She could not see how he yearned for them in his heart, feeling a greater anxiety and care for them, than he did for his own offspring that had never been so much exposed to the temptations and snares of the world. All she felt about it was that she was a poor little child, weak and ignorant, and that he was a priest of the great God, and taught the people from the blessed Book, and that it was a great honor for her to stand by his side when so many other children would covet the place. When Nannie Bates' name was called he handed her her presents—a nice pair of warm mittens, and a new hood, and a book, besides a turkey for her mother; and he spoke to her of the little dead Winnie whose body he had committed to the earth, and told her to be gentle and good that she might some time go to her; and Nannie went home happier than ever, and filled up the evening pleasantly with the glowing description of the day's pleasure. Pat sat with his ears distended, and his arms upon the table, leaning over toward her as she talked, and Mrs. Bates almost forgot the light that had so lately been extinguished in her dwelling as the bright face before her shone out in the pleasant room.

[Pg 211]

[Pg 212]

It needed only one more interested one to complete the little circle, but he was bounding over the waves, and no desire could recall him until the appointed time. He had now been gone one week, and they could not hope to see him until the opening of the summer, so they contented themselves with the enumeration of his goodness to them all, and with a fervent prayer for his safe return. The moon gleamed upon the bay as Mrs. Bates and Nannie looked from their windows upon the sparkling waves, and they almost fancied they could descry afar off the beaming face of their kind friend; but he lay heart-sick and home-sick in the berth of the tossing ship, thinking of his cosy room, and of the attic where so many pleasant moments had been spent, and wondering if Nannie and Pat would come to no harm while he was away.

[Pg 213]

---

## CHAPTER XXI.

The winter was well-nigh gone, and it had brought but little trouble to Mrs. Bates and her small family until now; just as the new quarter commenced she was short of funds. Pat was confined to the house with rheumatism, and his wages had stopped, and of course that stopped the board-money, for what he had saved went for the doctor and the medicines, and so Nannie had to leave school and take to the basket again. It was a pity, for she was making such rapid progress in her studies, and would soon be promoted, but there was no help for it, the pantry was quite empty of stores, and it could not be replenished without means. Mrs. Flin was urgent for the rent, too, and threatened to let the rooms to more prompt tenants. She forgot that she had never been put off before, and that good Mr. Bond would be sure to make up all arrearages on his return from his voyage.

It was not that she needed the money at all, for there was plenty of silver in her coffers, but she loved to look at the shining bits; and it did not matter to her if they did cheat some hungry one out of the necessary morsel. Her ambition was to be equal with the Airlys in point of establishment, therefore she toiled on to lay up the glittering heap, and every little while she sat down by it to build up imaginary fabrics of splendor and show. There was a house to let near her friends, with the same external marks of gentility, and she was negotiating for it, and it was to be furnished as nearly like her neighbor's as possible, and she and Sammy were to emerge from the lowly obscurity that had so long shrouded them, into the magnificence and grandeur of the next street. It was for this important step that Mrs. Bates was to be turned out into the chilly air, with the sick boy and the fatherless girl. The poor woman would not have stooped to entreat for permission to remain one moment were it not for the danger consequent on removing Pat in his present situation; but her pleadings availed nothing with Mrs. Flin any way, and so they went out, with the weak and suffering boy hobbling between them, and had their things put in a basement-room, which they called home again. It was not well for Pat down there in the cold and wet; and they missed the bright sun, and the pure air, and the cheering prospect, and altogether, what with the physical troubles incident to their depression of spirits, and the struggle they had for

[Pg 214]

bread, they were getting on very ill, when a letter reached them from Mr. Bond.

"I'm coming on finely, my child," he said—it was to Nannie—"and look quite like Peter Bond again. The sea-voyage made me hearty, and a good appetite, freely indulged, plumped me up to my usual size, so that you would scarcely believe me the same man who left you two months ago, with the skeleton limbs losing themselves in the folds of my wide garments. Every thing is so new and strange to me, too, that I have plenty of amusement in watching my neighbors; and I often forget that I am as great a lion to them, until I meet their inquisitive gaze.

[Pg 215]

"I should like for you to be here for a little while to get some of the delicious fruits that are so common and abundant, and to see the negroes working among the sugar-cane and tobacco. I can not tell you all I would like to in a letter, but we shall have very nice times when I get back again, talking about what I have seen and heard. I send you a few leaves of plants which I picked while walking in the garden of the Bishop's palace. They are unlike any you have at home, and I know your fancy for such things. I want very much to hear how you are getting along; if you are as attentive as ever to your lessons and school, and if Pat is doing well in the store, and if the attic looks just as it used to? and Nannie, you must go to Mrs. Kinalden's before you write and see puss for me; and don't suffer for any thing, d'ye hear? I send your mother a little money to help her along while I am away, for fear the work has failed. Shall come in June, if permitted.

"Your friend,

"PETER BOND."

The letter brought much joy, as well as the money that could reinstate them in their old quarters again; but the times were still pinching, and poor Nannie almost sunk down in the pitiless streets sometimes from fatigue and exhaustion. She had got very weary one day, and had sold but few of her wares, when she bethought her of May Minturn's mother, and wondered if she would buy something for May's sake; so she sought the house and went timidly in at the basement door. It wasn't Biddy who opened it for her, but a strange girl who told her they didn't want any thing; and she had not the courage to ask for the mistress, so she was turning sadly and despondingly away, when she saw the pale sweet face at the window and the white hand beckoning her to come up the front steps, and a moment after, Mrs. Minturn herself admitted her into the hall.

[Pg 216]

"I thought you were at school, Nannie," said she, looking over the articles in the basket, and selecting a goodly number, "and that you no longer needed to go out in the cold and tire yourself with this heavy thing," and she tried to lift the basket which her delicate arm could scarcely uphold. "I'm sorry for you," continued she, as Nannie told her of their misfortunes, "but come in here, I have something to propose to you;" and she led the way to the nursery where a lovely little girl of ten months old was amusing herself upon the floor with her playthings. "Would you like to come and live with me, and take care of Dora?" asked she, as Nannie stooped to caress the child, "I need Biddy as seamstress, and you love babies and know how to please them, do you not?"

[Pg 217]

Nannie looked earnestly at the young child, and as she thought of Winnie, it almost seemed as if she were back again, and she replied with tears in her eyes, "Oh, ma'am, it would be so much better than that!" pointing to the basket, "but perhaps I wouldn't suit you even if mother will let me come!"

"Never mind that, Nannie," said Mrs. Minturn, "you will suit if you try, I am sure; and I will give you more than you could get by trudging day after day with your small wares; so run home and ask your mother, child, and come to me on Monday, if you can."

"I would like it indeed!" thought Nannie, as she went homeward with a light step. "It would be quite like minding dear Winnie!"

They had got nicely settled again in the attic, and Pat lay upon his couch making shadows on the wall with his well arm to amuse himself, for the hours lagged heavily; and he longed to be tugging at the great bales and boxes again. He thought it would do well enough for women to be ill and confined to the house week after week; but he would rather work ever so hard than to be hived up in one particular spot so long, even with the tender nursing and care bestowed upon him. It did not occur to him that he needed occasionally such a convincing remembrance that he was mortal, which he perhaps often forgot in his accustomed health and strength. But he came to think of its object after awhile, and the discipline worked to a charm, making him patient and gentle, and awakening a deeper interest in the home where there is no more sickness, so that when he felt himself growing robust again, he looked back upon the trial with gratitude. It took a great while though to regain what he had lost, and he had to sit for many a day in the easy-chair with his swollen feet upon a pillow, before his limbs would perform their accustomed office. Oh! how glad was he for the power of locomotion, as his halting feet moved even slowly over the floor; and it was like a recreation to him when he could walk down to the corner with the aid of a crutch. But the limbs grew flexible at last, and he went bounding off to his labors, thanking God that He had not made him a cripple. The poor old man who hobbles about Broadway upon one leg, owed many a penny to Pat's rheumatic siege, and Pat acknowledged it to himself as he lifted his free steps and took the way to the store.

[Pg 218]

[Pg 219]

## CHAPTER XXII.

Mrs. Bates was very lonely after Nannie went to nurse Dora, but she could not decline so good an offer, and hardly thought of herself as she felt what a nice home it would make for the child. Mrs. Minturn permitted Nannie to go often to see her mother, for she felt a parent's sympathy for the forlorn woman who was bereft of all her children, and she would herself go and sit beside Dora's little crib, when the babe was wakeful, rather than deprive Nannie of her visit to her home. She knew how bitter a thing it was to be separated from the little ones that shed such a halo over the house, and she could easily spare the girl one hour an evening to cheer the lonely and widowed. Dora would object, and cling to the young nurse that she had so soon learned to love; but the clasp would grow weaker and weaker, until the non-resisting form could be placed upon the bed, and Nannie always hastened back before there was any real need. It was a happy hour for her mother and Pat—the one Nannie spent with them. The table was drawn out and the books were upon it, and the low voice read or chatted, and a merry ringing laugh was often heard in the attic—and then Pat would go back with the child to see that she was safe, and woe betide the boy that dared an insulting word or look.

[Pg 220]

"Wasn't he a brave lad, though?" said Nannie, as she told Bidly about the water, and the beating Pat gave the impudent troop of boys.

Bidly didn't dispute it, but she always went off into some rhapsody about a "bonnie lad she had left in ould Ireland, jist the boy that would be afther breaking the heart of ye, Nannie!"

Nannie had not reached that point yet, though, and was quite as contented watching the sleeping babe, as if there were no such trysting places as sidewalks, and no enamored boys and girls talking over the black railings about an Erin of their own yet to be established in the new country. She knew what it was to love her mother and the dead child, whose memory would never die out of her warm heart, and good Mr. Bond, who had always seemed to her so far above all other mortals—and Pat, too, who was, she thought, the impersonation of all that was beautiful and good; but the "breaking of the heart of ye" was a dead language to her, saving when it referred to some terrible affliction. Don't talk to Nannie about that, yet, Bidly. You're both better off with the kind mistress, and the nice home, and the warmth and comfort all about you, than you would be with a close room and crying children, and a husband who couldn't support you. It isn't the *love* I'm talking against. Oh! no—thank heaven for that; but wait until you can see the prospect clear for a comfortable living before you enter into a compact that may bring much misery with it, and don't think that to be breaking your hearts after the boys is of more importance than doing your duty in the house of your employers. Nannie is growing to be quite a stout girl, and perhaps Pat has a faint idea that she will make him a good wife one of these days; but she does not dream of it, and only looks upon him as Pat, yet. She never had a brother, so she can not estimate her regard for him as a sister would; indeed she does not care to measure it any way—why should she? the time has not come for this.

[Pg 221]

Pat looks at her rosy face as she sits across the table reading to them evenings, and he can compare it to nothing excepting the beautiful waxen figure he saw at some museum, a long time ago, and which has haunted him ever since. He paid something for seeing that, but this is a free blessing, which comes to him every evening, and the thoughts of it lightens the toil through the day, and quickens the step homeward. No wonder that he begins to feel that he must some day make sure that it will always be so, and that he studies over it after the light is out and the room is quiet, as he lies musing upon his restless couch. Doesn't he see that she is prettier and prettier every day and doesn't he know that there's many a boy that would be glad to call her "wife;" and isn't he sure there'll be bloody times if any of them attempt to take her from him! And as the sleep gets a faint mastery over him, and he dreams of a tussle with Mike Dugan—all on Nannie's account—the brawny arms strike outward, and the doubled fists come with such force against the innocent plastering, as to bring Mrs. Bates's nightcap to the bedroom door to see if thieves are breaking into the house.

[Pg 222]

[Pg 223]

---

## CHAPTER XXIII.

Mrs. Flin has got into her new home, and there is quite a rejoicing among her tenants. There is no fear now from Master Sammy's apple-skins and pebbles, and the landlady's bombazine dress has done sweeping its ample folds across Mrs. Bates' floor. You don't catch Mrs. Flin in that vile street any more! She has an agent now to collect her rents for her, and she does not even recognize Nannie, whom she meets walking with little Dora in her arms. She has as much as she can do to keep an account of the number of calls Mrs. Airly has in the course of a day, and to ascertain what stylish-looking young lady is visiting there, and what mustached gentleman it is who raises his eye-glass so gracefully as the three drive past. Then she must stroll forth every morning at a certain hour, which she has learned is etiquettical, with a card-case in her hand, for that is the way Mrs. Airly—who has not wit enough to keep her own counsel—told her she took to give people an idea that she was greatly sought after. Mrs. Flin's time is wholly occupied. It is not strange that she never has an hour to spare Mrs. Bates now. Sammy does not exactly understand it all, and wonders why she pulls him by the hand as they pass Nannie, whispering him not to

[Pg 224]

stop in the street to talk with that girl, when she used to send him up stairs to play with her, as often as she could get him out of her way, when they lived down there.

Captain Flin has returned from sea, and he scarcely knows his own wife, she has grown so grand. He does not feel at home in the new place; and while she walks out with the card-case, he takes his pipe, and goes down to sit on Jerry Doolan's steps and smoke with him, and he goes into the house (Jerry occupies the rooms vacated by the ambitious Mrs. Flin), and sits before the window, with his boots in the seat of it, wishing it was his home still, and that these women wouldn't get such plaguy notions in their heads!

Fie, fie! Captain Flin, will you let the weaker vessel go ahead of you in ambition and enterprise, and you rest content with such humble attainments! Knock the ashes out of your pipe, man, and go up to your own door as if you had always belonged there. What if you do step on the carpets as if they were eggs, and take up every thing as if it were not made to touch, and run to the door every time you hear the bell, as if it were not the maid's place. What if you do insist upon performing your ablutions at the kitchen sink, and using the same towel with the servants, and help yourself of the edibles 'way across the table, though Sally does her best to get your plate so as to wait upon you? Watch your wife, Jerold Flin. Don't you see how easy this gentility sits upon her; and were you not born and bred in as good a station as she? You scorn it all, do you! Notwithstanding, I'll warrant me you'll not know Jerry Doolan this day twelve months! Mark my words!

[Pg 225]

[Pg 226]

---

## CHAPTER XXIV.

Nannie's gone up to Mrs. Kinalden's to get some messages for the letter to Mr. Bond. What has happened to the old lady? She has grown so very gracious, and places a chair for Nannie, and offers her a warm doughnut which she has just fried, and then she sits down with the cat on her lap, while she talks to the girl about the old gentleman. There's a good-natured smile upon her face, and somehow Nannie forgets how old and disagreeable she thought her when she used to come to see the sick man; and puss feels quite at home on the kind lap that no longer gives her a spiteful toss upon the hard floor.

There's something come over Mrs. Kinalden, surely! Perhaps the letters that occasionally reach her from the amiable bachelor have something contagious in them, and may be they awaken in her mind a faint hope that the address, "My dear Mrs. Kinalden," may mean a little more than appears upon the surface. He says "how much he misses the comfort of his home!" too, and "what delight it will give him to be once more settled in his quiet room;" and he tells her to "take good care of puss for his sake;" and isn't that almost equal to a declaration? The old lady often draws a crumpled paper from her pocket, and carefully adjusting her spectacles upon her nose, goes over the manuscript with the forefinger of her right hand, stopping at "For my sake," and pondering the words very seriously. She doesn't know how it would do to change her situation at her time of life, although she does not feel a bit older than when she was married to Mr. Kinalden! She wonders if he, poor dear man! would rise from his grave if she should ever suffer herself to be called Mrs. Bond! He used to say that he should not lie peacefully beneath the sod if she were to drop his name for another. She was always afraid of "sperits," and if he should appear to her! and she crumples the paper up again, and thrusts it hastily into its secret receptacle, and chides herself for forgetting for one moment her buried lord, for the night is coming on, and she is not particularly courageous in the dreamy hours of darkness, and she is not sure but Mr. Kinalden's ghost will punish her for thought as well as deed.

[Pg 227]

Nannie has gone a long time ago. She only staid a moment to get news for the letter, and the old lady was quite alone when she suffered herself to embrace so important a subject as good Mr. Bond. The boarders drop in one by one and Mrs. Kinalden's thoughts are concentrated in her cups and saucers, and the hot tea that goes steaming round the table, and the query whether "Mr. Viets is the gentleman who takes sugar?" and "if it is Mr. Ballack that doesn't take milk?" and "which of the gentlemen it is that likes both sugar and milk?" and "which that takes neither?" And so all her aspirations after the Cuban bachelor are hushed for the present, amid the sober realities of her responsible station. It is not very remarkable that she sometimes dreams that it would be very agreeable to make a different arrangement! To be sure her boarders are as good as other boarders; but there's this person does not like beefsteak, and is very fond of mutton chops, and that one can not endure mutton chops, but delights in beefsteak; and fresh pork is too gross for such a one's appetite, and veal cutlets are disagreeable to Mr. So and So. Graham bread is the peculiar diet of one, and another never touches any thing but dry toast; and some like pastry, and some puddings; and what with them all and their likes and dislikes, the poor woman is almost distracted with the worriment and care.

[Pg 228]

No wonder then that she often sighs to be free from such a bondage! Her absent lodger never gave her any trouble; she can see it now that he is away, and she only wishes that his fat merry face would soon show itself again at her table. It would make her quite contented with her station at the big waiter.

It is a pity your mind's on that train, Mrs. Kinalden. Mr. Bond's heart is not made of wax, and is a terribly unimpressible object, so far as the ladies are concerned. There is only one other heart to whose pulsations it has ever responded, and that one has ceased to beat. Yours may throb and

---

## CHAPTER XXV.

Nannie wrote such a long letter to Mr. Bond, in her childish, unformed way. She told him every little thing concerning their own household, and the Flins', and Pat's misfortunes, and their ejection from, and reinstalment in, their attic home; and she dwelt a great while upon Mrs. Flin's metamorphosis, and upon her own new abode with the Minturns. And the worthy bachelor read it all with as much delight as if it had been his pet-newspaper. Wasn't it just what interested him, and he so far away from the spot where all his joys centered alone, and among a strange people! What if it was a child's composition—wasn't that child Nannie Bates! and hadn't he determined to make something of her in the world! and couldn't he see an uncommon degree of intelligence even in that unfinished epistle!

