

# GRAHAM'S MAGAZINE

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# GRAHAM'S MAGAZINE.

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**THE TROUBADOUR.**  
*Engraved expressly for Graham's Magazine.*

# GRAHAM'S MAGAZINE.

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VOL. XXXI. PHILADELPHIA, DECEMBER, 1847. No. 6.

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## LOVE'S LAST SUPPER.

OR THE TRUE STORY OF A TROUBADOUR.

A PROVENÇAL BIOGRAPHY.

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BY WM. GILMORE SIMMS, AUTHOR OF "THE YEMASSE," "RICHARD HURDIS," ETC.

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IN the first conception of the institution of chivalry it was doubtless a device of great purity, and contemplated none but highly proper and becoming purposes. Those very features which, in our more sophisticated era, seem to have been the most absurd, or at least fantastic, were, perhaps among its best securities. The sentiment of love, apart from its passion, is what a very earnest people, in a very selfish period, cannot so well understand; but it was this very separation of interests, which we now hold to be inseparable, that constituted the peculiarity of chivalry—the fanciful in its characteristics rendering sentiment independent of passion, and refining the crude desire by the exercise and influence of tastes, which do not usually accompany it. Among the Provençal knights and troubadours, in the palmy days of their progress, love was really the most innocent and the most elevated of sentiments. It seems to have been nursed without guile, and was professed, even when seemingly in conflict with the rights of others, without the slightest notion of wrong doing or offence. It did not vex the temper, or impair the marital securities of the husband, that the beauties of his dame were sung with enthusiasm by the youthful poet; on the contrary, he who gloried in the possession of a jewel, was scarcely satisfied with fortune unless she brought to a just knowledge of its splendors, the bard who alone could convey to the world a similar sense of the value of his treasure. The narrative which we have gathered from the ancient chronicles of Provence, and which we take occasion to say is drawn from the most veracious

sources of history, will illustrate the correctness of these particulars.

One of the most remarkable instances of the sentiment of love, warmed into passion, yet without evil in its objects, is to be found in the true and touching history of Guillaume de Cabestaign, a noble youth of Roussillon. Though noble of birth, Guillaume was without fortune, and it was not thought improper or humiliating in those days that he should serve, as a page, the knight whose ancestors were known to his own as associates. It was in this capacity that he became the retainer of Raymond, Lord of Roussillon. Raymond, though a haughty baron, was one who possessed certain generous tastes and sentiments, and who showed himself capable of appreciating the talents and great merits of Guillaume de Cabestaign. His endowments, indeed were of a character to find ready favor with all parties. The youth was not only graceful of carriage, and particularly handsome of face and person, but he possessed graces of mind and manner which especially commended him to knightly sympathy and admiration. He belonged to that class of *improvisatori* to whom the people of Provence gave the name of troubadour, and was quite as ready to sing the praises of his mistress, as he was to mount horse, and charge with sword and lance in her defence and honor. His muse, taking her moral aspect from his own, was pure and modest in her behavior—indulging in no song or sentiment which would not fall becomingly on the most virgin ear. His verses were distinguished equally by their delicacy and fancy, and united to a spirit of the most generous and exulting life a taste of the utmost simplicity and purity. Not less gentle than buoyant, he was at once timid in approach, and joy-giving in society; and while he compelled the respect of men by his frank and fearless manhood, he won the hearts of the other sex by those gentle graces which, always prompt and ready, are never obtrusive, and which leave us only to the just appreciation of their value, when they are withdrawn from our knowledge and enjoyment.

It happened, unfortunately for our troubadour, that he won too many hearts. Raised by the Lord of Roussillon to the rank of gentleman usher to the Lady Marguerite, his young and beautiful wife, the graces and accomplishments of Guillaume de Cabestaign, soon became quite as apparent and agreeable to her as to the meanest of the damsels in her train. She was never so well satisfied as in his society; and her young and ardent soul, repelled rather than solicited by the stern nature of Raymond, her lord, was better prepared and pleased to sympathize with the more beguiling and accessible spirit of the page. The tenderest impressions of love, without her own knowledge, soon seized upon her heart; and she had learned to sigh as she gazed upon the person that she favored, long before she entertained the slightest consciousness that he was at all precious to her eyes. He himself, dutiful as devoted, for a long season beheld none of these proofs of favor on the part of his noble mistress. She called him her servant, it is true, and he as such, sung daily in her praises the equal language of the lover and the knight. These were words, however, of specific and conventional meaning, to which her husband listened with indifferent ear. In those days every noble lady entertained a lover, who was called her servant. It was a prerogative of nobility that such should be the case.