How he frowned when he learned of Mrs. Flin's cruel treatment toward the sick boy and the straitened family; and how he congratulated himself upon being rid of the woman's importunities in behalf of the precocious Sammy; and how he laughed at the vision of Jerold Flin treading cat-like over the soft carpets, and sending his jets of liquid tobacco all over his ambitious wife's new furniture! Oh! there was fun in that childish letter to merry Mr. Bond.

[Pg 230]

His landlady was growing amiable! that was the best of all; but he guessed the secret of it, and feared it would not prove lasting. "It wasn't for nothing, Peter Bond," soliloquized he, "that she was so willing to be burdened with the care of thy favorite puss! It wasn't for nothing that so many goodies were stuffed into thy already crowded valise! It wasn't for nothing that her communications have been so frequent, and contained such tender inquiries after thy health, and such pathetic injunctions to be careful of thyself!" You must be a simpleton, man, to imagine that a benevolent disposition prompted so many manifestations all of a sudden, when the past was so different. "But why not?" thought he, as his charitable heart sought for a better motive in the woman than selfishness. "Isn't there such a thing as an immediate turning from the evil to the good? It does not take long to change the current of one's actions, if one is determined and energetic. But we shall see, we shall see;" and the good man leaned back in his chair, with his spectacles between his thumb and forefinger, and suffered himself to be carried away into a brighter past. He was not long in forgetting Mrs. Kinalden, and Mrs. Flin, and even his young *protégée*, and, looking off upon the surging ocean, he dreamed of a distant land where his spirit loved to linger with the soul that was hidden from other eyes. His reveries were very soothing and pleasant, and the people would wonder, as they passed through the covered gallery where the old man sat musing, what it could be that imparted such a radiance to his ingenuous and winning face. They could not tell how a true affection may hallow the whole of life, investing it with a secret and mysterious charm. They were absorbed in other interests: some had their merchandise out upon the treacherous waters, and their souls were in their ships; and some had their traffic in a foreign land, and their hearts went after it; and some were only pursuing a passing pleasure, with no definite object or plan in existence.

[Pg 231]

Oh! how much they lost of true good, while the loving spirit, unperturbed by the trifles that so deeply affected them, sought its fellow, and with it held a sweet and refining communion.

It was a great wonderment to Mr. Bond what happiness there could be in crowding together in a saloon, and smoking, and drinking, and card-playing, and low and boisterous conversation. He forgot that it would be quite impossible for some minds to think, and that such need a continual excitement to make the hours endurable.

Tell them to walk down upon the wondrous beach, and interest themselves in the beauties of a sublime nature, or to sit gazing upward with delight at a heavenly creation, or to look within themselves and strive after a higher and more perfect development, and how many would not turn sneeringly away, and empty the brimming glass, or light a fresh cigar, or begin a new game at faro, with the evident feeling that their own ideas of pleasure were far before your unfashionable and strange notions.

[Pg 232]

---

## CHAPTER XXVI.

What with Nannie's wages, and her own work, and Pat's board, besides an occasional perquisite from their kind friend, Mrs. Bates was quite looking up in the world. She had been able to cover the floor with a nice list carpet, and to add a few comfortable and pretty articles of furniture from time to time, so that the little family began to feel that their humble abode was the most luxurious place they had ever seen. Their hearts were so filled with gratitude for even these homely comforts, that there was no room in them for envious feelings toward those who were possessed of more bounteous gifts. A little stand by the window now held Nannie's plants, that were ever green and flourishing, and there was scarcely a week but some sweet bud peeped out from the fresh leaves of the one, or pure blossom burst forth from the other to greet them. The big Bible occupied its accustomed place in the corner, and a couple of neat shelves, the work of

Pat's ingenuity, held the few books and little ornaments that had been accumulating since their good fortune commenced. Winnie's cradle was put away in her mother's bedroom with the rag-baby still lying beneath the small counterpane, and in its place was Pat's couch newly covered with a gay flowered chintz. A bright oil-cloth was nailed beneath the stove, and in the center of the room stood a table, around which was gathered a loving trio every evening when Nannie could be spared from her little charge.

[Pg 233]

Mrs. Minturn's house, to be sure, was grand and magnificent, and abounded in every thing that was costly and elegant, and yet, to Nannie, the square attic room with its modest apurtenances was far more beautiful and attractive. The eye of a stranger could see only the bare objects that served to fill the vacant nooks; but the heart's strong affections, and the devotion that counts nothing a toil that can bring blessings to another, and the motives of love and purity that dictated this or that offering, were the hidden associations that manifested themselves to Nannie's vision and made their inestimable value, so that could she have chosen between them and the wealth of her employers, she would gladly have taken the simple home.

Wasn't it here that peace had first spread its soft wings to shelter her long-time troubled being! Was it not here that she had learned what it was to be smiled upon and beloved; and was it not hallowed to her by the visits of her kind friend and the noble Pat; and, more than all, was it not consecrated by the footsteps of the death angel that came for dear little Winnie? Oh! there is no space there for a murmuring, grasping spirit, to take the good gifts handed out by a wise and loving father, and to use them with a grateful feeling is all that the righteous poor can wish. Even in their lowliness are they often the objects of envy to the harassed and care-ridden rich, who would willingly forego all their superfluous gains for one hour of contented ease.

[Pg 234]

Mrs. Minturn went frequently to Nannie's home when the girl took little Dora out for a walk, for she wished to accustom her child to the sight of the various conditions of life, so that if she were spared to womanhood she might not be so far removed from her fellow-creatures as to hesitate to enter any abode, however humble, and to minister to the needy; and the gentle lady sat with her silken robes falling over the home-spun carpet, and her soft features exposed to the glare and steam of that common room, looking with a happy heart upon the joyous group before her. The poor widow, with her gown of print and checked apron, laid down her weary needle to attend to the sweet voice that ever sounded so soothingly in her ear, and the delighted child shook its rough toys, holding them up to the view, first of one, and then the other, and laughing aloud in her boisterous glee.

[Pg 235]

---

## CHAPTER XXVII.

Mr. Bond was coming home! the glad news was in Nannie's hand, and he was even then bounding over the waters toward his lowly friends.

The room looked very sunny that morning, and the hearts of the expectant ones danced for joy. He would be there the next week, and they must all be there to meet him on Friday—that seemed so like a reality, to name the very day. Pat could request a holiday of his employers, and, as for Mrs. Minturn, she was sure to participate in all of Nannie's pleasures, and would be ready with the permission to spend the important day at her mother's. The greatest trouble was the intervening hours; how could they be comfortably disposed of! they had duties enough to perform, and yet the time went slowly and wearily; but it had an end, and a happy one—for the kind face was before them, as fat and merry and amiable as ever, and the immense corporosity moved about the room with as much gravity as so jolly a person was capable of. Nobody would have suspected that he had ever been ill, or that the shadow of a sorrow had ever troubled him. Seated beside the window with the June air playing blandly upon his forehead, he congratulated himself that he was once more among his friends. What if they were humble and poor! there was a depth and richness in their love for him that neither comes of station nor wealth, and it sunk soothingly and gratefully into his glad heart, making it fruitful in a pure joy.

[Pg 236]

"It is not quite so pleasant bouncing up and down at the will of the angry waves, Nannie," said he, "as to sit quietly in this lolling-chair with your friends all about you, I can tell you, my girl!" and he looked at Nannie with a twinkle and a laugh, as if to say, "I'm well out of it, though. The ocean doesn't have any mercy on a body's bones, but tosses you about as if you were an India-rubber ball made on purpose;" added he, bursting into a hearty roar as he caught Mrs. Bates' eye fastened upon his rotund proportions, as if to ascertain where the bones were. "Oh! well, my good woman," continued he, "even a porpoise couldn't stand the bumping and thumping that we poor mortals are subject to when we trust ourselves on shipboard. Why, I solemnly protest that I've been pitched from my berth, many a time, quite across the cabin into my neighbor's and back again, in a trice, and that without ceremony, too!"

The old gentleman did not seem very indignant, but smiled upon his auditors as placidly as if there had been nothing but calm on his homeward journey, and he did not even mind their merriment as they pictured to themselves his robust figure bounding about like a foot-ball.

[Pg 237]

You are in the right of it, Mr. Bond. If you are the object of an innocent glee, it is better to join in the merry laugh, rather than to don a severe and offended dignity. It is quite a funny thought, though, that, amid such pitiless peltings you should escape with not even the slightest impression

upon your fleshless bones! well, there's some comfort in being fat, you have that to console you. He doesn't look as if he ever needed to be consoled, but I can tell you that even Mr. Bond is not wholly exempt from the annoyances and trials of life! He has learned how to make the best of every thing, and that is more than half toward averting a trouble. Put a cheerful face upon the matter, it will but make it worse to fret and frown and keep your neighbors uncomfortable about it, besides working yourself into a teapot! Mr. Bond crowded all the evils down into the deepest corner of his heart and turned the key upon them, and that was the end of them. Nobody ever got hold of and magnified them, until he felt that they were too painful for any mortal to bear, for he kept them so close that they had not room to breathe, and so suffocated, and he knew nothing more about them.

It was a way of Mr. Bond's—there, couldn't every body do it—there's a certain process to go through before one can learn, and he had tried it thoroughly, and was really a proficient in the thing. It isn't every body that cares to learn—it is very pleasant to draw a friend into a corner and pour into a willing and sympathizing ear all that affects one depressingly, but it is a question whether either is benefited by the confidence—the gloom may not only be deepened upon your own face, but it may reflect itself upon the countenance before you also. Better imitate the amiable and wise bachelor, and impart nothing but that which will bring a bright gleam with it.

[Pg 238]

[Pg 239]

---

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

Mrs. Kinalden was in a terrible flutter. Her lodger's "traps" had come, and were well disposed in his silent room; she had every thing in order to receive him. The light and the sun were admitted into the long-time darkened space, and puss was curled up upon the rug as if she had never known another resting-place. The dove-colored merino went up and down the stairs, and the clean cap-border flew backward with every agitated movement.

"It was very strange that he didn't come! Hadn't the boat been in since ten o'clock in the morning? so the truckman told her, and here were the hands at two in the afternoon! There was no accounting for it after all that had passed between them!" However, it couldn't be helped, and as the hour of three struck, and no Mr. Bond appeared, the despairing woman betook herself to her green moreen rocking-chair, and, what else could she do?—wept. Yes, wept! and while the red silk handkerchief hid her disappointed face, a heavy step sounded in the hall, and a familiar voice came through the half-open door of the little parlor. "Heigh-ho! what's the matter here? I thought I'd escaped the terrors of the briny deep; but bless my heart! here I am in the midst of it again!" and Mr. Bond's plump hand was extended to greet his landlady, who quickly wiped away the offending drops, and grew calm. "Couldn't come before, madam," said he, in reply to her question as to what had detained him so long. "Had to go first and see how Nannie and Pat got on, you know!" That was rather overwhelming—so inconsistent with "My dear Mrs. Kinalden."

[Pg 240]

The shocked widow looked indignant and muttered something about "professions of regard," and "affectionate epistles," etc.; but it was all lost upon the obtuse man who talked on, about what especially concerned him, and then went gleefully up the stairs.

What wonder if his heart did beat quicker as his hand touched the knob of his room-door! Isn't it like meeting a dear friend, after a long absence, to cross the threshold of a cherished locality? The very inanimate things seemed invested with a silent joy at his return, and the face from the portrait beamed out a glad welcome. There are tears in the bachelor's eyes as they meet the blue orbs so fondly fastened upon him, for his thoughts are upon the gentle and confiding embrace that was once his. Woe unto you, Mrs. Kinalden! If there were a single impregnable spot in the good man's bosom, that tear would never have found its birth.

Puss, awakened by the heavy foot-falls, leaps about her master's legs, and gives a spring into his narrow lap, as he takes his chair, maintaining her precarious position by fastening her claws tightly in his broadcloth, to the no small danger of the limbs beneath, and purrs her perfect satisfaction. Oh! it's a good thing to get home! There's not so comfortable a place on the face of the earth, as the spot we call our own, with the objects that meet our daily touch strewn all about in their accustomed places. It's a pleasant thing to go out into the wide world too, and gather up a noble stock of incidents and experience, and thoughts, to expand the ideas that get pent-up and contracted by a narrow and confined position; but it is far better to turn about with one's face toward the dearer haunts and the best loved friends, and the familiar pleasures!

[Pg 241]

So thought the weary old man, as he sat in his big arm-chair, while his vision roved from one thing to another in his cosy room, and the warm breath of his favorite puss touched his hand.

It was all like a dream to him—the path he had trodden upon the deep, and the wanderings amid tropical scenes, and the transition from place to place within the last few months! He arose and looked into the garden below. When he had left, a white covering was spread over every thing and the sun's rays fell coldly upon snow and ice. Now there was fresh foliage upon trees and shrubs, and the perfume from newly-blown roses came up to greet his willing senses, and the little girls were playing under the thick shade. They looked up with a merry shout, as a shower of bon-bons fell upon their heads, and clapped their hands for very rapture, as the happy face peered out upon them through the half-closed blinds.

[Pg 242]

---

## CHAPTER XXIX.

Captain Flin and his wife are coming down the street in full gala attire. The pipe has vanished, but the card-case is still conspicuous amid the folds of a stiffly-starched embroidered handkerchief. They have been to see the Airlys, and have posted themselves up in all their affairs, and they are now *en route* to return the numerous visits that have been paid to their new house and furniture. If that could have been put upon rollers and trundled about to drop its card, it would have been quite an acceptable deputy, and would have saved a world of embarrassment to the unsophisticated couple.

There's a worthy man upon the walk at a short distance from them. He shuffles along with his heavy gait and home-spun dress, but there is a good honest frankness in his face that commends him to the passers-by. He has almost reached them, and is about to give some token of recognition, when they whisk across the street with averted looks. Didn't I tell you so, Captain Flin? The twelvemonth lacks a week, and Jerry Doolan has gone to his home with downcast mien and a heavy heart, because his old friend has purposely avoided him. Don't I know something of human nature, and how contaminating heaped-up coppers are? It is not every body that will bear even a moderate degree of wealth, particularly among those who have no other foundation to build their consequence upon. You are not wholly given over yet, Captain Flin, for there are evidences of self-accusings in your confession. "I'm sorry we cut poor Jerry, wife! It wouldn't hurt us to speak to him!" You'll come right again, man; we're sure of that. Mrs. Flin thinks it is well enough to show Jerry that their position in life is different from what it used to be, and she is afraid that if she condescends to notice him, even casually, it will be an excuse for him to send Duggy up to play with Sammy; and isn't she trying as hard as she can to make Sammy forgetful of the past, and mindful only of their present exaltation! The Captain acknowledges that it is a good idea to try to make something of Sammy, but he feels as if he is himself rather too old to remodel into a polished gentleman, after so long a probation of hardening and roughening too. He considers it a real trial to sit by with his great hands hanging by his side, while his wife talks to her grand acquaintances with a volubility that he never before imagined her possessed of; and he only misses still more the quid that used to keep his own tongue occupied. It is such a relief when the last call is made, and their steps are bent toward their own door. Mrs. Flin goes to her room to divest herself of some of her superfluous finery, and her husband quietly takes the opportunity to don his shaggy coat and light his pipe, and while she fancies him safe within their own walls, he is striding swiftly toward Jerry Doolan's to tell him what an old fool he made of himself in the morning, and to remove the heaviness from his friend's heart by an hour of familiar chat.

[Pg 243]

[Pg 244]

"Fact is, Jerry," says he, "wife may as well hang up her fiddle about me; can't make a whistle out of a pig's tail, man, I tell ye! She may fuss up the young'un as much as she's a mind to, but it'll be labor lost over an old chap like me. I feel more at home down here in the old place, and a plaguy sight more comfortable, than I do with all the nice fixins she's got together up yonder; and I'll tell you what it is, Jerry, we'll have many a smoke and talk yet, while the women folks do up their callin'. I've been once, and that's once too many, and it will take a taut pull to get me at that business again;" and the old sailor puffed away at his pipe, and congratulated himself in his firm resolution not to be whiffled about so easily as heretofore by his wife's ambitious whims.

A pretty time there was of it, though, when he reached home again, and Mrs. Flin pumped out of him where he had been. "It's all of no use, Jerold Flin," said she, "for me to be a strivin' and a strivin' to keep up the honor of the house, and you continually running back to your low associates." But seeing that her husband was not much affected by any of her appeals she turned her aspirations to the boy, whose life she almost teased out with her injunctions not to do this, for James Airly didn't, and to be sure to do that, because James Airly did. You need not exert yourself, Mrs. Flin, the boy's a "chip off the old block," and you can not make him otherwise. If you'll only try to implant within him good principles, and teach him that kindness of heart that always results in a true courtesy, it will benefit him more than all the fashionable notions you can gather from the external example of your neighbor Airly's children, I can assure you. This life is too noble and too dignified to be frittered away in vain attempts after a worthless outside. There is a genuine refinement and polish that comes from a strict adherence to the golden rule; this is what I would have you impress upon Master Sammy.

[Pg 245]

[Pg 246]

---

## CHAPTER XXX.

"How d'ye do, Nannie?" said young Flin, as he met the girl walking with Dora. Sammy was on his way to school with his satchel on his arm, and could only stop a minute; but he always did like Nannie Bates, and he was glad to get an opportunity to tell her that he would see her sometimes if his mother would let him go down to the old house. "You see I have to study very hard, now," said he, with a disdainful toss of his books to the walk; "and I don't love it, Nannie, but mother says she wants me to be a great man one of these days, and that's the way to bring it about. I don't see though how it will do it, if I study all my life and don't learn any thing!"

"But," said Nannie, "you ought to try to improve since you have the means to get a good education; I wish mother was rich enough to send me to school all the time!" and she took the



satchel and looked over the books with a wistful air, while Sammy amused himself with the child.

"There's the old bell," said he, as the first faint tones came gratefully to his ear, "and I suppose I must go; I'm sure I'd rather play than sit bending over my desk all day, but good-by, Nannie, when I'm bigger I'll come to see you as often as I've a mind;" and away he ran, while Nannie stood looking after him and wishing for the very privilege that he spurned.

[Pg 247]

It would have done her some good, but Mr. Bond thought "she knew enough already. She could read, write, and cipher, and didn't she know Pilgrim's Progress from beginning to end; that was all he had ever learned, and hadn't he gone through life well enough so far!"

You are a nice good-hearted jolly old man, Peter Bond, and your merry happy face and amiable temper will compensate for any deficiency in intellectual attainment; but Nannie Bates has a craving mind, and it must have nourishment. You don't know how early she is out of her bed, stowed away in Mrs. Minturn's attic with a book in her hand, nor how many pages she devours while nursing Dora. She does not neglect her little charge, but invents a thousand ways to keep her pleased and contented, while she gleans a little more knowledge every day. It's astonishing how much the girl has gained already, and she has a double motive in it, too; there's another mind waiting to have it imparted, and the two expand, night after night, as they give their gathered ideas to each other in the one short hour. It's not much time, but it accumulates, in one year, thirty days! think of it! Supposing it were spent in foolish talking and jesting, or in parading the walks with the other boys and girl! there would be thirty days wasted, and two minds robbed, and two intelligent faces despoiled of their chief attractions. Pat has grown quite fine-looking since the obtuse look has given place to such a sensible inquiring expression, and a soul speaks out from Nannie's eyes now that she bestows more culture upon the mental part.

[Pg 248]

You're right, Mr. Bond. It is not necessary for Nannie Bates to go to school! she will come out quite as bright as thousands who are kept at their books by a rod over their backs. She can not help acquiring, wherever she is! She appears very modest and very attentive to the child as she stands in the drawing-room of her mistress while Dora is exhibiting to the many guests; but her ear is becoming accustomed to a pure language, and her imitative powers soon adopt it. She will make a very lady-like little wife for somebody! Pat sees it, and does what he can to keep up with her. There'll be a struggle for her, though. Mike Dugan goes to Mrs. Minturn's very often, and whenever Nannie is sent to the kitchen on any mission there's a paper of candy for her, or a kind pleasant word, or a fond look, and she begins to think Mike a very nice sort of lad; when Pat finds how things are going, "he doesn't think he would put himself in Mike Dugan's way if he were Nannie! He's a great rough, red-headed, ugly fellow, and wouldn't make much of a husband for any girl!"

Nannie isn't thinking of husbands, and only wonders why Pat dislikes Mike so much when he is as kind to her as a brother would be. She doesn't think him ugly at all. She remembers that he has red hair. It doesn't strike her that Pat's is, if possible, a shade more fiery. She has never thought of comparing them, Mike is a clever fellow, and all the girls like him; but Pat, is Pat, and she would not have him like anybody else for all the world!

[Pg 249]

[Pg 250]

---

## CHAPTER XXXI.

Mrs. Kinalden's face has grown long again, and the sour look has returned. It is strange what a gutta-percha capacity it has! Not so very strange though since she has not attended to the direction to purge herself from all internal sources of disquiet.

There isn't a person in the world that could maintain an equable temperament and expression, if every little outward vexation were suffered to penetrate him. Mrs. Kinalden has never learned to look within for her chief pleasure and enjoyment. Poor soul! it is little she would find to attract her in its present aspect, and that is the reason she does not care to enter the recesses of her heart; but depends upon the things that surround her for her delight; and they can not but fail to bring her any peace. If she would only consent to sweep and garnish the hidden chambers, and adorn them with the beauteous and goodly things which all may possess, she would find it very comforting to withdraw from other things, and spend her sweetest moments there, and the bright cheerful expression would be permanent then.

It is not easy to take this advice, however, and we give the landlady up as a hopeless case. Mr. Bond is the only person whose arguments weigh any thing with her, and he, indifferent man, does not even perceive his influence; but goes about his own business, as if there were no disconsolate widow pining away her desolate being for him. The boarders recognize the fact, and they enjoy the fun, and flatter her into the belief that the bachelor is willin', but too diffident to propose, and they tell her that she must not be shy—that she can reveal the state of her feelings in a delicate way—and, when they have every thing in a right train, they withdraw from the little parlor, as Mr. Bond comes in for a moment's conversation with the old lady. She is terribly perturbed now that the moment has really come, and the innocent man seeing her distress, and fearing that some serious evil has happened to occasion it, begs her to tell him what troubles her, assuring her of his sympathy and aid. He even places a chair near her, and seats himself so close to her that his hand rests upon the arm of the sofa where she is sitting.

[Pg 251]

She loses her fear then, and says, in a tremulous tone, she has been thinking of Mr. Kinalden. Mr. Bond appreciates that. Is not there a kindred spirit in his own thoughts every moment of his life? Mrs. Kinalden begins to rise in his estimation, and he chides himself for ever imagining her untrue to her husband's memory; so he sighs, and listens as she goes on to say that she used to have scruples about throwing off her widowhood; but her days are very lonely, and she might be induced "to change her mind". Mr. Bond puts her down a peg again; but feeling that he must congratulate her if she has really determined to marry, he tells her he is really very happy! and this encourages her to speak openly of him as the object of her affectionate designs.

[Pg 252]

There is a suppressed giggle in an adjoining room as the quick tread of the bachelor is heard upon the stairs; but he does not feel like laughing. He is shocked! he is indignant, that any one should ever dream of his being faithless to his early love!

How he came face to face with the cherished portrait, he does not know! That something strange has occurred he is sure; yet he stands there in his bewildered mood, a long, long time, wondering whether he is in or out of the body, and why Betty Lathrop could not have been spared to cheer his declining years? What! Peter Bond is not sad!

Isn't it enough to depress any one to be surprised by such a novel and unwelcome announcement when his own heart is dead to all but the one beloved?

Of course Mr. Bond could not remain in Mrs. Kinalden's house after this, and so he took a room in the same house with his young friends, and Nannie's mother went in every day to keep it in order, and it soon grew to be as dear as the old spot, for the same furniture was there, and the same face upon the canvas.

[Pg 253]

---

## CHAPTER XXXII.

The good man can now make one of the party that assembles every evening in the pleasant attic. He has not the distance to keep him away, nor the weather, nor a feeble state of health, and right glad he is that every obstacle to so welcome a privilege is removed. A stranger, used to the polish and luxury of a different sphere, would wonder how such content and happiness could reign amid apparent lowliness and effort, for although things present a neat and thrifty aspect in the little room, it is evident that much toil is necessary in order to maintain even this degree of prosperity. The busy fingers of the mother are ever engaged with the needle, and the child is separated from her home by a needful economy; yet there is a real joy in every moment spent together, which might well excite the envy as well as the curiosity of a spectator. People are so long a time learning that harmony is of more value in a household than thousands of gold or silver—that "a dinner of herbs, where love is, is better than the stalled ox and hatred therewith." Perhaps if they could look in upon some of their wealthy neighbors, who are rich in every thing but the blessed element that money can not purchase, and then return to the humble place that overfloweth with love and peace, they would be ready to acknowledge wherein true happiness consists, and to search for it with as much ardor as they now do for an increased treasury or a higher station. Mrs. Bates never troubled herself as to who was better off than she in point of tangible good, but she perfectly reveled in the sunny atmosphere of her pleasant home, endeavoring so to fix its present blessedness that no outward vicissitudes would be able to affect it.

[Pg 254]

She had no verbal eloquence with which to commend a contented and glad disposition to the members of her household, but her example was more forcible than precept, and there needed no other adviser. It was not always so; Nannie can look back to a sorrowful period, when even the hope-light was hidden from them, and they all feel that the leaven of the kind, and Christian, and benevolent heart has exercised its changing and salutary power among them.

Well may you look about upon the group before you with a placid feeling, Peter Bond. Isn't it worth a few more years severance from the spirit that awaiteth thee elsewhere, to see so noble a work—the result of thy instrumentality? It was a strange Providence to thee that raised thee up from the jaws of death and set thee upon thy strong feet again; but to question its wisdom was perfect folly—that thou feelest now as thy usefulness becomes apparent even to thy humility.

Nannie wonders what subject is agitating her friend, as his face grows thoughtful and serious; but she does not interrupt his meditations, for she has many a moment of quiet reflection that she wouldn't have broken for all the world, so she keeps very still until her hour has expired, and then says "good-night," so gently that he is not disturbed.

[Pg 255]

Mr. Bond goes to his room, with puss sauntering after, and Mrs. Bates indulges herself in a cat-nap in her chair, while Pat is enjoying the moonlight walk to Mrs. Minturn's with Nannie. He is as happy as happy can be until they reach the house, and Mike Dugan confronts them with a gift for Nannie. It's all spoiled now! Pat frowns upon Mike, and making a gruff adieu to Nannie, walks back again, with an uncomfortable feeling as if all the world is against him; and Nannie puts the unopened parcel upon the table, and cries herself asleep, with Pat's daguerreotype under her pillow and his rough adieu in her heart.

Poor children! it's the same the world over—smiles and tears, and smiles again; heart-breakings and heart-mendings; quarrels and reconciliations. There's no help for it; you must have your own experience!

[Pg 256]

---

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

Mike, with his hands in his pockets, strolls homeward, whistling a merry tune as he thinks of the smile upon the young face that haunts him. He does not fancy there will be much difficulty in winning Nannie Bates. "All the girls like him, and why shouldn't she?" Mike has a tolerable favorable opinion of himself. He keeps a livery-stable in — street, and takes the girls out to drive, and he flourishes his whip, and trots his fast horses along the roads with the best of them. There is a bravado sort of way about him that tells among his companions, who look up to him with a certain degree of veneration, as a being of rather a superior order to themselves. He twists his red hair over a hot iron till it stands up all about his head in little bits of curls; and he has grown a flaming mustache that is really quite killing among his female acquaintances. No wonder he is so easy concerning Nannie Bates! He couldn't imagine that Pat Rourke, with his uncouth ways and brusque appearance could presume to rival him in her heart! So he enters the stable with a joyous spring, and goes the rounds cheerfully, patting Berk's back, and speaking pleasantly to Roscoe, and giving an ear of corn to Arab, and a little more hay to all.

[Pg 257]

There's no doubt of his supremacy there—the grateful animals neigh, and paw, and rub their noses fondly upon his shoulder as he passes fearlessly around them. If Nannie could see his devotion to the helpless and dumb it would awaken within her a far deeper regard than the combined results of curling-tongs and pomatum, or the outward flourish and glitter of his equestrian establishment.

Mike has a tender heart; any body can see that who visits his nice stables, and looks upon the plump, well-cared-for horses. He has a spice of vanity; the girls are responsible, in a measure, for this, for they have flattered him until he begins to think he may be good enough for any of them; but he only thinks of Nannie Bates as a fit and desirable companion for him, and he works diligently to get the means to buy them a home. Pat strives, with the same end constantly in view, and Nannie smiles on them both with her winning, happy face, never dreaming herself the motive-power to such untiring energy. She wonders why Pat puts so much of his earnings in the savings' bank, contenting himself with his old suit, which has grown quite rusty from such continual wear; and when Mike whispers to her, in a sly way, that he is trying to get a home to offer a certain fine girl that he wants for a wife, Nannie shakes her finger witchingly at Bidy, as if to say, "I've found you out now." Mike does not relish her obtuseness, but she seems so timid and shrinking, that he is backward about speaking his sentiments plainly. Besides, he has a real affection for her, and that always brings a certain reserve with it. What in the world is he to do? That rascally Pat has such a decided advantage in seeing her every day, and he can see that he has a great deal of influence over her. He does not really think she can hesitate between them, for Pat is so rough in his dress, and has such red hair, and straight at that; and Mike pushes his fingers through the bright curls, and gives another look at himself in the little mirror that hangs in his room in the stable. The self-complacency melts away, as the object becomes dearer, and there is a slight fear that some obstacle may spring up between him and his hopes. He'll risk but he can overcome it, though, but it would be pleasanter to have the way smooth and easy. There's Molly Ryan would give her right hand for him, and Katie Doyle says he's the only boy she will ever marry, and Helen Dhue left her last place because the mistress would not permit him to stay later than ten o'clock when he went to see her. "Oh! there were girls enough ready!" and he snapped his fingers at the willing ones that were in his mind, and dwelt yearningly upon the doubtful and uncertain. There's nothing strange in that—every body does so.

[Pg 258]

[Pg 259]

---

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

Time goes very fleetly where there is a real and substantial joy, a happiness that mocks all outward changes. It was thus in the humble home of Nannie Bates' mother, and also in the magnificent abode of the Minturn's, whose hearts were untarnished by the constant in-pouring of a lavish opulence.

Four years had elapsed since Nannie found shelter under that pleasant roof, and little Dora had learned to cling to her with an unwonted affection. Mrs. Minturn, too, had such a perfect confidence in the young nurse, and could trust the child to her care and love, as if she were a fond sister. She knows that Dora holds the dead Winnie's place in the warm heart, and that no word of bitterness or touch of anger can ever proceed from the faithful girl. She has just been watching them at play upon the walk, and has noticed Nannie's patience, at some petulant act of the child, and she is rejoicing in the treasure she possesses in Nannie, when Mrs. Bates requests to see her. She has come to take Nannie home. Mr. Bond is ill again, and the girl is needed to nurse him. She grieves very much that she is obliged to tear her from so nice a home; but the good man is entitled to her grateful services, and she has no alternative. Her own hands are ready and glad to wait upon the sick man, but he says "bring Nannie;" and she can not tell him no.

[Pg 260]

So the nurse must go; and she cries herself almost ill by the side of the sweet child, whose arm is still around her neck in its unconscious slumbers. It seems quite like laying Winnie away again, to turn from the little one that had so long been as her own. There is a duty in it, however, and she

sees it too plainly to try to evade it, so she disengages herself softly from the clinging arm, and kissing the little placid face, goes down to the kitchen to see Mike, who had sent up expressly for her. She had not the heart to refuse, when he had always been so kind to her, and perhaps she would not soon meet him again to thank him, for she knew Pat would prevent it if he could. Mike pretended not to notice her downcast looks, although he did perceive that something had occurred to sadden her, and he had a strong desire to comfort her. If it had been one of his horses in trouble, there would have been no difficulty in providing a remedy; but Nannie Bates was quite another thing; and the more he tried to find a solace, the more at a loss was he. Bidy had gone out on an errand, and all the other servants were absent, and he felt that it might be a good time to tell Nannie who it was that he was getting a house for; but the words stuck by the way, and it was in vain to try to force them out, they would not come at all.

[Pg 261]

Nannie looked at him in wonder, and almost in affright as he clutched at his blazing head in the very desperation of his feelings, and she could not account for the difference in his demeanor. Mike was usually such a merry good companion. Perhaps it was herself that scattered her sadness and dullness all about her; or was Mike sick? She ventured to ask him this.

"No—yes—no, he wasn't sick; he thought perhaps he wasn't so well as he was; but he guessed he'd feel better by 'm by; he didn't know what ailed him!"

Nannie told him she was to leave for home in the morning, and she did not know how long it would be before she should see him again, and she expressed her kind feelings toward him, and her appreciation of all that he had done for her; and she gave him a little heart made of bright silks, and stuck all round with pins, as a parting memento. It was not coquetish in her, for she had too much honest simplicity for that; but Mike was emboldened by it to move his seat from the other side of the room to the end of the table where she sat weaving a cord chain, and he had just taken up the work to look at it, when Pat came blustering in. He had seen Mike through the window, and his manner as he spoke to Nannie, was hurried and excited, and betrayed a tinge of anger. Nannie was as pleasant as ever, though sad at her approaching separation from Dora, and her gentle mistress; and she tried to draw the lads into an amicable conversation. It was all in vain on Pat's side though; and both were so strange and still that it was growing very uncomfortable for them all, and when Bidy and one of the other servants came in, Nannie took her work and left the room with a faint good night to both the discomfited youths.

[Pg 262]

"Tell mother I'll be home early, Pat," said she, as she passed him on her way to the door.

Mike arose and followed her into the basement hall, and handed her a parcel, which his timidity had thus far prevented his offering; and he so far overcame his bashfulness, as to tell her he should go for her to ride with him sometime.

"Not as you know of!" said Pat to himself, as he overheard the lad's plans, "it'll be many a day before Nannie Bates sits beside Mike Dugan, I'm thinking!" and he rushed past the couple like a madman, and hastened down the street, never stopping until he reached the attic room.

Then sinking into a chair by the window, he gazed out upon the bay whose waves murmured and foamed in the freshening breeze—a fit emblem of his agitated mood! "It's well," thought he, "that I didn't touch him; there might have been consequences! and 'tis better that I came directly home!"

There was not much rest for Pat that night! Every time he lost himself; there were visions of a young girl dashing along the streets, with Mike Dugan holding the reins of a restive horse, and as he attempted to reach the maiden, she would smile sweetly upon her companion, and turn from him with a contemptuous expression. Poor Pat! What a world of useless sighing and trouble! Nannie sits meantime in her chamber working upon the chain for a surprise to thee on the morrow, and her heart's honest love is inwoven with every knot; until there is not a link from beginning to end but is fraught with holiest feelings and wishes!