It spoke for the courtliness and aristocracy of the party; and to be without a lover, though in the possession of a husband, was to be an object of scornful sympathy in the eyes of the sex. Fashion, in other words, had taken the name of chivalry; and it was one of her regulations that the noble lady should possess a lover, who should of necessity be other than her lord. In this capacity, Raymond of Roussillon, found nothing of which to complain in the devotion of Guillaume de Cabestaign to Marguerite, his wife. But the courtiers who gathered in her train were not so indulgent, or were of keener sight. They soon felt the preference which she gave, over all others, to our troubadour. They felt, and they resented it the more readily, as they were not insensible to his personal superiority. Guillaume himself, was exceeding slow in arriving at a similar consciousness. Touched with a fonder sentiment for his mistress than was compatible with his security, his modesty had never suffered him to suppose that he had been so fortunate as to inspire her with a feeling such as he now knew within himself. It was at a moment when he least looked for it, that he made the perilous discovery. It was in the course of a discussion upon the various signs of love—such a discussion as occupied the idle hours, and the wandering fancies of chivalry—that she said to him, somewhat abruptly,

“Surely thou, Guillaume, thou, who canst sing of love so tenderly, and with so much sweetness, thou, of all persons, should be the one to distinguish between a feigned passion and a real one. Methinks the eye of him who loves truly, could most certainly discover from the eye of the beloved one, whether the real flame were yet burning in her heart.”

And even as she spoke, the glance of her dark and lustrous eye settled upon his own with such a dewy and quivering fire, that his soul at once became enlightened with her secret. The troubadour was necessarily an *improvisatore*. Guillaume de Cabestaign was admitted to be one of the most spontaneous in his utterance of all his order. His lyre took for him the voice which he could not well have used at that overpowering moment. He sung wildly and triumphantly, inspired by his new and rapturous consciousness, even while her eyes were yet fixed upon him, full still of the involuntary declaration which made the inspiration of his song. These verses, which embodied the first impulsive sentiment which he had ever dared to breathe from his heart of the passion which had long been lurking within it, have been preserved for us by the damsels of Provence. We translate them, necessarily to the great detriment of their melody, from the sweet South, where they had birth, to our harsher Runic region. The song of Guillaume was an apostrophe.

Touch the weeping string!  
Those whose beauty fires me;  
Oh! how vainly would I sing  
The passion that inspires me.  
This, dear heart, believe,  
Were the love I've given,  
Half as warm for Heaven as thee,  
I were worthy heaven!

Ah! should I lament,  
That, in evil hour,  
Too much loving to repent,  
I confess thy power.  
Too much blessed to fly,  
Yet, with shame confessing,  
That I dread to meet the eye,  
Where my heart finds blessing.

Such a poem is beyond analysis. It was simply a gush of enthusiasm—the lyrical overflow of sentiment and passion, such as a song should be always. The reader will easily understand that the delicacy of the tune, the epigrammatic intenseness of the expression, is totally lost in the difficulty of subjugating our more stubborn language to the uses of the poet. A faint and inferior idea of what was said, sung at this moment of wild and almost spasmodical utterance, is all that we design to convey.

The spot in which this scene took place was amid the depth of umbrageous trees, in the beautiful garden of Chateau Roussillon. A soft and persuasive silence hung suspended in the atmosphere. Not a leaf stirred, not a bird chirruped in the foliage; and however passionate was the sentiment expressed by the troubadour, it scarcely rose beyond a whisper—harmonizing in the subdued utterance, and the sweet delicacy of its sentiment with the exquisite repose and languor of the scene. Carried beyond herself by the emotions of the moment, the feeling of Marguerite became so far irresistible that she stooped ere the song of the troubadour had subsided from the ear, and pressed her lips upon the forehead of her kneeling lover. He seized her hand at this moment and carried it to his own lips, in an equally involuntary impulse. This act awakened the noble lady to a just consciousness of her weakness. She at once recoiled from his grasp.

“Alas!” she exclaimed, with clasped hands, “what have I done?”

“Ah, lady!” was the answer of the troubadour, “it is thy goodness which has at length discovered how my heart is devoted to thee. It is thy truth, and thy nobleness, dear lady, which I love and worship.”

“By these shalt thou know me ever, Guillaume of Cabestaign,” was the response; “and yet I warn thee,” she continued, “I warn and I entreat thee, dear servant, that thou approach me not so near again. Thou hast shown to me, and surprised from me, a most precious but an unhappy secret. Thou hast, too, deeply found thy way into my heart. Alas! wherefore! wherefore!” and the eyes of the amiable and virtuous woman were suffused with tears, as her innocent soul trembled under the reproaches of her jealous conscience. She continued,

“I cannot help but love thee, Guillaume of Cabestaign, but it shall never be said that the love of the Lady Marguerite of Roussillon was other than became the wife of her lord. Thou, too, shall know me by love only, Guillaume; but it shall be such a love as shall work neither of us trespass. Yet do not thou cease to love me as before,



for, of a truth, dear servant, the affections of thy heart are needful to the life of mine.”

The voice of the troubadour was only in his lyre. At all his events, his reply has been only preserved to us in song. It was in the fullness of his joy that he again poured forth his melody.

Where spreads the pleasant garden,  
Where blow the precious flowers,  
My happy lot hath found me  
The bud of all the bowers.  
Heaven framed it with a likeness,  
Its very self in sweetness,  
Where virtue crowns the beauty,  
And love bestows completeness.  
Still humble in possessions,  
That humble all that prove her,  
I joy in the affections,  
That suffer me to love her;  
And in my joy I sorrow,  
And in my tears I sing her,  
The love that others hide away,  
She suffers me to bring her.  
This right is due my homage,  
For while they speak her beauty,  
'Tis I alone that feel it well,  
And love with perfect duty.

It does not appear that love trespassed in this instance beyond the sweet but narrow boundaries of sentiment. The lovers met daily, as usual, secretly as well as publicly, and their professions of attachment were frankly made in the hearing of the world; but the vows thus spoken were not articulated any longer in that formal, conventional phraseology and manner, which, in fact, only mocked the passion which it affectedly professed. It was soon discovered that the songs of Guillaume de Cabestaing were no longer the frigid effusions of mere gallantry, the common, stilt style of artifice and commonplace. There was life, and blood, and a rare enthusiasm in his lyrics. His song was no longer a thing of air, floating, as it had done, on the winglets of a simple fancy, but a living and a burning soul, borne upward and forward, by the gales of an intense and earnest passion. It was seen, that when the poet and his noble mistress spoke together, the tones of their voices mutually trembled as if with a strange and eager sympathy. When they met, it was noted that their eyes seemed to dart at once into each other, with the intensity of two wedded fires, which high walls would vainly separate, and which, however sundered, show clearly that they will overleap their bounds, and unite themselves in one at last. Theirs was evidently no simulated passion. It was too certainly real, as well in other eyes as their own. The world, though ignorant of the mutual purity of their hearts, were yet quick enough to discern what were their real sentiments. They saw the affections of which they soon learned, naturally enough, to conjecture the worst only. The rage of rivals, the jealousy of inferiors, the spite of the envious, the malice

of the wantonly scandalous, readily found cause of evil where in reality offence was none. To conceive the crime, was to convey the cruel suspicion, as a certainty, to the mind of him whom the supposed offence most affected. Busy tongues soon assailed the ears of the Lord of Roussillon, in relation to his wife. They whispered him to watch the lovers—to remark the eager intimacy of their eyes—the tremulous sweetness of their voices, and their subdued tones whenever they met—the frequency of their meetings—the reluctance with which they separated; and they dwelt with emphasis upon the pointed and passionate declarations, the intensity and ardor of the sentiments which now filled the songs of the troubadour—so very different from what they had ever been before. In truth, the new passion of Guillaume had wrought wondrously in favor of his music. He who had been only a clever and dextrous imitator of the artificial strains of other poets, had broken down all the fetters of convention, and now poured forth the most natural and original poetry of his own, greatly to the increase of his reputation as a troubadour.

Raymond de Roussillon hearkened to these suggestions in silence, and with a gloomy heart. He loved his wife truly, as far as it was possible for him to love. He was a stern, harsh man, fond of the chase, of the toils of chivalry rather than its sports; was cold in his own emotions, and with an intense self-esteem, that grew impatient under every sort of rivalry. It was not difficult to impress him with evil thoughts, even where he had bestowed his confidence; and to kindle his mind with the most terrible suspicions of the unconsciously offending parties. Once aroused, the dark, stern man, resolved to avenge his supposed wrong; and hearing one day that Guillaume had gone out hawking, and alone, he hastily put on his armor, concealing it under his courtly and silken vestments, took his weapon, and rode forth in the direction which the troubadour had taken. He overtook the latter after a while, upon the edge of a little river that wound slowly through a wood. Guillaume de Cabestaign approached his lord without any misgiving; but as he drew near, a certain indefinable something in the face of Raymond, inspired a feeling of anxiety in his mind, and, possibly, the secret consciousness in his own bosom, added to his uneasiness. He remembered that it was not often that great lords thus wandered forth unattended; and the path which Raymond pursued was one that Guillaume had taken because of its obscurity, and with the desire to find a solitude in which he might brood securely over his own secret fancies and affections. His doubts thus awakened, our troubadour prepared to guard his speech. He boldly approached his superior, however, and was the first to break silence.

“You here, my lord, and alone! How does this chance?”

“Nay, Guillaume,” answered the other, mildly, “I heard that you were here, and hawking, and resolved to share your amusement. What has been your sport?”

“Nothing, my lord. I have scarcely seen a single bird; and you remember the proverb—‘Who finds nothing, takes not much.’”