[Pg 263]

[Pg 264]

---

## CHAPTER XXXV.

Mr. Bond's pale face brightens up as Nannie enters the sick room, and he seems to rally again, but the physician says there is no hope of his restoration. He has failed very rapidly. A paralytic stroke has deprived him of the use of his right side, and it is very evident that he will not make one of the pleasant party in the sunny attic again. It is a great happiness to the weary man to feel that his work upon earth is almost over. He has done it more than cheerfully, even gladly! but he is not sorry to rest from it now, there's a great reward coming—besides the face of his merciful and loving Father, there is another, the gift of that same Father whom they both ever revered, that is winning him with its seraphic expression, and he is quite ready to go. There are some things to be settled, though, while he has the ability to do it, and he calls Pat and Nannie to him, and places the girl's hand in the lad's, blessing them doubly—first with the fadeless benison that cometh from above, sometimes through the petitions of a departing and righteous soul—and then with an earthly dower from the purse that had never been closed to the poor and needy, neither had unwisely nor imprudently emptied itself upon them. There was nothing else for Peter Bond to do but to compose himself, and peacefully await the parting moment. There were very profitable hours spent beside the sick man's bed; hours that left their impress upon the after-life of Mrs.

[Pg 265]

Bates and her two children, for Pat is as Nannie, now, the minister has made them man and wife beside the couch of their benefactor. It was by his express wish; what if they are young! So much the more closely will the sacred bonds be interlaced until no earthly power can loose them.

They demur, on account of the unseemliness of a joyous ceremony at a time, to them, so sad and trying; but it is a last request, and they yield. It is very hard to think that their kind friend is passing from them, and that they have no power to detain him; but so it is, and he falls asleep with his closing eyes fixed upon the face on the canvas, and the beloved name on his lips. There are a good many in to look upon him as he lies there so majestically calm. There is such a sublimity in the noble countenance now stamped with so sacred a seal!

There are no relations there, for he has outlived all of kindred blood; but there are others crowding around to get a parting glimpse of the kind face that has cheered them through many an adverse season, and the family of his adoption leave him not until the trees that shade the maiden's grave wave also over his, and the fragrance of the flowers which his own hand hath planted on the green hill-side afar off, breath upon the tombs of both united.

[Pg 266]

---

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

It is a very quiet subdued sort of night. A solemn stillness broods over the attic room where the bereaved trio are gathered. It is August again, and two of the group recall a bitter evening one August, long ago, when the pitiless rain cast them shelterless into the street—and their grateful hearts dwell upon the peace and comfort that resulted from that one, apparently adverse, providence.

The other member of the little circle dwells upon the single kind act that made his subsequent good fortune. There is no doubt in either mind of the especial guardianship of an Almighty power. Every little blessing, every happy consequence from what, at first, seemed an evil, is plainly before them, and the review of the few past years is working out a settled confidence in the overruling Hand.

Mrs. Bates thinks of the hours of heaviness when, a poor huckster woman, she trudged wearily along with her loaded basket, and of the many times she sought the miserable cellar without a morsel of bread for her famishing children, and her heart clings fondly to the memory of the real friend who wrought so glorious a change in her condition. Nannie goes back to the pinched and pallid infant in the darkened room, and the days and weeks of sadness spent away from the light and air, and she comes again to the happy home, and the angel sister, and the lovely little Dora—and a tear moistens her eye as she feels that the kind heart that has so long imparted to their life its purest pleasures has forever ceased to beat. Pat is more occupied with the bright present than with past ills. The vile place where he once groveled is erased from his mind by the hallowed sanctuary that is now his Christian home, and the blessed consciousness that Nannie Bates is his, now and forever, banishes every feeling of sadness, leaving room for no regrets save the one that Mr. Bond is hidden from them, to be seen no more on earth.

[Pg 267]

Pat has acquired such an universal benevolence since Nannie is so fast bound unto him, that even Mike Dugan is welcomed into their little circle with a true cordiality.

Mike is not alone, however, when he comes to sit an hour with his old friend, Nannie; but is accompanied by the blushing Helen Dhue whom he calls "my wife."

[Pg 269]

---

## ARCHIBALD MACKIE, THE LITTLE CRIPPLE.

---

## ARCHIBALD MACKIE.

---

[Pg 271]

## CHAPTER I.

"Oh! oh! mamma, dear, isn't it a pity he isn't a rich, boy like Cousin Willie? then he could have a carriage to take him about in, and nice clothes to cover up the hump on his back, and a pretty cane with a silver band every little way, and the people wouldn't push him about so, and call him 'ugly rascal,' as that great man did just now."

Kittie Fay's mother had noticed the sad object that was slowly moving up the street before her, trying in vain to keep his clumsy crutch out of the way of the passers-by, and she had heard the

rude and inhuman ejaculation of the nobly-formed specimen, whose inner soul must, she felt, be far more hideous than the stricken lad's outward being, since it could so cruelly taunt one on whom the hand of God had been placed in wisdom.

"Perhaps not 'a pity,' Kittie, darling," replied she, as she quickened her steps in order to overtake the boy. "We will try to find out whether it is or not, and you shall some day answer the question for yourself;" and she laid her hand gently upon the head of the poor little cripple, who had halted that he might get breath to proceed to his home. She was almost startled at the sweet yet sad face that was upturned to her gaze. There seemed such a depth of feeling in the blue eye, and such a calm and hallowed expression upon the pale features, that she hesitated for a moment, as if studying how to address herself to the lad. He was not like a common pauper, although the scanty rags scarcely covered his unsightly figure, and the old hat served only to keep the scorching sun from the very top of his head. He had not asked for money, and he shrunk away from the touch of the lady as if there were degradation in it, and leaned upon his crutch, with the sweet yet reproachful look still fixed upon her.

[Pg 272]

Perhaps it was a consciousness of the blessed sympathy that welled up from her motherly heart that relaxed his features into a half smile, and moved him to a half glad, half sad emotion; perhaps the memory of as dear a face that once beamed upon him with the same holy tenderness, stirred the long-time quiet depths within his young bosom, and sent forth the tear that lay upon his thin cheek! At any rate, the shyness and misery had vanished, and he stood intently gazing into the face of the lady until he seemed to have forgotten his misfortunes in the happiness of that one sacred moment. The gentle voice recalled him to a sense of his position, and he sighed heavily as she said, "Will you tell me where you live, my son? and may I sometimes go to see you with my little daughter?"

[Pg 273]

"*My son, my son!*" that was too much, for the pent-up torrent, and the poor lad burst into an agony of weeping. Years had passed since so blessed a sound had fallen upon his heart, and it awakened so long a train of fond recollections, henceforth to be only as a departed dream, that he could have no power to restrain the grief that struggled for vent. It wasn't the pity that moved him—oh! no. There was never an hour in the day, when he was exposed to the observation of his fellow-mortals, that some expression of commiseration did not reach his sensitive ear, and many a stranger would stop him with the words of self-complacent condolence that would send the hot blood over his white forehead, and excite in him a bitter feeling of rebellion against the Providence that ordereth all things aright. He could distinguish between a passing glance of loathing and contempt, and the heartfelt look of sympathetic sorrow, and his isolated spirit grasped at the slightest evidence of a kindred feeling, and treasured it up as the brightest and most precious of gifts.

Mrs. Fay was troubled by the tears she had so unwittingly occasioned, and was about to move quietly away, as she saw no prospect of an immediate answer to her question, and the people were beginning to be attracted to the spot by the scene, when the boy pointed in the direction of the bay, and said, tremulously, "I stay with my grandmother down there in a small house by the water, lady; and we shall both be glad to see you if you please to come;" and, as if fearing another glance, he hobbled off as fast as his infirmities would allow, and was soon out of their sight.

[Pg 274]

It was hard to go along day by day, with his withered limb and his protruding back, in the midst of God's fair creation, and feel himself an anomaly there. Shut up his ears and soul as he would against the coarse gibes that were often uttered at his expense, he could not fail to perceive the strange difference between himself and the crowd that hurried by him, nor to take in the wondrous beauty that would sometimes flit before his longing vision. The very thought that in his own person he was denied the excellence and majesty of a perfect development enhanced so much the more the value of these perfections in his estimation, and helped him to feel that of all the objects in the wide world, he was the most horribly repulsive. He did not mind the brutal sneers of the rabble that surrounded his grandmother's hovel on this day, however, for the sweet lady and the beauteous child were constantly before him, and the look so like his departed mother's; that had penetrated his inmost soul, exalted him far above the trivialities of earth, and he entered the door with a face so radiant, that his old grandmother cried out in surprise,

"Why, Archie, my boy, what's the matter with ye now? you look as if the angels had been with ye."

"And so they have, grandmother," replied the boy. "Do you remember what dear mother used to tell us? That all were God's angels that do His will; and what can be His will if not the outpouring of kindness and love upon all the world?"

[Pg 275]

"It is strange, child!" continued the old woman, raising her hands in utter amazement; "last night, and almost all the nights before it, the cloud has been upon ye, and to-night I'm frightened by the change," and she sat down with her hands folded upon her lap, not daring to turn from the lad "for fear he was crazed," as she said to herself.

"I know I have been dark, and gloomy, and wicked," replied he, "for I was maddened by the foolish and thoughtless; but I learned to-day that there are those who can forget the body and its defects, and see the real and perfect man that is hidden beneath. No, no, grandmother, I do not any longer wish to be otherwise than as God has made me, and I'll be valued yet for something better than this shell!" and the boy-man went away to his humble room, and shut himself in to dream out his future, while his bewildered grandparent wondered within herself what it all could mean.

There was little in that carpetless room, with its narrow cot, and its one chair, and its small window with the cracked and puttied panes, to inspire hopefulness or even cheerfulness, if the spirit looks to external objects for its coloring; and yet the one eye that pierced within the bosom of the solitary lad, saw the blessed light that was beginning to dawn there, and the invisible hand that so affectionately helpeth us in our necessity, was stretched forth to lift him out of the despondency that had hitherto pressed him continually downward.

[Pg 276]

The sun was near its setting, and the evening was coming on with its slow, midsummer pace, and he had sat for one whole hour beside the window, with bowed head, and clasped hands building up a castle, which, perchance might fall; perchance might resist the shock of ages, and prove the admiration of every beholder. What mattered it to him, so long as it served to divert him from the one baneful subject—his distorted self—and place him for the time being at least, in an atmosphere of glory and delight! It was better by far than the boisterous mirth of the rude boys whose riotous sport filled the open space near his dwelling with revolting and uncouth sounds; and these silent and intense yearnings after something higher and better than his present state, were almost sure to result in some real and noble achievement.

Not much could be found in any of his surroundings to encourage his lofty aspirations; what with the coarse father whose only mastery was of the trowel by day, and at night the pipe; and the simple grandmother who dwelt with wonder, and almost with alarm on every progressive step of the boy. As he looked from the small loop-hole that admitted the light and air to his humble room, there was naught before him save blocks of brick and stone, with a large square of ground intervening, which was unfenced and covered with rough stone, and the refuse from the adjoining houses; but that same uncultivated plot insured to him a wide expanse above, whither his longing soul often turned for the beauty and power that it met not on earth. The bay was shut off from his view by the broad and high masonry which his wealthy neighbors had erected between him and his chief joy, and the only glimpse of water visible to him now was a stagnant pond, on which dirty and ill-mannered urchins were constantly sailing their boats of paper or wood. One would have thought that there was nothing to attach him to so barren and unattractive a spot, and yet the greatest of all his anxieties was lest amid the encroachments of an ambitious and increasing population, the miserable hut that had become a palace to him in its hallowed associations, would fall under the ban of some authoritative power, and himself be cast forth into some new place where memory and affection had no hold.

[Pg 277]

The extensive traveler, whose mind has an unbounded range, can scarcely conceive of the immense value of a limited space to his equally acquisitive though less favored brother. Thousands, whose feet had wandered amid all the wonders of the earth, came back to their every-day plodding life with vacant brains and unexpanded souls, while Archibald Mackie, in his non-suggestive hovel, gathered big thoughts and exalted ideas, and grew majestic in intellect, even as he was diminutive in his outward frame. Not a stone upon the waste before him but could tell him its thrilling tale of weary heads pillowed thereon, when all other resting-places failed; of scanty meals spread out upon them for lack of a social board; and of forlorn and forsaken ones, sighing out their bitter complaints unto these flinty auditors for want of more attentive hearers. Not a block in the noble structures all about but could bear witness to many a sorrowing soul whose drooping body was sustained only by the thought of the needy ones at home, whose wants gave energy to every effort. Not a child amid the group that frequented the common play-ground near but spoke to him, either of blessed ties, and hallowed sympathies, and tender care, and watchful training, or of a broken circle, and chilled feelings, and an utter destitution of interest or culture. But these were all wearisome to him compared to the splendors that were revealed from the heavenly creation, where his gaze was so lovingly fixed on this evening, after meeting Mrs. Fay and her little daughter Kittie.

[Pg 278]

He could remember his mother more by the endearing fondness lavished upon him from his birth, than by any distinct impression of her features, but this night her face took the form of the strange lady's in his imagination, and made him sadder than ever as he looked upward to meet it.

"Wherefore, oh! wherefore wert thou taken from me, my mother!" said he, as he bowed still lower before God, as if crushed beneath the weight of so mighty a sorrow. "How can I be any thing without thy gentle guidance, and with none to help me out of my ignorance and nothingness?"

[Pg 279]

"With God nothing is impossible!" came the answer from his mother's Bible, which he had opened to the place that her own hand had marked, and Archie lifted up his heart and his head, and went out at the summons of his grandmother.

[Pg 280]

---

## CHAPTER II.

"What can I do for you, my darling?" said Mrs. Lincoln, as she bent over a languid form that was extended upon the sofa in front of an open door. The perfume of rare flowers was wafted to them from the cultivated borders without, and the rich foliage cast a soft shade upon the lawn, shutting out the intensity of the summer sun, and making the air bland and grateful. Pet hounds were gamboling about the room, and games and toys of every description were scattered all about in the greatest profusion. A stuffed chair, on rollers, was near the boy, and a garden chair stood upon the steps, ready for immediate use, and every thing around seemed fitted to minister to a diseased body and a capricious will. The lad drew pettishly away from the caress of his fond

mother, as he replied,

"It isn't of any use to do any thing at all for me; there's no happiness, anyhow! Why couldn't I have been like other boys, and not so ugly as to have to hive myself up here all the time for fear of ridicule?" and he threw his head back upon the cool hair pillows and murmured something which his mother did not hear, excepting that the last word was die. She had often heard the wicked wish that his life might not be prolonged; but how to lead him from the constant contemplation of his deformity so as to make him resigned, if not cheerful, had, as yet, been an unavailing study.

[Pg 281]

The pampering the luxurious tastes and propensities of her son had only fostered in him a craving and dissatisfied spirit, and engendered the feeling that every thing was to bend to his demands however foolish or extravagant. It was a pitiable sight! that gentle and fond mother vainly giving every energy to the effort to soothe and interest her son, while he, seemingly unconscious of her unwearied exertions, turned petulantly from all her kindness and love, and buried himself in gloom and fretfulness. "This thing is intolerably hot!" said he, as he threw back the collar of his fine white linen tunic, and bared his throat to the breeze that came faintly through the open windows; "I haven't felt comfortable to-day, and the night promises nothing better." Mrs. Lincoln took a broad fan from the mantle, and, seating herself by the youth, pushed aside the heavy hair from his brow and quietly fanned him, while she tried to draw his thoughts away from himself, and fix them upon something pleasing and instructive; but the mood was perverse, and she was about to despair when two little feet came patting through the hall, and Kittie Fay burst suddenly into the room.

"Oh! Willie," said she, bounding up to the couch, and kissing her cousin twenty times over; "you've no idea what a beautiful home you have, and what a happy boy you are! only think, I've seen somebody, just now, that had just such a thing on his back as you have; but it stuck almost through his ragged coat, and he had old ugly crutches, and a shabby hat, and he says he lives in a small house down by the bay, and Willie, dear, I'm going with mother, some day, to see him, and you shall go too, if you will, maybe it will make you sorry for him, so that you will give him something pretty from this nice room!" and the child's eyes wandered over the beautiful articles that were strewn around, and her little hand lay softly upon the forehead of the boy, who looked upon her with something of pleasure in his usually dissatisfied face. "Auntie Lincoln," continued she, leaving her cousin and leaning upon her aunt's knee; "please take me up to the big window in the study, I believe we can see that little hut from there, for there's an old woman comes out the door sometimes, and I guess that's Archie's grandmother."

[Pg 282]

"What does the child mean?" asked Mrs. Lincoln of her sister, who that moment entered the room; "she seems quite in earnest about a poor child whom she says she met in the street, and who is afflicted somewhat like our Willie. Is it so, Mary?"

"Ah, yes, and such a sad, sweet face, I shall not soon lose the impression. Such perfect patience and resignation! It made me really forget his crooked frame. Surely, dear Sarah, God makes us all equal, and it is ourselves alone that create a disparity. The calmness and Christian beauty that shone out of that poor boy's face, more than compensates for the distortion of his frame. We will find him out, if you please, some time, and I am sure we shall not repent it;" and Mrs. Fay cast an intelligent glance toward her impatient nephew, which was understood and appreciated by his mother, who gladly acquiesced in the proposal to seek out the strange lad.

[Pg 283]

Kittie, meantime had glided quietly from the room, and ensconced herself in a deep window in the library, where she stood gazing out upon a small hut that stood just visible in the distance. The night was bright and clear, and by the light of the moon that illumined the vacant space around the hovel, she was able to distinguish perfectly every object. The shabby group still gathered about the stagnant pond pushing out their little crafts, or wading in to guide them with greater skill, and now and then a coarse-looking woman would loiter across the space, and with no gentle hand, pull her struggling offspring homeward. The scene was a revolting one to the child, and she was turning to leave the spot, with one last look at the hut, when she perceived the old woman who had so often before arrested her attention, outside the door, and Archie himself near her, while a shaggy-haired man, with a pipe in his mouth sauntered back and forth in front of the house, occasionally stopping to address himself to one or the other of his companions. Kittie bestowed but a passing glance upon the woman and the man, and bent her fixed and interested gaze upon the boy, who sat upon the low step with his forehead upon his hand, and his sad figure almost doubled together. It was but a moment, however, before the head was raised, and the face turned toward the heavens, with a look so full of reverence and earnestness, that the delicate child shrunk away from her secret observatory, with the feeling that it was a sacrilege to witness the poor lad's sacred emotions, and with suffused eyes and a throbbing heart she left the spot in order to return to her petted cousin.