The artlessness and simplicity of the troubadour’s speech and manner, for the first time, inspired some doubts in the mind of Raymond, whether he could be so

guilty as his enemies had reported him. His purpose, when he came forth that morning, had been to ride the supposed offender down, whenever he encountered him, and to thrust his boar-spear through his body. Such was the summary justice of the feudal baron. Milder thoughts had suddenly possessed him. If Raymond of Roussillon was a stern man, jealous of his honor, and prompt in his resentment, he at least desired to be a just man; and a lurking doubt of the motives of those by whom the troubadour had been slandered, now determined him to proceed more deliberately in the work of justice. He remembered the former confidence which he had felt in the fidelity of the page, and he was not insensible to the charm of his society. Every sentence which had been spoken since their meeting, had tended to make him hesitate before he hurried to judgment in a matter where it was scarcely possible to repair the wrong which a rash and hasty vengeance might commit. By this time, they had entered the wood together, and were now concealed from all human eyes. The Lord of Roussillon alighted from his horse, and motioned his companion to seat himself beside him in the shade. When both were seated, and, after a brief pause, Raymond addressed the troubadour in the following language:

“Guillaume de Cabestaing,” said he, “be sure I came not hither this day to talk to you of birds and hawking, but of something more serious. Now, look upon me, and as a true and loyal servant, see that thou answer honestly to all that I shall ask of thee.”

The troubadour was naturally impressed by the stern simplicity and solemnity of this exordium. He was not unaware that, as the knight had alighted from his steed, he had done so heavily, and under the impediment of concealed armor. His doubts and anxieties were necessarily increased by this discovery, but so also was his firmness. He left that much depended upon his coolness and address, and he steeled himself, with all his soul, to the trial which was before him. The recollection of Marguerite, and of her fate and reputation depending upon his own, was the source of no small portion of his present resolution. His reflections were instantaneous; there was no unreasonable delay in his answer, which was at once manly and circumspect.

“I know not what you aim at or intend, my lord, but, by heaven! I swear to you that, if it be proper for me to answer you in that you seek, I will keep nothing from your knowledge that you desire to know!”

“Nay, Guillaume,” replied the knight, “I will have no conditions. You shall reply honestly, and without reserve, to all the questions I shall put to you.”

“Let me hear them, my lord—command me, as you have the right,” was the reply of the troubadour, “and I will answer you, with my conscience, as far as I can.”

“I would then know from you,” responded Raymond, very solemnly, “on your faith, and by your God, whether the verses that you make are inspired by a real passion?”

A warm flush passed over the cheeks of the troubadour; the pride of the artist

was offended by the inquiry. That it should be questioned whether he really felt what he so passionately declared, was a disparaging judgment upon the merits of his song.

“Ah! my lord,” was the reply, expressed with some degree of mortification, “how could I sing as I do, unless I really felt all the passion which I declare. In good sooth, then, I tell you, love has the entire possession of my soul.”

“And, verily, I believe thee, Guillaume,” was the subdued answer of the baron; “I believe thee, my friend, for unless a real passion was at his heart, no troubadour could ever sing as thou. But, something more of thee, Guillaume de Cabestaing. Prithee, now, declare to me the name of the lady whom thy verses celebrate.”

Then it was that the cheek of our troubadour grew pale, and his heart sunk within him; but the piercing eye of the baron was upon him. He had no moment for hesitation. To falter now, he was well assured, was to forfeit love, life, and every thing that was proud and precious in his sight. In the moment of exigency the troubadour found his answer. It was evasive, but adroitly conceived and expressed.

“Nay, my lord, will it please you to consider? I appeal to your own heart and honour—can any one, without perfidy, declare such a secret? Reveal a thing that involves the rights and the reputation of another, and that other a lady of good fame and quality? Well must you remember what is said on this subject by the very master of our art, no less a person than the excellent Bernard de Ventadour. He should know—what says he?”

The baron remained silent, while Guillaume repeated the following verses of the popular troubadour, whose authority he appealed to:

“The spy your secret still would claim,  
And asks to know your lady’s name;  
But tell it not for very shame!

“The loyal lover sees the snare,  
And neither to the waves nor air,  
Betrays the secret of his fair.

“The duty that to love we owe,  
Is, while to her we all may show,  
On others nothing to bestow.”

Though seemingly well adapted to his objects, the quotation of our troubadour was unfortunate. There were yet other verses to this instructive ditty, and the Baron of Roussillon, who had listened very patiently as his companion recited the preceding, soon proved himself to have a memory for good songs, though he never pretended to make them himself. When Guillaume had fairly finished, he took up the strain after a brief introduction.

“That is all very right and very proper, Guillaume, and I gainsay not a syllable that Master Bernard hath written; nay, methinks my proper answer to thee lieth in

another of his verses, which thou shouldst not have forgotten while reminding me of its companions. I shall refresh thy memory with the next that follows.” And without waiting for any answer, the baron proceeded to repeat another stanza of the old poem, in very creditable style and manner for an amateur. This remark Guillaume de Cabestaign could not forbear making to himself, though he was conscious at the same time that the utterance of the baron was in singularly slow and subdued accents—accents that scarcely rose above a whisper, and which were timed as if every syllable were weighed and spelled, ere it was confided to expression. The verse was as follows:

“We yield her name to those alone,  
Who, when the sacred truth is shown,  
May help to make the maid our own.”

“Now, methinks,” continued the baron, “here lieth the wisdom of my quest. Who better than myself can help to secure thee thy desires, to promote thy passion, and gain for thee the favor of the fair? Tell me, then, I command thee, Guillaume, and I promise to help thee with my best efforts and advice.”

Here was a dilemma. The troubadour was foiled with his own weapons. The quotation from his own authority was conclusive against him. The argument of Raymond was irresistible. Of his ability to serve the young lover there could be no question; and as little could the latter doubt the readiness of that friendship—assuming his pursuit to be a proper one—to which he had been so long indebted for favor and protection. He could excuse himself by no further evasion; and having admitted that he really and deeply loved, and that his verses declared a real and living passion, it became absolutely necessary that our troubadour, unless he would confirm the evident suspicions of his lord, should promptly find for her a name. He did so. The emergency seemed to justify a falsehood; and, with firm accents, Guillaume did not scruple to declare himself devoted, heart and soul, to the beautiful Lady Agnes de Tarrascon, the sister of Marguerite, his real mistress. At the pressing solicitation of Raymond, and in order to render applicable to this case certain of his verses, he admitted himself to have received from this lady certain favoring smiles, upon which his hopes of future happiness were founded. Our troubadour was persuaded to select the name of this lady, over all others, for two reasons. He believed that she suspected, or somewhat knew of the mutual flame which existed between himself and her sister; and he had long been conscious of that benevolence of temper which the former possessed, and which he fondly thought would prompt her in some degree to sympathize with him in his necessity, and lend herself somewhat to his own and the extrication of Marguerite. After making his confession, he concluded by imploring Raymond to approach his object cautiously, and by no means to peril his fortunes in the esteem of the lady he professed to love.

But the difficulties of Guillaume de Cabestaign were only begun. It was not the policy of Raymond to be satisfied with his simple asseverations. The suspicions

which had been awakened in his mind by the malignant suggestions of his courtiers, were too deeply and skillfully infixed there, to suffer him to be soothed by the mere statement of the supposed offender. He required something of a confirmatory character from the lips of Lady Agnes herself. Pleased, nevertheless, at what he had heard, and at the readiness and seeming frankness with which the troubadour had finally yielded his secret to his keeping, he eagerly assured the latter of his assistance in the prosecution of his quest; and he, who a moment before had coolly contemplated a deliberate murder, to revenge a supposed wrong to his own honor, did not now scruple to profess his willingness to aid his companion in compassing the dishonor of another. It did not matter much to our sullen baron that the victim was the sister of his own wife. The human nature of Lord Raymond of Roussillon, his own dignity uninjured, had but little sympathy with his neighbor's rights and sensibilities. He promptly proposed, at that very moment, to proceed on his charitable mission. The castle of Tarrascon was in sight; and, pointing to its turrets, that rose loftily above the distant hills, the imperious finger of Raymond gave the direction to our troubadour, which he shuddered to pursue, but did not dare to decline. He now began to feel all the dangers and embarrassments which he was about to encounter, and to tremble at the disgrace and ruin which seemed to rise, threatening and dead before him. Never was woman more virtuous than the Lady Agnes. Gentle and beautiful, like her sister Marguerite, her reputation had been more fortunate in escaping wholly the assaults of the malignant. She had always shown an affectionate indulgence for our troubadour, and a delighted interest in his various accomplishments; and he now remembered all her goodness and kindness only to curse himself, in his heart, for the treachery of which he had just been guilty. His remorse at what he had said to Raymond, was not the less deep and distressing from the conviction that he felt, that there had been no other way left him of escape from his dilemma.

We are bound to believe that the eagerness which Raymond of Roussillon now exhibited was not so much because of a desire to bring about the dishonor of another, as to be perfectly satisfied that he himself was free from injury. At the Castle of Tarrascon, the Lady Agnes was found alone. She gave the kindest reception to her guests; and, anxious to behold things through the medium of his wishes rather than his doubts and fears, Raymond fancied that there was a peculiar sort of tenderness in the tone and spirit of the compliments which she addressed to the dejected troubadour. That he was disquieted and dejected she was soon able to discover. His uneasiness made itself apparent before they had been long together; and the keen intelligence of the feminine mind was accordingly very soon prepared to comprehend the occasion of his disquiet, when drawn aside by Raymond at the earliest opportunity, she found herself cross-examined by the impatient baron on the nature and object of her own affections. A glance of the eye at Guillaume de Cabestaign, as she listened to the inquiries of the suspicious Raymond, revealed to the quick-witted woman the extent of his apprehensions, and possibly the danger of her sister. Her ready instinct and equally prompt benevolence of heart, at once

decided all the answers of the lady.