[Pg 284]

"I've seen him, Willie," said she, half lying across the heavy pillows and putting her mouth close to the youth's ear, "and he seemed so sad, and yet so happy! You wouldn't like it at all down in that mean place with such a looking man and woman to live with, would you, Willie?"

"I don't like any thing, Kittie, mean or not mean," muttered the boy. "To be sure," he continued, seeing her surprised expression, as her eyes fell upon the many comforts and luxuries with which he was surrounded, "to be sure I live in a great house and have plenty of money and books, and toys, and such things; but Kittie, what if you had this great hump on your back, so that every body would look at you whenever you were out, and pity and loathe you! I don't believe you would be any happier than I. I don't care, I wish I was dead, anyhow!" and Willie buried his head



in the pillows while his little cousin tried to soothe and comfort him.

"Perhaps I should think of it too much, Willie," said she, "and then it would make me fretful and wretched; but mamma says if we fix our minds on something pleasant, we shall forget the pains and troubles of life; and only think, Willie, this is all the ill you have, while Archibald Mackie is poor, and ragged, and an orphan besides!"

[Pg 285]

"Who's Archibald Mackie?" asked her cousin, "and what have I to do with him?—'tis as much as I can do to think of myself!"

"That's the very thing, Willie," replied the little reasoner. "If you would only try to put your mind on some body or something else, may be you wouldn't remember that you are at all unlike other people. I know mamma and Auntie Lincoln talk so about you very often when they are together; but I didn't tell you about Archie. You see, I've found out where he lives—in that hut that you can see from the library window, and he's the boy that we are to visit some day, dear Willie;" and Kittie fondled her deformed cousin, smoothing down the obtrusive hump, as if it were a graceful and comely thing.

[Pg 286]

---

## CHAPTER III.

One little bit of candle, and a few old school-books, and a mind swelling with big desires after knowledge, were beside the small window, long after the midnight hour had struck and the noisy city was hushed into a comparative calm. It did not signify that the bowed frame was wearied by a day of physical toil, or that the aching head pleaded for "tired nature's sweet restorer," or that a voice from the outer room came often to his ear, with the petition that he would no longer rob himself of his needful rest; there were new and holy impulses that refused to be put aside, and hungerings and thirstings that must be satisfied, and not until the candle gave out its last flicker did Archibald Mackie spare himself the pittance of slumber that was to prepare him for another toilsome day. Even in his fitful and nervous sleep was he mentally solving some abstruse problem, or following out some philosophical train of reasoning, while all the time in his dreams the strange lady would urge him onward in his tasks, smiling upon him with the sweet and gentle face. Forgetful of the simple hovel and its uncouth accompaniments, unmindful of the deformed figure, and the tattered raiment, and the taunts and jeers of an unfeeling multitude, the poor boy reveled amid visions of knowledge, and wisdom, and beauty, and love, as happy as if an angel form were resting where the hideous body lay.

[Pg 287]

The morning beams struggled feebly in at the little window as Archie tore himself from his pillow, again to apply himself to his books. It was such a wonder to him that he could for so long a period have cast them away for less satisfying pleasures. The bright dawn, too, was so filled with peace and purity, and he had hitherto dozed it off, never thinking that he had lost the most precious part of his existence. The air came in so refreshingly upon his brow, and the open space had not one revolting object to distract him from hallowed and exalted thoughts. The only sound that reached him was the slow and measured breathing of his grandmother through the thin partition, or the nasal performances of his father from the loft above. Archie's room was the one his mother had occupied ever since his remembrance, and miserable and empty as it was, to him there was an atmosphere of the purest delight. All other spots were trivial and commonplace compared to the one where the maternal blessing had been pronounced, and the maternal breath had ceased; and hardened indeed must the heart have been that could resist his desire that this one sacred spot might be consecrated alone to him. Here were the books from which her thin and tremulous fingers had pointed out to him the rudiments of that knowledge which his spirit so longed to compass. Here were gathered the few mementoes of her maidenhood—the trinkets from her early schoolmates, and the love-tokens from her rough but kind and affectionate husband—all disposed by her own hand, within the tiny cupboard, that came to be a sealed place to every eye but that of the child, whose mature mind could take in all their value. These alone, of all the objects about him, linked him to the dead mother. To be sure his fond old grandmother doted on the boy in her childish and simple way, and his father gave him all the love of which his nature was capable, but there seemed to him no connection between the spiritual image that so continually hovered about his pathway, and the coarse and material beings who seemed only to live for the things that give life and support to the body; and his high communings and yearnings found no sympathy in either of his well-meaning but obtuse relatives. To look upon the lad's occasional bursts of enthusiasm with a wondering and frightened stare, was all that the poor old woman could do to show that she even observed them, and as for the father, it was quite impossible to beguile him from his old and commonplace notions. The idea of listening to reading, or to the explanation of any of the mysteries of science, formed no part of his mental machinery.

[Pg 288]

"Book larnin'll do well enough for you, Archie, my boy," he would say; "but this thing," holding up his trowel in a fond sort of way, "has found me a good living for many a year, and as for amusement, my pipe keeps my mind off the trouble, so don't pester yourself trying to turn me into a new way, child, the old one suits me better!" It was not well for the imaginative and sickly youth to be left to his own wild and untutored fancies; but there was no help for it now, and he gave himself up to his studies and his dreams, looking no longer for sympathy from those around him, but gathering inward strength and self-dependence with every struggle for the mastery over his sensitive and morbid nature.

[Pg 289]

Little, however, as there was in Archie's home to aid him in his efforts after a higher attainment, he was not without a hidden but blessed influence. His mother's grave was just without the city, in the beautiful cemetery, and thither his weary feet often wandered when he was spared from his labor early enough, or on the precious Sunday, the day of days, especially to the poor. Glorious monuments of the most elaborate workmanship, temples, and majestic columns, and angel figures, were all nothing to Archie compared to the simple mound that told him of an undying love for the lonely and crippled one. No marble arose there in wonderful grace and beauty, no reclining seraph imaged the departed saint; but low down, beneath the green turf was the heart that leaped at the advent of her first-born son, and the eye that overlooked the blemish that all other eyes seemed to dwell upon, and the hand that was laid upon his head in the last sad moment. Naught else was needed to the few souls that cared for her memory. Was she not ever before them in the garb of purity and love! and yet among the boy's visions was a sacred spot remote from the common ground where necessity had placed his idolized parent, and a slab that should speak of a son's gratitude, and shrubs and flowers around to breathe their sweet odor above the lowly bed. So long as his mother's memory was kept fresh and green within him Archibald Mackie was not cut off wholly from the companionship and sympathy that is a need of every nature.

[Pg 290]

[Pg 291]

---

## CHAPTER IV.

The afternoon had been uncommonly sultry and oppressive, so that even the plants and trees appeared to droop and wither, and all about the city were hot and tired people lagging homeward as if every energy were utterly exhausted. Archie had been working unusually hard, so that the old pain had seized his back again, making him miserably despondent lest he should be wholly crippled, and thrown quite broken and helpless upon his struggling relatives, and he was panting toward the quarter of the city where his shelter was, with slow and weary steps, when suddenly, as he passed a bright saloon, he heard a joyous cry of "Oh! mamma, just look, there he is again!" and before he could get away, the pleasant face of the lady was bent upon him from the window of the carriage that stood before the door, and she motioned him to her.

Perhaps he would have heeded her summons if he had not seen an impatient and scornful countenance peeping curiously through the side-curtain. May be it was but his native pride that induced him to press onward with only a quiet and polite recognition of her notice.

"There, Willie, you've driven him away," said Kittie, frowning upon her cousin reproachfully. "How could you look so cross at him when you knew mamma wanted him to come up and speak to us? Well, I shall go to see him, whatever you do, that's certain," continued she, after a short pause, as the lad leaned back upon his seat without deigning a reply. Then taking up the thin hand that lay upon his knee, she kissed it affectionately as if to atone for the momentary pique against him; but her eyes followed the poor boy until he was no longer visible among the crowd, and she was thinking of the pitiful expression, and contrasting it with the trustful, hopeful one that she had last seen from the lonely library, and wondering what could make the difference. And she cared little for the drive, although they passed through beautiful streets and along her favorite haunts, by the bay, and out on the avenues and quite beyond the noise and dust of the city, in the midst of God's own fair and beautiful nature. The mother noticed the child's abstraction, and it saddened her to think of the shadow that comes over the brightness of one's early being, shutting out the loveliness and the grace even from the youngest heart.

[Pg 292]

It was hard to feel that an unsightly hump, and a woe-begone face were occupying the place that had hitherto been filled with images of joy and gladness; but Mrs. Lincoln was a wise mother, and would not try to divert her child's mind from the salutary lesson which the very shadow itself ever brings; so they moved on with the unbroken silence, save when Willie gave utterance to some pettish feeling, and then little Kittie would look at him with a deeper pity than poor Archie had ever called forth.

[Pg 293]

They were alone in the evening, after their return from their drive, and Willie was sitting in his easy-chair by the door, while his young cousin was upon the sill at his feet apparently absorbed in some intense subject, for her pet kitten was making sad havoc with the neat straw hat that had fallen from her head, and lay unnoticed upon the step, the ribbons already crumpled and wet by Miss Pussy's chewing; and Willie had twice spoken to her without an answer. It was rather too much for the impetuous youth to bear, and when he spoke again it was with a tinge of bitterness.

"I thought mother sent for you here to amuse me, Kittie, and not to waste all your pity upon a poor beggar whom you happened to meet in the street. I'm sure I might as well be without you, as to have you as dull and silent as you have been since you saw that miserable boy. Well, haven't you any thing to say yet," continued he, as she fixed her wondering and sorrowful eyes upon his face. "It's enough to tire any body's patience to speak, and speak, and speak, and no one to answer you but the echo of your own voice. That's the way it's always been; but I might have known it. Nobody cares for a deformed boy!" and the lad threw the bunch of flowers that his cousin had just before arranged for him, out the door and wheeled his chair further back, although he was not so far removed as to lose the reproachful glance of Kittie.

[Pg 294]

"Oh, Willie!" said she, "if you had only noticed poor Archie, as I did, and seen how troubled and worn he looked, and how the big drops stood all over his forehead, as he moved on with one hand

to his back, you wouldn't wonder that I don't want to talk and play to-night! It makes me so sorry because I can't help it any, and you know he's poor and has to work, when may be he's too sick and lame to do any thing."

"Why don't you pity me, Kittie? Here I have to sit, day after day, moping in this dull old house; I can't go any where, and I can't do any thing as other boys do, and there don't any body care, either, but you all seem as merry and happy as if I were the most favored person in the world. You needn't look at me with your great staring eyes, as if I were the wickedest boy you ever saw; perhaps you'd be better if you were in my place; but I'm not bad enough to wish you there, much as I wish to cast off this loathsome body and find myself upright and perfect. Come, come, Kittie, we won't quarrel any more; I didn't mean to hurt your feelings," said he, as the tears rolled down the child's face and fell upon her white dress. "You mustn't mind when I am cross, but must love me, whatever any body else does. I don't like to feel as I do so often; but how can I help it? Every thing goes wrong with me. I thought when you came I'd got somebody that wouldn't get tired of me, and it frets me to see you thinking all the time of that beggar-boy."

"I do indeed love you, dear Willie," replied his little cousin, rising, and clasping him around the neck; "but I wish poor Archie had time to lie down on a soft couch like yours, and had a kind mother to kiss him, and fan him, and soothe away his pain, as you have. I'm afraid to hear you talk pettishly, when you have so many comforts, for mamma says 'God sometimes takes away our good things if we do not know how to prize them and be thankful for them,'" and the child ran to her mother, whose voice she heard in the hall.

[Pg 295]

It was very well to leave the murmuring boy alone just then, for her little prattle was not without its effect upon her cousin, who began to think that perhaps there were others in the world as miserably off as himself.

"I'll go with Kittie to see the poor lad, any way," soliloquized he. "It won't do me any harm, and may be it will amuse me a little while."

Still selfish, poor youth! If it had only been, "May be it will amuse him a little while," then the obtrusive hump wouldn't be so heavy, and the murmuring, repining spirit would become joyous and grateful. But we will have patience with thee for a while yet. It is so easy, with this healthy, robust frame, to reproach the diseased and fretful one. We will try to be lenient toward thy complainings.

[Pg 296]

---

## CHAPTER V.

The sun had been up for a long time, and the old grandmother had the breakfast upon the table. She hadn't called Archie, for she knew the boy's habits, and supposed he was busy with his books as usual, so she helped her son to his hasty meal, and saw him and his trowel and pipe a long distance without the door before she ventured to disturb her grandchild's quiet. Thump, thump, thump, upon the bedroom wall, and not an answering sound, yet, after a moment, there seemed to be a stir, and some words that were not intelligible to her obtuse ear. She didn't wait much longer, but lifted the latch and entered his room.

What ails the boy? His eyes are wild and fierce, and his figure is tossed from side to side of the narrow bed, while he mutters of his mother, and of a sweet lady, and a gentle child; and then he presses a parched hand to his brow, and begs them not to heap up the hot coals there, but to bring him ice, ice; and then he clinches his fist and strikes at the old woman who has approached him to try to calm him, but she has no power over his ravings, and she perceives that he has a terrible fever; and then she remembers that he would go supperless to bed the night before, and that he looked paler and more weary than usual, and she chides herself for not coming earlier to see if he was ill. She wishes some body would come; it wouldn't do to leave him alone, and what can she do by herself? There's a knock at the outer door, she thinks—no; it is only a stray goat that frequents that quarter of the city, and has come for her accustomed offering of food. She hasn't any heart to stop now, and the disappointed animal goes off again to try her next neighbor. There's no milk-man, nor baker, nor butcher's boy, nor grocer to come to her, for they do all their own purchasing at the small shop near, and so the morning wears on, and the lad grows more delirious, and talks about coffins, and death, and horrible sights, and just as his grandmother, too frightened to neglect the case longer, locks the door of his room, and gets her bonnet on to find a doctor, a lady gives a slight rap and enters the outer door, followed by a young girl. She hears the delirious tones, and immediately knows that the boy is ill, and the old woman gladly accepts her kind offer to sit by him until she returns with the physician, though she says it is too much for a lady to consent to, and she is fearful the boy will do her some harm in his raving mood.

[Pg 297]

"Don't be troubled," said Mrs. Lincoln, "I'm not afraid;" and she turned the key, and was soon beside the sufferer with her delicate hand upon his brow, and her tender words soothing his horrors all away. It was wonderful what a charm there was in the gentle eye that was fixed upon him, and the soft touch that cooled the burning forehead! Quite an hour she sat in the same position, breathing out tones that only a mother ever learns, and the lad lay quiet and calm, looking up into her face with a pleased and satisfied expression, save when she moved as if to leave him for a moment, the paroxysm would seize him again. The physician came, and pronounced the disease brain-fever brought on by over-fatigue and exertion, and Kittie stood with

[Pg 298]

her pitiful glance fastened upon him, and she knew then why he was so distressed the day before when he passed them as they sat in the carriage, and why the resignation and trust had gone.

He did not know her now, and her mother sent her home with the promise that she should come often, if he got better and would like to see her; but she remained day after day nursing him as his own mother would have done, until the mind was clear again, and he was conscious of her grateful presence. All through the long period of his delirium he had fancied that his mother's spirit was beside him ministering to his wants, and whenever she went from his sight, for a moment, he kept up a lamentable moaning until she was there again, and then he would lay for hours without even a murmur or a sound.

No wonder she felt a mysterious interest in the boy as he grew stronger, and would so often bend her steps to his humble dwelling to read or talk to him. And Kittie, too, desired no better reward for good behavior than to spend an hour at poor Archibald Mackie's. They had learned all about his history now, and he had told Mrs. Lincoln how much she had reminded him of the dead mother, and what a help her sympathy had been to him in his studies, and they had spoken of Willie and his troubles, and Archie forgot the sour face that had sent him away from the carriage, and thought only of the boy's crippled fate, so like his own. Like, and yet unlike—to the casual observer there was a vast difference between the forlorn, poverty-stricken, ragged Archie, and the petted, and pampered, and richly-clad Willie; but to the eye of the unwearied watcher who had witnessed the patience and the goodness of the sick lad, and contrasted it with the petulance and sinfulness of her nephew, the gifts of God were not unequally distributed.

[Pg 299]

[Pg 300]

---

## CHAPTER VI.

It was astonishing how many friends Archie had among the poor—there was Mahan Doughty coming every day with her apron full of wild flowers which she had wandered a long way to find, and which she carefully disposed in the little pewter mug that stood on the table beside the lad's bed—and there was old Patrick Marsh, night and morning, with a fresh cup of milk from his one precious goat—and Sally Bunt with the only egg her hen-house could produce, and a host of young voices often at the door with a hushed tone of inquiry concerning the invalid. Oh! it isn't wealth that brings the greatest and purest joy! Mrs. Fay felt that as she saw the blessings of an unbought interest pouring in upon the humble inmate of the small hovel, and she adored more than ever the justice of the Almighty giver who dispenseth with such perfect measure to every living soul.

The lad loved the flowers, and dwelt upon their beauty as he lay languidly upon his bed, and they were full of happy teachings to him—better, far better than many a more boisterous exhorter. He couldn't look upon their wonderous and perfect mechanism with a cold or unbelieving heart; but his best and warmest affections went upward with their sweet odor, and were acceptable to Him who had tipped every petal with a heavenly message.