“Why question me of lovers,” she replied to Raymond, with a pretty querulousness of tone and manner, “certainly, I have lovers enow, as many as I choose to have. Would you that I should live unlike other women of birth and quality, without my servant to sing my praises, and declare his readiness to die in my behalf?”

“Ay, ay, my lady,” answered the knight, “lovers, I well know, you possess; for of these, I trow, that no lady of rank and beauty such as yours, can or possibly should be without; but is there not one lover over all whom you not only esteem for his grace and service, but for whom you feel the tenderest interest, whom, in fact, you prefer to the full surrender of your whole heart, and were this possible or proper, of your whole person?”

For a moment the gentle lady hesitated in her answer. The question was one of a kind to startle a delicate and faithful spirit; but, as her eyes wandered off to the place where the troubadour stood trembling—as she detected the pleading terror that was apparent in his face—her benevolence got the better of her scruples, and she frankly admitted that there really was one person in the world for whom her sentiments were even thus lively, and her sympathies thus broad and active.

“And now, I beseech you, Lady Agnes,” urged the anxious baron, “that you deal with me like a brother who will joy to serve you, and declare to me the name of the person whom you so much favor?”

“Now, out upon it, my Lord of Roussillon;” was the quick and somewhat indignant reply of the lady, “that you should presume thus greatly upon the kindred that lies between us. Women are not to be constrained to make such confession as this. It is their prerogative to be silent when the safety of their affections may suffer from their speech. To urge them to confess, in such cases, is only to compel them to speak unnecessary falsehoods. And know I not you husbands all—you have but a feeling in common; and if I reveal myself to you, it were as well that I should go at once and make full confession to my own lord.”

“Nay, dearest Lady Agnes, have no such doubt of my loyalty. I will assure you that what you tell me never finds its way to the ear of your lord. I pray thee do not fear to make this confession to me; nay, but thou must, Agnes,” exclaimed the rude baron, his voice rising more earnestly, and his manner becoming passionate and stern, while he grasped her wrist firmly in his convulsive fingers, and drawing her toward him, added, in the subdued but intense tones of half-suppressed passion, “I tell thee, lady, it behooves me much to know this secret.”

The lady did not immediately yield, though the manner of Raymond, from this moment, determined her that she would do so. She now conjectured all the circumstances of the case, and felt the necessity of saving the troubadour for the sake of her sister. But she played with the excited baron awhile longer, and when his passion grew so impatient as to be almost beyond his control, she admitted, as a most precious secret, confided to his keeping only that he might serve her in its

gratification, that she had a burning passion for Guillaume de Cabestaign, of which he himself was probably not conscious. The invention of the lady was as prompt and accurate as if the troubadour had whispered at her elbow. Raymond was now satisfied. He was relieved of his suspicions, turned away from the Lady of Tarrascon, to embrace her supposed lover, and readily accepted an invitation from the former, for himself and companion, to remain that night to supper. At that moment the great gates of the castle was thrown open, and the Lord of Tarrascon made his appearance. He confirmed the invitation extended by his wife; and, as usual, gave a most cordial reception to his guests. As soon as an opportunity offered, and before the hour of supper arrived, the Lady Agnes contrived to withdraw her lord to her own apartments, and there frankly revealed to him all that had taken place. He cordially gave his sanction to all that she had done. Guillaume de Cabestaign was much more of a favorite than his jealous master; and the sympathies of the noble and the virtuous, in those days, were always accorded to those who professed a love so innocent as, it was justly believed by this noble couple, was that of the Lady Marguerite and the troubadour. The harsh suspicions of Raymond were supposed to characterize only a coarse and brutal nature, which, in the assertion of its unquestionable rights, would abridge all those freedoms which courtliness and chivalry had established for the pleasurable intercourse of other parties. A perfect understanding thus established between the wife and husband, in behalf of the troubadour, and in misleading the baron, these several persons sat down to supper in the rarest good humor and harmony. Guillaume de Cabestaign recovered all his confidence, and with it his inspiration. He made several improvisations during the evening, which delighted the company—all in favor of the Lady Agnes, and glimpsing faintly at his attachment for her. These, unhappily, have not been preserved to us. They are said to have been so made as to correspond to the exigency of his recent situation; the excellent Baron Raymond all the while supposing that he alone possessed the key to their meaning. The Lady Agnes, meanwhile, under the approving eye of her husband, was at special pains to show such an interest in the troubadour, and such a preference for his comfort, over that of all persons present, as contributed to confirm all the assurances she had given to her brother-in-law in regard to her affections. The latter saw this with perfect satisfaction; and leaving Guillaume to pass the night where he was so happily entertained, he hurried home to Roussillon, eager to reveal to his own wife, the intrigue between her lover and her sister. It is quite possible that, if his suspicions of the troubadour were quieted, he still entertained some with regard to Marguerite. It is not improbable that a conviction that he was giving pain at every syllable he uttered entered into his calculations, and prompted what he said. He might be persuaded of the innocence of the parties, yet doubtful of their affections; and though assured now that he was mistaken in respect to the tendency of those of Guillaume, his suspicions were still lively in regard to those of his wife. His present revelations might be intended to probe her to the quick, and to gather from her emotions, at his recital, in how much she was interested in the sympathies of the



troubadour.

How far he succeeded in diving into her secret, has not been confided to the chronicle. It is very certain, however, that he succeeded in making Marguerite very unhappy. She now entertained no doubt, after her husband's recital, of the treachery of her sister, and the infidelity of her lover; and though she herself had permitted him no privilege, inconsistent with the claims of her lord, she was yet indignant that he should have proved unfaithful to a heart which he so well knew to be thoroughly his own. The pure soul itself entirely devoted to the beloved object, thus always revolts at a consciousness of its fall from its purity and its pledges; and though itself denied—doomed only to a secret worship, to which no altar may be raised, and to which there is no offering but the sacrifice of constant privation—yet it greatly prefers to entertain this sacred sense of isolation, to any enjoyment of mere mortal happiness. To feel that our affections are thus isolated in vain; that we have yielded them to one who is indifferent to the trust, and lives still for his earthly passions, is to suffer from a more than mortal deprivation. Marguerite of Roussillon passed the night in extreme agony of mind, the misery of which was greatly aggravated by the necessity, in her husband's presence, of suppressing every feeling of uneasiness. But her feelings could not always be suppressed; and when, the next day, on the return of the troubadour from Tarrascon, she encountered him in those garden walks which had been made sacred to their passion by its first mutual revelation, the pang grew to utterance, which her sense of dignity and propriety in vain endeavored to subdue. Her eyes brightened indignantly through her tears; and she whose virtue had withheld every gift of passion from the being whom she yet professed to love, at once, but still most tenderly, reproached him with his infidelity.

“Alas! Guillaume,” she continued, after telling him all that she had heard, “alas! that my soul should have so singled thine out from all the rest, because of its purity, and should find thee thus, like all the rest, incapable of a sweet and holy love such as thou didst promise. I had rather died, Guillaume, a thousand deaths, than that thou shouldst have fallen from thy faith to me.”

“But I have not fallen—I have not faltered in my faith, Marguerite! I am still true to thee—to thee only, though I sigh for thee vainly, and know that thou livest only for another. Hear me, Marguerite, while I tell thee what has truly happened. Thou hast heard something, truly, but not all the truth.”

And he proceeded with the narrative to which we have already listened. He had only to show her what had passed between her lord and himself, to show how great had been his emergency. The subsequent events at Tarrascon, only convinced her of the quick intelligence, and sweet benevolence of purpose by which her sister had been governed. Her charitable sympathies had seen and favored the artifice in which lay the safety equally of her lover and herself. The revulsion of her feelings from grief to exultation, spoke in a gust of tears, which relieved the distresses of her soul. The single kiss upon his forehead, with which she rewarded the devotion of the troubadour, inspired his fancy. He made the event the subject of a sonnet, which has

fortunately been preserved to us.

MARGUERITE.

That there should be a question whom I love,  
As if the world had more than one so fair!  
*Would'st know her name, behold the letters rare,*  
*God-written, on the wing of every dove!*  
Ask if a blindness darkens my fond eyes,  
That I should doubt me whither I should turn;  
Ask if my soul, in cold abeyance lies,  
That I should fail at sight of her to burn.  
That I should wander to another's sway,  
Would speak a blindness worse than that of sight,  
Since here, though nothing I may ask of right,  
Blessings most precious woo my heart to stay.  
High my ambition, since at heaven it aims,  
Yet humble, *since a daisy's all it claims.*