[Pg 301]

Archie also loved the rough visage of old Patrick, and was convinced of the value of a kind and generous heart, by the simple offering that was so grateful to his enfeebled state. Patrick had always looked upon the boy with a pride not unmixed with awe. He could discern the symptoms of a higher destiny awaiting the lad, and had always treated him with a certain degree of reverence and respect, and now that the youth was so helpless and weak, the strong arm of the true old man lifted him back and forth, and held him fondly upon his breast as if he were his own little child, and so there grew an enduring sympathy between them that was to stay both the tottering and the crippled.

Sally Bunt, too, standing before the sick boy with the tempting gift in one hand, and a finger of the other bashfully thrust into her wee mouth, was an object of some affection to Archie, who would call the little girl up to him, and smooth down her frizzled hair with his tremulous hand, and thank her so warmly for the one egg, that she would go away with as much joy in her heart as if she were a queen, and had just tendered her costly offerings, and concluded her interview with the wisest man.

Nor were the young children who gathered around the house for news of the convalescent, forgotten or unheeded; but the pale face would appear at the small window to greet them, and the feeble voice would speak out its sincere gratitude. The hours were very lonely after he began to get well, yet was confined to his close room; and Archie almost felt as if he could be always so very, very ill, if it would insure to him the presence of the gentle lady, who came now but an hour a day to see him.

[Pg 302]

The old grandmother was obliged to keep closely to her work now that the boy was disabled, and the father had only the early dawn and the late evening to spend in the sick-room; but these were pleasant seasons to his child, for they developed the good and the tender in the man's nature, and diminished the distance between the two, so that the son could again feel the link that bound his father to the departed.

They could now talk together of his mother and look over the little mementoes that were so treasured, and both were happier for the hallowed communion.

"You'll lay me by her when I'm gone, lad, won't you?" said the man. "I couldn't sleep elsewhere,

and I've faith to think you'll live to see me buried, much as we all watched for your own last breath."

The boy didn't like to talk of death now. He had passed through the danger, and had a motive in wishing to live. There was a great deal to be done—a mighty work, but he felt strong to do it—and when he was alone he hobbled across the room, and unlocked a small chest and found a portfolio that had been his mother's, and every day the white pages grew black with marks; but bright and radiant with the overflowing treasures of a rich and gifted mind. Like a miser he hid the product, down, down, amid heaps of household rubbish in an uncared for nook by the chimney, and only drew it forth to add to its value when there was no witness that could betray him. It was a worthless-looking thing, that old leather portfolio, with the wear and tear of years upon it; but the boy felt a sort of inward consciousness that the gloomy and dismal hiding-place beneath the refuse truck was not its irrevocable destiny; and this feeling buoyed him up when he was inclined to despondency or sadness, and kept him busy with his new labor during many an otherwise weary and painful hour. And so his days passed on until the pain and the lassitude left him, and he could again go forth to work amid the erect and strong, with his own frame bent still lower by his long sad illness.

[Pg 303]

[Pg 304]

---

## CHAPTER VII.

"Cousin Willie, I have not seen him for several days, and I do want to go so much!"—besides, pleaded the little girl, "you promised to walk there with me some day, long ago, and you have never been there yet."

The cousins were standing together on the green slope, whence they could see the poor boy's home, and Kittie's attention had been particularly drawn to the spot by a crowd of laborers that were gathered around the house seemingly engaged in some exciting subject, for they were gesticulating violently, while the old woman stood without the group wringing her hands, and now and then applying her apron to her face with a passive sort of grief.

"I do believe *that* Mr. King, who bought so much land here last week, means to pull down Archie's cottage!" exclaimed Kittie, looking earnestly at the men, whose motions she had been anxiously watching for some time. "I heard mamma say she was afraid they would have to leave, and that would almost kill Archie. Will you go with me, Willie? I must know about it. Only think! to have to go away from the place where he was born, and, may be, live in a room with ever so many families, just like little Peter Bell; it is really dreadful!" and the child moved toward the gate, with her hat in her hand, and her hair waving in the fresh breeze, unconscious of every thing save that something threatened Archie, in whose interests she was now wholly absorbed.

[Pg 305]

"It's no use; you mustn't go there now, Kittie," said her cousin, who had, thus far, been but a silent witness of the scene upon the vacant space, and of the child's unwonted emotion. "What good do you think a little girl like you could do among so many grown men? I know they mean to pull down the house, for old Patrick Marsh came to father this morning to see if he would let Archie live in the little place of ours, just down here by the vegetable-garden. He said Archie was not able to be confined to a store, and that he would be just the hand to keep the garden nice."

"Oh! that will be grand!" replied Kittie, clapping her hands and dancing for joy. "I'm almost glad they will take it down—only he likes it so, living there, and it will take a long time to get used to another place," added she musing thoughtfully, with her finger upon her lip. "But it's greener, here, Willie," she continued, bounding along until she stood beside the spot in question; "and then we can come often to see him, you know. Won't it be nice? Oh! I'm so happy!"

"Not so fast, Kittie; father left it to me altogether. He knew it would be unpleasant to have that deformed boy always before me, and so he would give no answer to old Patrick without my consent; and I don't believe I shall say yes very soon. I'm sorry Jim went away, for I loved to come down here sometimes while he had the place; he always had something nice to say to me."

[Pg 306]

"And yet Jim was wicked, dear Willie, and used to beat Brindle, and kick the horses every day; and I heard him call you names to Bridget once, when you told him to wheel you about the garden. To be sure he didn't know I was near; but if he had really liked you, he would have felt the same and acted the same every where. I hope you'll let Archie come, he's so gentle and kind, and it will be a good deed on your part, too, Willie."

"I don't know," muttered the lad; "it's bad enough to have one cripple about without multiplying them. People would call this the hospital, or the asylum for the deformed, if they saw many such objects around here."

"Never mind *people*, Willie; it's better to feel that you are doing good than to be guided by what people would say and what people would think. Mamma teaches me to go by that rule, and I'm sure I'm a great deal happier for it. I never think now of any body when I want to do any thing, but go right on and do it, if I think it is best. Only let Archie come, and you'll see what a difference it will make to your life. He is a good boy, and he knows a great deal, too; more than I can learn for a long, long time, so that it will do us no harm to be with him. Mamma says she does not care who I associate with, if it is a good and intelligent child. All she wants is to keep me away from the wicked and ignorant, and she never says no when I ask to go to Archibald

[Pg 307]

Mackie's; and I'm sure my mother knows!" and Kittie seated herself on the bench beside the vacant house, waiting for some decision from Willie, who was still wavering.

If he should consent, there would be a constant remembrancer of his own defective person ever before him; it was quite enough to be sensible of his condition without so palpable an image haunting the precincts of his home. Then Kittie would be drawn from him to the poor boy, who had already enlisted more of her sympathies than he had ever done. He would like to please her, though, and it would be a sort of patronage toward the boy that might exalt himself in Kittie's estimation.

It was very singular how much influence the child exercised over him. He was pettish and cross toward her, and made it a great condescension to do any thing that she proposed; and yet, to thwart her in any one thing made him uneasy and miserable. "What would Kittie think?" and, "Would it please Kittie?" were questions that he was more willing to put to himself than to acknowledge to any body else. He could not mistake his cousin's wishes now, and he meant all the time to gratify her, but the perverse nature would have its vent, and so he said, very ungraciously,

"There's one thing—the pony needs better care than Jim ever gave it, and perhaps Archie might be gentle with it, and his father can mind the garden at odd times. I've half a mind to try him; but he must know his place, and not be thinking himself an equal just because we choose to benefit him."

[Pg 308]

Kittie did not care what he did, nor how he got there, so that he really had the permission, and before Willie had time to alter his mind she had flown out the gate, and was fast nearing the humble cottage. The workmen had dispersed, and the door and windows were closed, and the curtains all down, so that the child thought nobody was there, but she went quietly in, as she had been accustomed, and tapped at Archie's room. There was a sound of voices within, and she heard the old woman murmuring against the new proprietor of the ground for disturbing her in her old age; but she was scarcely prepared for such a burst of grief as met her from Archie, as she entered the room and spoke to him in her soothing gentle manner. His treasures were lying upon his bed ready for the packing in a small box that he held in his hand, and his books and clothes were piled up on the table awaiting their final destination.

The child had never seen him so pale and troubled in all his trying illness as he now looked, and his unconcealed, unsuppressed sorrow frightened her so that she had scarcely a word to say, until he became somewhat calm, and then she told him of the small house on her uncle's domains, and the permission he had to occupy it. "It is so much better than this, Archie!" said she, looking out the window upon the barren space, and around the room at the dingy and tottering walls. They were both very grateful—the old woman and the boy—but nobody could tell with what tenacity their affections clung to every splinter of the old building, and what a bitter step it was, that last one, over the threshold of their lowly home.

[Pg 309]

[Pg 310]

---

## CHAPTER VIII.

The morrow had come, and the old woman knew that the word had gone forth against her humble tenement, and that there could be no appeal, so she quietly betook herself to the vacant cottage within the grounds of Mr. Lincoln with the feeling that "it was not long that she had to stay upon the earth anyhow, and it mattered little where she spent her few remaining days."

Archie said nothing to his grandmother about his own movements, but while she went her way to the new home he turned toward the beautiful cemetery, and there, upon the head of his mother's grave, he deposited the box of treasures, not with any false or superstitious notion, but from a sacred and loving impulse. It had seemed such a sacrilege, to him, to remove them from the spot where her own hand had placed them; besides, there was no hallowed nook in the strange home, and this was why he sought the most consecrated part of earth for these precious relics. All about, upon the graves of the poor, he had seen similar tokens, and had observed that even the most careless and light-hearted passer-by had never stooped to touch what a pious affection had made sacred. Some, it is true, had looked with contempt upon these simple tributes, and had suffered the words "heathen fanatics!" to escape their lips; but these same persons would spend hours before the costly ornaments above a richer body, and find in them no motive but a commendable and proper respect, whereas the Omniscient could note the pride engraven upon the one, and the sincere and earnest feeling that marked the other. It didn't matter much to Archie what any body said or thought. He knew that there his treasures were safe, and he felt them to be an appropriate monument until his secret wishes respecting his mother's ashes could be attained, so he left them, and sauntered slowly away. Gay parties, whose only motive in seeking the dwelling-place of the dead was the gratification of the outward senses, looked from their luxurious carriages upon the poor hunchback with a careless indifferent feeling as he passed along with bent frame and serious air, little dreaming of the great soul that tenanted so feeble a body.

[Pg 311]

One alone of a merry group paused, and leaned eagerly forward to give some token of recognition to the lad, whose errand there she could readily guess. "What is it, Kittie?" asked half a dozen of her light-hearted companions, as she smiled sweetly and bowed to the boy. "It can't be

human;" and then they laughed as the child's sad face looked reproachfully at them. As if this miserable shell that, however attractive and beautiful now, must, one day, be clothed in a loathsome corruption, could affect in any way the glorious and undying principle within! Not "human!" because clad in an uncouth and unsightly garment! as well might we spurn the immortal spirits for once dwelling in clayey tenements, as to make a mock and derision of those who, for some wise but hidden purpose, are made to walk this earth with marred and uncomely figures. Not "human!" Kittie knew how much of humanity there was in the sorrowing heart that was even now beating with a pure and filial affection, as the weary steps plodded through the pleasant avenues. She remembered the deep and grateful feeling that was so constantly manifesting itself toward her gentle mother as she ministered to him on his sick bed, and she could appreciate his noble, and generous, and loving nature, while others saw but the distorted figure that came between them and an otherwise undisturbed beauty. Take heart, poor youth! There are kindred loving eyes on earth that beam even for thee!

[Pg 312]

[Pg 313]

---

## CHAPTER IX.

Several weeks have passed, and the old woman takes wonderfully to the new place. She begins to feel really glad for the change that was so terrible in the anticipation. It is so green and quiet all about the house—no rude boys shouting in her ear as she steps without the door, or throwing mud-balls into the open windows; no brazen, neglected girls to call her low names, or pin dirty rags upon her gown as she walks about the premises; and then every thing within the walls is so clean and nice—no threatening cracks in the white ceilings; no dilapidated walls to totter, or worn planks to shake at every tread; no half-starved rats, stalking about seeking somewhat to devour; and no odious effluvia from the waste lot, or the stagnant pond, stopping her breath as she looked from door or window. Oh! she could not have believed that any thing that seemed such an evil would prove so great a good. The breeze came into the clean rooms so laden with the breath of flowers, and the cheerful notes of birds were all the time in her ears; and in the quiet evening, she, and the boy, and his father could sit upon the sill of the door and talk to their heart's content, without one noisy interruption from the rude crowd, that used to make it so difficult to have one moment's pleasant intercourse. Archie was more cheerful, too, and took possession of his little chamber with such a manifest delight that his grandmother had nothing more to desire. His window looked out upon the old quarters, and he was thus enabled to contrast the beauty and the quiet with the sad unrest of his former home; and as he noticed the rough group so constantly upon the open space, and remembered how often he had been the butt of their unfeeling jests and cruel sport, he rejoiced at the high wall that prevented their ingress into his patron's territory, and felt as if he had indeed an impregnable fortress to resort to in every emergency.

[Pg 314]

It was just the spot for meditation, too, and the musty portfolio came forth oftener from its obscurity, and began to grow really bulky, and that not only in size but in matter.

Nobody would have thought him more than a common lad as he bent to weed the vegetables and flowers, or brushed down the white pony, or sauntered about the grounds with bowed head, and hands behind him; but Mrs. Fay had fathomed the secret depths, as from time to time she sought to draw him out from the reserve in which he was enveloped, and Kittie knew by her own pure and blessed instincts, all that there was of light and wisdom in the poor boy, who had attracted her from the very beginning. True, Cousin Willie would take every opportunity to disparage the lad, but what cared she? It is not so easy to bias the mind of a properly-taught child; and her own heart told her what was good in the boy and what was evil in her cousin. As for Willie, he walked about like some evil genius, making the deformity of the body more conspicuous by the deformity of the soul, and casting a huge and ugly shadow over the lovely home that God had so graciously given him. There was a constant antagonism between him and the poor lad; not that Archie ever gave occasion of offense, or encouraged the antipathy that he could perceive in Willie; but his patience, and gentleness, and intelligence, were a constant reproach to his rich young neighbor, who so continually wearied his friends by fretfulness and ill-humor, and who spurned all the efforts of his tutor, never trying to improve the privileges lavished upon him, but deeming it very hard that he should be expected to confine himself to books—"As if it were not punishment enough to carry about a repulsive body!" he would say.

[Pg 315]

Ah! quite enough. This Archie felt as he applied himself diligently to the task of adorning and embellishing his higher and imperishable nature. And the lady and the child had learned to look at that only, so that they really forgot often the outer man, as the soul-lit eyes sparkled and beamed upon them when they talked together. *He* did not forget it, and so it served its true purpose, making him humble, and keeping under the majesty of his spirit that might otherwise have grown into a revolting and self-sufficient pride. It is so vain to struggle against these fetters and restraints; God knows what we need, and it may be ever the mightiest souls that are curbed while on earth by some physical infirmity.

[Pg 316]

[Pg 317]

---

## CHAPTER X.

Patrick Marsh was a cooper, and lived down close to the water's edge in a shanty of his own construction. He had taken possession of the spot long before there were any signs of human habitation near, and nobody had ever doubted his right of ownership. Yet as he beheld the slow but sure encroaches upon his vicinage he began to tremble even for the meager handful of earth on which his domicil stood, and used often to go up to Archie's to condole with the old lady when her own little resting-place was threatened.

Now he was filled with wrath as he passed the heaps of boards, stone, and rubbish, and viewed the preparations for the erection of a large and noble mansion, and he strode hastily on, that he might *effervesce* in the old woman's presence, for he wished to convince her of his interest and displeasure, and a sober pace would have brought back the habitual placidity to the old man's heart. It was not natural for him to cherish the slightest degree of malice or resentment, and the very consciousness that he was out of his usual way distressed and vexed him, so that when he reached the quiet cottage, it was delightfully soothing to find the grandmother contentedly sitting knitting—work in hand, beside the door in no need of comfort, if one might judge by the cheerful, happy expression.

[Pg 318]

"Such a blessing, Betty," said he—they were children together—"such a blessing to find you so easy and nateral-like. I begin to believe the Lord's hand is raly in it all, and that He always gives as good as He takes. I used to think there wasn't no place like your old 'un; but it wasn't a touch to this purty spot!" and he gazed about him with evident satisfaction, stroking the hounds that loved to wander from their young master's presence to the sunny room, where there was always a kind word and a gentle pat for them.

"Archie's better, too," said the old woman with an exultant chuckle, as she shuffled to the stairs-door to call her grandson.

Patrick didn't think him better, as he noticed his flushed cheek and trembling, fluttering frame, and he held his hand a long time in his own, now counting the quick pulse, now pressing it warmly and fondly.

"You'll leave the books, my boy, and be more in the garden, won't you?" said he in an earnest, anxious tone. "Depend upon it that's the only thing for you."

Archie did not know what he meant by the "only thing," neither could he tell why Patrick went so suddenly out brushing his sleeve across his eyes, all the way to the gate; but the circumstance weighed with him, and it made him jump from his study so soon as the least symptom of weariness came, and resort to his out-of-door occupations. Kittie had gone off to boarding-school and the boy sadly missed the white figure that he used to watch so fondly for in the walk that led to his cottage. She would not come again for many a year, and there was loneliness and desolation in the very thought; but so it must be, and he strove to find solace in his books, and with his plants; but every thing recalled the past. His books were thrown aside for awhile, because she was not there to question him as to their contents, and the flowers were hueless and scentless, since the eye that loved so to look upon them, and the sense that delighted so in their sweet odor were gone. Willie, too, missed the gentle cousin that bore his caprices so patiently, and he murmured at the decree that banished her from his presence. "She knew enough to please him, and what more could they want?" "That was all such a little mouse as she was good for!"

[Pg 319]

The "little mouse," though, made a great hole in the house, and there was nothing in all the big world that could fill it acceptably to the lad, and so it remained empty until the school-days should be accomplished, save that her shadow was ever there, palpable—to the vision of the two lads at least. How differently was she cherished!—by the one as a grateful sort of appendage that contributed vastly to his comfort in various ways—to the other as a guardian presence, inciting him to every virtue and grace, and sanctifying and spiritualizing his whole being. Strangest of all mysteries, the transforming power of that wondrous and precious essence!

[Pg 320]

Thanks be to Him who has so diffused it over this lower world that there is no spot that may not be akin to heaven!

[Pg 321]

---

## CHAPTER XI.

Mrs. Lincoln's time was wholly taken up in inventing new pleasures for her son, so that she had not one moment for the poor youth at the foot of the garden, who, but for the benevolence and kindness of Kittie's mother, would have led a weary life of it indeed.

Archie's father had, at last, laid down both trowel and pipe, and was taking his long rest beside the dead wife. The boy had purchased a small lot in a secluded and romantic part of the cemetery, and there he had both parents placed, in one wide grave, with the box of treasures between them, and above them a large white cross with a simple inscription. The lot was fenced around with a hawthorn hedge, and here and there a rose bush grew luxuriantly. There was room for himself and for the old grandmother who was now terribly decrepit, so that she was unable to take any care of the house, and Patrick Marsh had consented to let his little shanty and come, with good Molly his wife, to look after the lad's comfort, for they had no child, and Archie was nearer to them than any living being. Good Molly was of rough and ungainly exterior, but within,

[Pg 322]



the very impersonation of tenderness and love, and this happy and blessed temperament had gained for her so flattering an appellation wherever she was known. Little children would gather around her in the street and hold on by her apron or gown, fondling and caressing her hands, and even her feet, as if she were some good angel—and so indeed was she to many a lone and forsaken one, who had found care, and food, and shelter, beneath her lowly but hospitable roof. It wasn't strange then that, with such a heart, Good Molly should consent to leave the home that was endeared to her by a thousand associations in order to watch over the failing and imbecile old woman and her diseased and lonely grandson.

Neither she nor Patrick felt themselves competent to mingle in the youth's higher and holier sympathies; they were conscious that they were of altogether a different mold; but there were bodily wants that none knew better how to meet than the nice housewife, whose skill in such matters few could contest. The dainty bit was ever tempting, and the linen was pure and white, and the neat chamber inviting even to the most fastidious taste, so that there would have been nothing wanting to Archie's comfort or joy were it not for the void that but one could fill. "It was foolish to think of *her!*" that he so often repeated to himself, yet think of her and dream of her he did, and all the time grew thinner and thinner, and paler and paler, until he seemed some ghostly shadow moving about the grounds. Five years had passed since she came down the green slope and put her little hand in his to bid him a long good-by. It was the summer time, and he remembers that the old elm under which he sat was just in the fullness and glory of its foliage; the hour, too, is distinctly in his memory; the dreary and sad twilight, and the breeze's soft play over the waving grass, and the hum of the insects, and the murmur of the city's noise that came pleasantly from the distance, like the moving of far-off waters. Oh! these things can never die out of his remembrance. How can they! Doesn't he cherish them religiously, coming always at the vesper time to the same spot to live them over and over again?

[Pg 323]

Even through the dreary winters he but closes his eyes and the verdure is there, and the beauty.

No need of that to-night, however, for the chilly season has again passed away, and the old elm is rich in her emerald robes, and the breath of the soft winds is upon him, and the same murmur in his ear. There is only the small hand and the gentle words wanting to make it all a precious reality. Is it his fancy that at this moment brings them so palpably to him? Is the vision of a graceful figure, and a white dress, and a pure face beaming upon him with the lovely expression only a delusion of his excited mind! Or is it really her own voice that comes to him so earnestly. "Oh! speak, Archie, pray speak! don't you remember Kittie?" It was of no use to call upon him, the shock was too much for his delicate organization, and whiter than the spotless muslin was the brow that the maiden loved, as she supported the drooping head, and strove to recall the fainting breath.

[Pg 324]

His heart beat more painfully than ever as the warm life-blood flowed evenly again, for that one moment had told him that he loved, and the revelation was as death. To linger upon the earth, to see and hear her continually, and to press back the deep and springing emotions that were ever welling up toward her. How could he do it! it were worse than death itself! And yet he spoke calmly and naturally as she walked with him to the cottage, and quietly watched her as she talked with the old people; but the light in his heart went out as she passed over the threshold into the stilly night—and the struggle was a victorious one.

Kittie was pondering upon it all—the agitation, and the pallor, and the overwhelming joy, and a secret delight filled her soul as she sought again the tree. There was no wavering of purpose as the vow went forth from that same consecrated place to be true to the convictions that she now felt. How long a period had elapsed since she stood there before. She is no more forgetful of it than Archie, and she draws forth from her bosom a tress of raven hair, and looks upon it while it is bathed in the moonlight, wondering, meantime, how she had dared to cut it from his head as he leaned against this same tree so long, long ago. True, he did not know it, it was so slyly done; but nothing could tempt her to a like act again. Not that she is sorry for the deed—ah! no. This little talisman will ever be most precious unto her. But the brow seemed so hallowed now; there was a mystic light upon it, as though a beam from Heaven were shining directly there, and a superstitious awe crept over the heart of the young maiden as she remembered the cold dews that her hand had felt as she stroked back the clustering locks.

[Pg 325]

[Pg 326]

---

## CHAPTER XII.

The beauty, and luxury, and lavish tenderness that had continually surrounded Willie during his cousin's absence, brought no corresponding loveliness, and richness, and gratitude within, and Kittie found it more difficult to bear with the querulous, fitful temper than before her long separation from him. Day after day he would require her to sit with him reading aloud some foolish and distasteful thing which was suited to his weak and uncultivated intellect; or she must walk or ride, as he pleased, giving up her own occupations and plans whenever they interfered with his amusement. Time and again the question would recur to her, "Why should I give myself up to the effort to do good, where it is so evident that I can do nothing?" and then her aunt's kindness in giving her mother and herself so welcome a home when they were deprived of their earthly supporter, and the wish to make some return for all the love bestowed upon her in her uncle's house, induced her to strive with renewed diligence to influence her cousin to a holy and

consistent life. He had so far been won by her courteous example as to treat Archie with respect, and even with a degree of cordiality, whenever they met; but the low-born, yet noble youth, felt the difference between his patronizing regard and the ingenuous and free sympathy that the cousin manifested, and his dark eyes would flash with a suppressed and hidden fire that nothing could subdue like the gentle glance that so often sought his.

[Pg 327]

Was it only compassion for his terrible infirmity that tinged the maiden's cheek and gave fervor to her every tone, as she met him about the garden walks, or in the humble cottage? Was it only the loving and earnest nature, that could not help its warm and gushing impulses, that caused the tear to suffuse her eye at every wound occasioned his sensitive heart by the thoughtless Willie? Was it naught but a generous interest that led her every day to his humble home, with her books or drawings, to ask aid of her uncle's *protégée*? Or was he inflicting upon himself a needless suffering, besides quenching the brightness of that young spirit which he would fain die to save from sorrow? Could it be that by one spoken word his life and health might flow back upon him with new and refreshing vigor? The risk was too great. It might banish forever from his sight the only object that made that life endurable; and so it remained unsaid, preying upon the vitals and pressing him onward to the blessed haven of rest—rest from all doubts, rest from all infirmities and sufferings, rest from all painful labor, both physical and mental, glorious, perfect, enduring rest!

He felt the change that was drawing him from earth, and rejoiced in it. It were better that she should think of him as a spirit, divested of the covering that made him a loathsome mortal! Even if he could know that her every affection clung to him, he would pray to go hence before her eyes could be so cleared of the mists of love as to see the hideousness of his imperfections. He had seen her shudder as her cousin's arm was placed around her; and was he not more repulsive still? Oh, how could he ever dream of allying himself to an angel?

[Pg 328]

The very thought of his "vanity" and forgetfulness was humiliating, and Archibald Mackie shut himself up in his chamber, and suffered, and prayed, and struggled alone; and came forth with a radiant brow, and a cheerful, peaceful heart. He had done with the things of this life. The dearest and best he had dropped from his grasp, and now it was so easy to part with the rest. The dreams of his youth had made his pathway green, and kept his mind off the real evils. What if they were but transient and fading visions? They had been of sufficient duration and brightness to cheer him in many an otherwise dreary walk; and they had not been without their influence upon the inner soul that perchance would have sunk into an utter despondency and gloom but for these incentives to energy and action.

No more dreaming now; but a constant looking forward to the end of life's journey, and a steady and unwearied preparation for the final summons.

[Pg 329]

---

## CHAPTER XIII.

The summer was unspeakably beautiful to the dying youth. To sit in his easy-chair beside the low window of his loved chamber, and let his eyes wander over the greenness and glory of nature, while his thoughts went upward to the Paradise of immortal joys, or to rove languidly about the grounds of his patron, supported by the kind old man whose tenderness and care were ever ready, or to recline upon a couch beside the door while Kittie Fay talked to him in her pleasant sympathetic way, or read to him in a low soft tone—these things made up the sum of his waning life, and imparted a quiet sort of rapture to every moment. Mahan Doughty—now grown a large and bashful girl—came again with some simple flowers, that recalled to him the distant years, and Sally Bunt stood often beside him, not as of old with the newly-laid egg; but with nice broth from some favorite chicken, whose head was as nothing, when the word came to the old playmate that Archie was fading away. A great gulf had separated them since he lived on the plain, for none of his former associates had dared venture an intimacy after his removal within the precincts of the "great house;" but an undying sympathy made a bridge over the wide gulf, and they crossed and recrossed fearlessly, to minister to their friend.

[Pg 330]

The imbecile old grandmother played with the thin fingers of her idol boy, and laughed with an idiotic chuckle as she looked upon the white face, calling him her "gentleman," and wondering "how he came to have such a delicate skin, when his father was brown and tawny."

Patrick and Molly discussed the case of the sick youth as often as they were left alone, with disconsolate and saddened hearts; and all that could cheer him with the words of a comfort which they were far from feeling in their own spirits, were the mother and daughter, who had learned to look away from themselves in every grief and sorrow, that they might be a blessing to others. The day had been terribly oppressive, and both had been watching the youth as he lay fainting and exhausted upon his couch. Not one moment had they ceased fanning him gently lest the weak breath would take its flight; but now a refreshing breeze was stirring the locks upon his temples, and imparting to him a little strength, so that Kittie could leave for a few moments to attend to her cousin Willie, whose demands were more importunate upon her than ever, since her time was required in the sick presence.

"How is Archie, to-night, Kittie?" asked he, as his cousin stepped lightly over the threshold, and seated herself on the sofa beside him.

[Pg 331]

"He seems to revive a little," said she; "Doctor Fincke thinks he may yet linger for a few days, but I am fearful it can not be—to me he seems very weak and low."

"I am quite impatient for the end, Kittie," said Willie, in a light and careless tone, "for I have a great deal to say to you, and you are so taken up with this young man that I really have not one moment of your time, lately. It seems as if there might be a proper nurse found, without your acting in that capacity."

"It is my pleasure, cousin Willie," said Kittie, in a gentle and subdued voice. "Nothing could induce me to lose the few last words of this dying saint. He seems already to reflect the glory of the upper land, so that every one around is blessed by its influence. Oh! Willie, if you would only learn from so pure an example to make this life but the stepping-stone to a better and higher being, instead of taking it for the only good, and giving up every thought to it, it would be such a gain to yourself, and such a joy to us all!"

"Wouldn't you like to go with me to see Archie?" continued she, a moment after, as her cousin had taken no notice of her appeal. "He often speaks very kindly of you, and I'm sure it would give him pleasure to know that you are truly his friend."

"But Kittie, what's the use! You know I don't care any thing about the young man, and that it will be quite a relief to me when he is no longer there to keep you from me. I have never been to the cottage since he occupied it, and I don't mean to annoy myself with the sight of him now. It would give me the horrors to see him die!"

[Pg 332]

Kittie did not urge the matter, but she felt how little there was in the calm of that Christian soul to excite any gloom or terror in the beholder, and so soon as she could get away from her cousin she resumed her seat beside the sick bed. She had a right to be there now—not a word had been spoken to tell her so; but the gentle heart revealed itself to her in a silent, yet none the less intelligible way, and her own responded warmly and heartily.

[Pg 333]

---

## CHAPTER XIV.

"Molly, I dreamed of Kittie Fay last night," said old Patrick, as he drew his chair up to his wife. "It seemed as if she was weeping over a green grave, and as she stood by it she was dressed all in white, like an angel, and all about her was nothing but a barren waste. It made me sad like to see her there, wife, and I went over the dark space that lay between me and her to try to get her away, but no, she wouldn't stir a step, and kept stooping to water the grass and flowers, and then she pointed down to the grave, and then up to heaven, and then laid her white hand upon her heart. I woke up after that, Molly; but that dream won't leave me, I keep thinking on't, and I'm most of a mind that these young folks haven't been so long together for nothing. I believe, Molly, that there's a reason for our boy's fading away from us so all of a sudden, and for the pale face that Miss Kittie carries with her."

"No, no, Patrick, you mustn't be so full of your whims," replied the good wife, in a whisper, as she pointed to the half-open door, through which they could see the young maiden bending over the couch to minister to Archie. "You've forgot the station, man, you've forgot the station; it is kind and natural for her to interest her dear heart in the sick lad; but depend upon it there's nothing deeper—greater would be the sorrow if there was, Pat! Besides," she added, after a moment's silence, "there's her cousin Willie, they say, as much as engaged to her!"

[Pg 334]

"Fudge!" returned the old man, getting really excited; "a jackass of a fellow as ain't fit to hold a candle to our Archie? Never you fear, Molly, there'll nothing come of that; I'd sooner see her in her coffin first!"

"But you take it hard, man," answered his wife. "Don't you know that they've been children together, and it isn't as if she could see him with your eyes; besides, he's got a power o' money, Patrick, and that covers up many a blemish."

"I tell ye, Molly, a mint of gold wouldn't make any difference to the feelings o' that girl. Her heart's with the dying lad, and, mark my words, she'll never marry that simple cousin; but she'll cherish the green grave just as she did in the dream, and her thoughts'll be up in heaven with the absent spirit."

"It will be desput lonesome here when he's gone, Patrick," sighed the old woman; "but I s'pose it's our duty to take care of the grandmother as long as she lives!"

"To be sure, to be sure, Molly! We'll do well what we've undertaken, but I long to be back in the old shanty by the water, I kinder miss the old ways. Nothing but the lad would ever have brought me here, and he's fast going; it won't be many mornings that we can sit and look in even upon his sick-bed, Molly."

[Pg 335]

They couldn't talk about it any more, but they watched the old grandmother as she clutched at the shadows that the waving foliage made upon her white gown as she sat in the outer door, and they wondered why it could not be that she should go first, and the lad be spared them. It wasn't any good that she could do upon the earth, it wasn't any joy that she could ever again give! Truly, God's ways are not as our ways, nor His thoughts as our thoughts! Patrick and Molly could trust

## CHAPTER XV.

The little room was darkened, and the still form was freed from all its pains—no more fear of the ridicule of an unfeeling world—no more struggling upward toward a tottering eminence—no more sighings after a higher sympathy than a narrow sphere can insure—no more tremblings and palpitations lest the desired good vanish from the sight—no more sinning nor sorrowing; but the quiet figure lay peaceful and still beneath the pure covering, with the bright flowers above and loving hearts around. There are no outbursts of anguish in the presence of the hallowed dead, but a calmness that speaks of the hope of a resurrection. The mother and her daughter are alone with the departed, and, as they look upon his placid features, Kittie recalls the time when she met him, years ago, in the scorching noontide heat, and contrasted his forlorn and pitiable condition with the pampered and luxurious state of her cousin Willie, and, as her mother's words recur to her, "Perhaps not a pity that he has not Willie's blessings, dear Kittie." She echoes in her own heart, "not a pity, not not a pity!"

Oh! no; the pity now is all for the high-born lad, whose privileges are all wasted and perverted, and could she choose for herself one of these two lives, she would not hesitate to take the lowly cottage on the plain, with all its sad inconveniences and distasteful accompaniments, with the exalted Christian mind, rather than the glory, and beauty, and ease of the great house, with the weakened intellect and the brutish soul.

[Pg 337]

There is a small trunk in Archie's chamber, with a card nailed upon the top, and the inscription, "Miss Kitty Fay;" and Patrick lifts it reverently, with no vain curiosity, and carries it to the "great house." He knows that it contains many a manuscript that helped to dry up the fount of life. They are all dedicated to Kittie, who inspired them; and it is a great comfort to be reading them over while he is lying there as if asleep and unable to speak. They make every thing plain to her concerning the past, and they confirm her in the vow that was made beneath the old elm, long ago. It is such a treasure, that precious legacy; so filled with beautiful thoughts, and so free from earthly dross. Besides, it is all her own, sacred from the world. No other eye has ever seen it, and nobody else can ever know the secret workings of the great mind that is no longer clogged by the crippled body.

The old leather portfolio has come to a blessed use—the comforting and supporting the afflicted. Much need is there, too, of comfort where the wound is so deeply hidden. Nobody knows Kittie's secret; not even her fond mother discerns more than a natural solemnity at the presence of death. It is so hard to go about the house with a cheerful face and an apparent indifference, when the full heart would fain express itself freely. But harder still was it for Kittie to be subjected to her cousin's importunities at a time when she had scarcely room for a common sympathy for him.

[Pg 338]

She had walked out alone, and had sought the old elm; it was so soothing to be there, with no eye to observe her emotion. Why should Willie seek her *then* of all times in the world? and for such a purpose!

"It can not be, Willie—you know it can not be," said she, in firm and decided accents.

"But I have set my heart upon it, Kittie," replied her cousin. "You see, we have been much together, and I am used to your ways, and I don't think I could easily find any body else that would exactly suit me, so I've concluded it is best to have the matter arranged immediately. There is nothing in the way but this funeral, and that will be over to-morrow, and what do you say to Monday week, Kittie? Will that be soon enough, my birdie?" and the too confident youth drew near and reached out his arm to encircle her waist, but she was no longer there.

"Soon enough!" What! to be wedded to a compound of the most hideous deformity! "Soon enough!" To blot out the memory of the pure and immortal one, and to link herself to a revolting and miserable object! It were better to be lying peacefully beneath the green earth than to walk about a living corpse, with but the semblance of animation. What mockery it seemed to her as she stood by the silent dead! The pet name, too, was almost an insult to the pure and loving heart that had smothered its springing affections, until the life also was crushed and gone. Oh! that she could tear out the remembrance of her cousin's weakness and folly so that she need abate nothing of her accustomed kindness and attention. Henceforth she must withhold from him even the natural sympathy which his infirmities demand, and perhaps be forced to add another tinge to the bitterness of his fate, by a constant coldness and indifference toward him.

[Pg 339]

Poor child! the ills of life come seldom singly, yet how much greater is the might that can rise above and conquer a complication of sorrows. There was strength for Kittie in the contemplation of the serene face that was before her—so free from every shadow that had darkened it when animate. There were exhortations to patience in its hallowed expression, and lessons upon the nothingness of our temporary trials, and inspiring promises of the end—that glorious end that will compensate for all our sad beginnings. No wonder Kittie Fay was more than ever tranquil as she stepped again within the circle of her home; and no wonder the wound that lay deeply hidden was unsuspected there.

[Pg 340]

## CHAPTER XVI.

"Come, come Archie, my son, don't be fooling with your old grandmother. What does it all mean? Is it a wedding, boy? Ah, yes, I mind me now; it was just so when your father was married, this day forty years ago—posies all about, on the dresser, on the bed—roses and pansies, and 'bundance o' green stuff every where," and the unconscious idiot touched the cold hands, and put her arms around the stiff neck, laying her wrinkled face to the youth's cheek, and then she would dress his hair with the flowers, weaving fantastic garlands, and twining them in and out, amid the damp locks. It was thus they found her—old Patrick and Molly—as they entered the silent room on the morning of Archie's funeral. "Is the bride ready?" asked she, unwinding her arms from the lad, and smoothing down her dress, as if to make herself presentable, "because," she continued, advancing toward Molly, and pointing to the couch, "he's waiting for her. 'Tis a beautiful home they'll have, I never dreamed of any thing so pretty; but *he* whispered it to me—golden streets, and pearls, and rivers of water, and trees with all manner of fruit—'tis worth while to be *his* bride! I never thought our Archie'd come to all this good!"

[Pg 341]

Molly put the flowers back in their places, and composed the limbs once more, and then gently led the old woman to her arm-chair in the outer room, where she relapsed into her quiet dosing way until all was over. Once only she looked up as they bore the remains from the dwelling, and asked in a deprecating voice, "why Archie didn't take her with him;" but his name did not escape her after that. The rest of her days were a blank.

Close beside his mother in a green grave they placed the crippled form, that was to come forth in the resurrection, perchance the more glorified for its earthly trial. Groups of ragged urchins from the common were there, respectful and solemn. Old playmates that were now men and women gathered around the coffin and wept as they remembered the past. Sally Bunt and Mahan Doughty were among them, but the sincerest mourners—save one—were Patrick and Molly, who had watched the young man from his infancy up, and had placed all their hopes upon him. Bowed and broken, the old man returned to the desolate cottage to minister to the dotting grandmother, whose only claims upon him were that she was allied to the dead. Day after day would he and Molly ascend to the little chamber to spend all their weary leisure. There were *his* books, just as he had left them, with one opened and turned down upon the table. There were his clothes, hung by his own hand upon the wall, and there were the pictures with which his native talent had adorned the room.

[Pg 342]

Oh! was not the deep affection of the two simple hearts that beat so fondly to his memory, a worthy tribute? Is there more value in mines of gold and silver, or in the adoration of a fickle multitude, than in the unobtrusive homage of those loving and true, though humble ones.

Every effort of his untaught genius was to them as wondrous and beautiful as if from the pencil of a Raphael or Titian. Every object of his pleasure or regard was treasured as a sacred thing. Even the withered flowers that had bedecked his death-couch were preserved with pious care, and no unloving hand could touch a single article that had once felt the impress of the now palsied fingers. There was still one solace for the bereaved old couple, and that was the frequent visits of Kittie, who seemed to them linked in a mysterious manner with the departed.

There was a real pleasure to the three, to speak together of the absent one whose exalted merit they only knew; and the maiden grew more calm and resigned from the intercourse. Yet the grave in the beautiful cemetery was none the less green in her memory, and the white hand pointed none the less often from it to her heart, and thence upward to heaven.

### THE END.

\*\*\* END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE ELM TREE TALES \*\*\*

Updated editions will replace the previous one—the old editions will be renamed.

Creating the works from print editions not protected by U.S. copyright law means that no one owns a United States copyright in these works, so the Foundation (and you!) can copy and distribute it in the United States without permission and without paying copyright royalties. Special rules, set forth in the General Terms of Use part of this license, apply to copying and distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works to protect the PROJECT GUTENBERG™ concept and trademark. Project Gutenberg is a registered trademark, and may not be used if you charge for an eBook, except by following the terms of the trademark license, including paying royalties for use of the Project Gutenberg trademark. If you do not charge anything for copies of this eBook, complying with the trademark license is very easy. You may use this eBook for nearly any purpose such as creation of derivative works, reports, performances and research. Project Gutenberg eBooks may be modified and printed and given away—you may do practically ANYTHING in the United States with eBooks not protected by U.S. copyright law. Redistribution is subject to the trademark license, especially commercial redistribution.

START: FULL LICENSE

THE FULL PROJECT GUTENBERG LICENSE

To protect the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting the free distribution of electronic works, by using or distributing this work (or any other work associated in any way with the phrase “Project Gutenberg”), you agree to comply with all the terms of the Full Project Gutenberg™ License available with this file or online at [www.gutenberg.org/license](http://www.gutenberg.org/license).

## **Section 1. General Terms of Use and Redistributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works**

1.A. By reading or using any part of this Project Gutenberg™ electronic work, you indicate that you have read, understand, agree to and accept all the terms of this license and intellectual property (trademark/copyright) agreement. If you do not agree to abide by all the terms of this agreement, you must cease using and return or destroy all copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in your possession. If you paid a fee for obtaining a copy of or access to a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work and you do not agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement, you may obtain a refund from the person or entity to whom you paid the fee as set forth in paragraph 1.E.8.

1.B. “Project Gutenberg” is a registered trademark. It may only be used on or associated in any way with an electronic work by people who agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement. There are a few things that you can do with most Project Gutenberg™ electronic works even without complying with the full terms of this agreement. See paragraph 1.C below. There are a lot of things you can do with Project Gutenberg™ electronic works if you follow the terms of this agreement and help preserve free future access to Project Gutenberg™ electronic works. See paragraph 1.E below.

1.C. The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation (“the Foundation” or PGLAF), owns a compilation copyright in the collection of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works. Nearly all the individual works in the collection are in the public domain in the United States. If an individual work is unprotected by copyright law in the United States and you are located in the United States, we do not claim a right to prevent you from copying, distributing, performing, displaying or creating derivative works based on the work as long as all references to Project Gutenberg are removed. Of course, we hope that you will support the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting free access to electronic works by freely sharing Project Gutenberg™ works in compliance with the terms of this agreement for keeping the Project Gutenberg™ name associated with the work. You can easily comply with the terms of this agreement by keeping this work in the same format with its attached full Project Gutenberg™ License when you share it without charge with others.

1.D. The copyright laws of the place where you are located also govern what you can do with this work. Copyright laws in most countries are in a constant state of change. If you are outside the United States, check the laws of your country in addition to the terms of this agreement before downloading, copying, displaying, performing, distributing or creating derivative works based on this work or any other Project Gutenberg™ work. The Foundation makes no representations concerning the copyright status of any work in any country other than the United States.

1.E. Unless you have removed all references to Project Gutenberg:

1.E.1. The following sentence, with active links to, or other immediate access to, the full Project Gutenberg™ License must appear prominently whenever any copy of a Project Gutenberg™ work (any work on which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” appears, or with which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” is associated) is accessed, displayed, performed, viewed, copied or distributed:

This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this eBook or online at [www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org). If you are not located in the United States, you will have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

1.E.2. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is derived from texts not protected by U.S. copyright law (does not contain a notice indicating that it is posted with permission of the copyright holder), the work can be copied and distributed to anyone in the United States without paying any fees or charges. If you are redistributing or providing access to a work with the phrase “Project Gutenberg” associated with or appearing on the work, you must comply either with the requirements of paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 or obtain permission for the use of the work and the Project Gutenberg™ trademark as set forth in paragraphs 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.3. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is posted with the permission of the copyright holder, your use and distribution must comply with both paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 and any additional terms imposed by the copyright holder. Additional terms will be linked to the Project Gutenberg™ License for all works posted with the permission of the copyright holder found at the beginning of this work.

1.E.4. Do not unlink or detach or remove the full Project Gutenberg™ License terms from this work, or any files containing a part of this work or any other work associated with Project

Gutenberg™.

1.E.5. Do not copy, display, perform, distribute or redistribute this electronic work, or any part of this electronic work, without prominently displaying the sentence set forth in paragraph 1.E.1 with active links or immediate access to the full terms of the Project Gutenberg™ License.

1.E.6. You may convert to and distribute this work in any binary, compressed, marked up, nonproprietary or proprietary form, including any word processing or hypertext form. However, if you provide access to or distribute copies of a Project Gutenberg™ work in a format other than "Plain Vanilla ASCII" or other format used in the official version posted on the official Project Gutenberg™ website (www.gutenberg.org), you must, at no additional cost, fee or expense to the user, provide a copy, a means of exporting a copy, or a means of obtaining a copy upon request, of the work in its original "Plain Vanilla ASCII" or other form. Any alternate format must include the full Project Gutenberg™ License as specified in paragraph 1.E.1.

1.E.7. Do not charge a fee for access to, viewing, displaying, performing, copying or distributing any Project Gutenberg™ works unless you comply with paragraph 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.8. You may charge a reasonable fee for copies of or providing access to or distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works provided that:

- You pay a royalty fee of 20% of the gross profits you derive from the use of Project Gutenberg™ works calculated using the method you already use to calculate your applicable taxes. The fee is owed to the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, but he has agreed to donate royalties under this paragraph to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation. Royalty payments must be paid within 60 days following each date on which you prepare (or are legally required to prepare) your periodic tax returns. Royalty payments should be clearly marked as such and sent to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation at the address specified in Section 4, "Information about donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation."
- You provide a full refund of any money paid by a user who notifies you in writing (or by e-mail) within 30 days of receipt that s/he does not agree to the terms of the full Project Gutenberg™ License. You must require such a user to return or destroy all copies of the works possessed in a physical medium and discontinue all use of and all access to other copies of Project Gutenberg™ works.
- You provide, in accordance with paragraph 1.F.3, a full refund of any money paid for a work or a replacement copy, if a defect in the electronic work is discovered and reported to you within 90 days of receipt of the work.
- You comply with all other terms of this agreement for free distribution of Project Gutenberg™ works.

1.E.9. If you wish to charge a fee or distribute a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work or group of works on different terms than are set forth in this agreement, you must obtain permission in writing from the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the manager of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark. Contact the Foundation as set forth in Section 3 below.

1.F.

1.F.1. Project Gutenberg volunteers and employees expend considerable effort to identify, do copyright research on, transcribe and proofread works not protected by U.S. copyright law in creating the Project Gutenberg™ collection. Despite these efforts, Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, and the medium on which they may be stored, may contain "Defects," such as, but not limited to, incomplete, inaccurate or corrupt data, transcription errors, a copyright or other intellectual property infringement, a defective or damaged disk or other medium, a computer virus, or computer codes that damage or cannot be read by your equipment.

1.F.2. LIMITED WARRANTY, DISCLAIMER OF DAMAGES - Except for the "Right of Replacement or Refund" described in paragraph 1.F.3, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, and any other party distributing a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work under this agreement, disclaim all liability to you for damages, costs and expenses, including legal fees. YOU AGREE THAT YOU HAVE NO REMEDIES FOR NEGLIGENCE, STRICT LIABILITY, BREACH OF WARRANTY OR BREACH OF CONTRACT EXCEPT THOSE PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH 1.F.3. YOU AGREE THAT THE FOUNDATION, THE TRADEMARK OWNER, AND ANY DISTRIBUTOR UNDER THIS AGREEMENT WILL NOT BE LIABLE TO YOU FOR ACTUAL, DIRECT, INDIRECT, CONSEQUENTIAL, PUNITIVE OR INCIDENTAL DAMAGES EVEN IF YOU GIVE NOTICE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGE.

1.F.3. LIMITED RIGHT OF REPLACEMENT OR REFUND - If you discover a defect in this electronic work within 90 days of receiving it, you can receive a refund of the money (if any) you paid for it by sending a written explanation to the person you received the work from. If you received the work on a physical medium, you must return the medium with your written explanation. The person or entity that provided you with the defective work may elect to provide a replacement copy in lieu of a refund. If you received the work electronically, the person or entity providing it to you may choose to give you a second opportunity to receive the work electronically in lieu of a refund. If the second copy is also defective, you may demand a refund in writing without further opportunities to fix the problem.



1.F.4. Except for the limited right of replacement or refund set forth in paragraph 1.F.3, this work is provided to you 'AS-IS', WITH NO OTHER WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR ANY PURPOSE.

1.F.5. Some states do not allow disclaimers of certain implied warranties or the exclusion or limitation of certain types of damages. If any disclaimer or limitation set forth in this agreement violates the law of the state applicable to this agreement, the agreement shall be interpreted to make the maximum disclaimer or limitation permitted by the applicable state law. The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of this agreement shall not void the remaining provisions.

1.F.6. INDEMNITY - You agree to indemnify and hold the Foundation, the trademark owner, any agent or employee of the Foundation, anyone providing copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in accordance with this agreement, and any volunteers associated with the production, promotion and distribution of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, harmless from all liability, costs and expenses, including legal fees, that arise directly or indirectly from any of the following which you do or cause to occur: (a) distribution of this or any Project Gutenberg™ work, (b) alteration, modification, or additions or deletions to any Project Gutenberg™ work, and (c) any Defect you cause.

## **Section 2. Information about the Mission of Project Gutenberg™**

Project Gutenberg™ is synonymous with the free distribution of electronic works in formats readable by the widest variety of computers including obsolete, old, middle-aged and new computers. It exists because of the efforts of hundreds of volunteers and donations from people in all walks of life.

Volunteers and financial support to provide volunteers with the assistance they need are critical to reaching Project Gutenberg™'s goals and ensuring that the Project Gutenberg™ collection will remain freely available for generations to come. In 2001, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation was created to provide a secure and permanent future for Project Gutenberg™ and future generations. To learn more about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation and how your efforts and donations can help, see Sections 3 and 4 and the Foundation information page at [www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org).

## **Section 3. Information about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation**

The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) educational corporation organized under the laws of the state of Mississippi and granted tax exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service. The Foundation's EIN or federal tax identification number is 64-6221541. Contributions to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation are tax deductible to the full extent permitted by U.S. federal laws and your state's laws.

The Foundation's business office is located at 809 North 1500 West, Salt Lake City, UT 84116, (801) 596-1887. Email contact links and up to date contact information can be found at the Foundation's website and official page at [www.gutenberg.org/contact](http://www.gutenberg.org/contact)

## **Section 4. Information about Donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation**

Project Gutenberg™ depends upon and cannot survive without widespread public support and donations to carry out its mission of increasing the number of public domain and licensed works that can be freely distributed in machine-readable form accessible by the widest array of equipment including outdated equipment. Many small donations (\$1 to \$5,000) are particularly important to maintaining tax exempt status with the IRS.

The Foundation is committed to complying with the laws regulating charities and charitable donations in all 50 states of the United States. Compliance requirements are not uniform and it takes a considerable effort, much paperwork and many fees to meet and keep up with these requirements. We do not solicit donations in locations where we have not received written confirmation of compliance. To SEND DONATIONS or determine the status of compliance for any particular state visit [www.gutenberg.org/donate](http://www.gutenberg.org/donate).

While we cannot and do not solicit contributions from states where we have not met the solicitation requirements, we know of no prohibition against accepting unsolicited donations from donors in such states who approach us with offers to donate.

International donations are gratefully accepted, but we cannot make any statements concerning tax treatment of donations received from outside the United States. U.S. laws alone swamp our small staff.

Please check the Project Gutenberg web pages for current donation methods and addresses. Donations are accepted in a number of other ways including checks, online payments and credit card donations. To donate, please visit: [www.gutenberg.org/donate](http://www.gutenberg.org/donate)



## **Section 5. General Information About Project Gutenberg™ electronic works**

Professor Michael S. Hart was the originator of the Project Gutenberg™ concept of a library of electronic works that could be freely shared with anyone. For forty years, he produced and distributed Project Gutenberg™ eBooks with only a loose network of volunteer support.

Project Gutenberg™ eBooks are often created from several printed editions, all of which are confirmed as not protected by copyright in the U.S. unless a copyright notice is included. Thus, we do not necessarily keep eBooks in compliance with any particular paper edition.

Most people start at our website which has the main PG search facility: [www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org).

This website includes information about Project Gutenberg™, including how to make donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, how to help produce our new eBooks, and how to subscribe to our email newsletter to hear about new eBooks.