The lines first italicized embody the name of the lady, by a periphrasis known to the Provençal dialect, and the name of the daisy, as used in the closing line, is Marguerite's. The poem is an unequivocal declaration of attachment, obviously meant to do away with all adverse declarations. To those acquainted with the previous history, it unfolds another history quite as significant; and to those who knew nothing of the purity of the parties, and who made no allowance for the exaggerated manner in which a troubadour would be apt to declare the privileges he had enjoyed, it would convey the idea of a triumph inconsistent with the innocence of the lovers, and destructive of the rights of the injured husband. Thus, full of meaning, it is difficult to conceive by what imprudence of the parties, this fatal sonnet found its way to the hands of Raymond of Roussillon. It is charged by the biographers, in the absence of other proofs, that the vanity of Marguerite, in her moments of exultation—greater than her passion—proud of the homage which she inspired, and confident in the innocence which the world had too slanderously already begun to question—could not forbear the temptation of showing so beautiful a testimony of the power of her charms. But the suggestion lacks in plausibility. It is more easy to conceive that the fond heart of the woman would not suffer her to destroy so exquisite a tribute, and that the jealousy of her lord, provoked by the arts of envious rivals, conducted him to the place of safe-keeping where her treasure was concealed. At all events, it fell into his hands, and revived all his suspicions. In fact, it gave the lie to the artful story by which he had been lulled into confidence, and was thus, in a manner, conclusive of the utter guilt of the lovers. His pride was outraged as well as his honor. He had been gulled by all upon whom he had relied—his wife, his page, and his sister. He no longer doubted Marguerite's infidelity and his own disgrace; and breathing nothing but vengeance, he yet succeeded in concealing from all persons the convictions which he felt, of the guilt which dishonored him, and the terrible vengeance which he meditated for its punishment. He was a cold and savage man, who could suppress, in most cases, the pangs which

he felt, and could deliberately restrain the passions which yet occupied triumphant places in his heart and purpose. It was not long before he found the occasion which he desired. The movements of the troubadour were closely watched, and one day when he had wandered forth from the castle, seeking solitude, as was his frequent habit, Raymond contrived to steal away from observation, and to follow him out into the forest. He was successful in his quest. He found Guillaume resting at the foot of a shady tree, in a secluded glen, with his tablets before him. The outlines of a tender ballad, tender but spiritual, as was the character of all his melodies, were already inscribed upon the paper. The poet was meditating, as usual, the charms of that dangerous mistress, whose beauty was destined to become his bane. Raymond threw himself upon the ground beside him.

“Ah! well,” said he, as he joined the troubadour, “this love of the Lady Agnes is still a distressing matter in thy thoughts.”

“In truth, my lord, I think of her with the greatest love and tenderness,” was the reply of Guillaume.

“Verily, thou dost well,” returned the baron; “she deserves requital at thy hands. Thou owest her good service. And yet, for one who so greatly affects a lady, and who hath found so much favor in her sight, methinks thou seek’st her but seldom. Why is this, Sir Troubadour?”

Without waiting for the answer, Raymond added, “But let me see what thou hast just written in her praise. It is by his verses that we understand the devotion of the troubadour.”

Leaning over the poet as he spoke, as if his purpose had been to possess himself of his tablets, he suddenly threw the whole weight of his person upon him, and, in the very same moment, by a quick movement of the hand, he drove the *couteau de chasse*, with which he was armed, and which he had hitherto concealed behind him, with a swift, unerring stroke deep down into the bosom of the victim. Never was blow better aimed, or with more energy delivered. The moment of danger was that of death. The unfortunate troubadour was conscious of the weapon only when he felt the steel. It was with a playful smile that Raymond struck, and so innocent was the expression of his face, even while his arm was extended and the weight of his body was pressing upon Guillaume, that the only solicitude of the latter had been to conceal his tablets. One convulsive cry, one hideous contortion, and Guillaume de Cabestaign was no more. The name of Marguerite was the only word which escaped him with his dying shriek. The murderer placed his hand upon the heart of the victim. It had already ceased to beat.

“Thou wilt mock me no more!” he muttered fiercely, as he half rose from the body now stiffening fast. But his fierce vengeance was by no means completed. As if a new suggestion had seized upon his mind, while his hand rested upon the heart of the troubadour, he suddenly started and tore away the garments from the unconscious bosom. Once more he struck it deeply with the keen and heavy blade. In a few moments he had laid it open. Then he plunged his naked hand into the

gaping wound, and tore out the still quivering heart. This he wrapped up with care, and concealed in his garments. With another stroke he smote the head from the body, and this he also concealed, in fragments torn from the person of his victim. With these proofs of his terrible revenge, he made his way, under cover of the dusk, in secret to the castle. What remains to be told is still more dreadful—beyond belief indeed, were it not that the sources of our history are wholly above discredit or denial. The cruel baron, ordering his cook into his presence, then gave the heart of the troubadour into his keeping, with instructions to dress it richly, and after a manner of dressing certain favorite portions of venison, of which Marguerite was known to be particularly fond. The dish was a subject of special solicitude with her husband. He himself superintended the preparation, and furnished the spices. That night, he being her only companion at the feast, it was served up to his wife, at the usual time of supper. He had assiduously subdued every vestige of anger, unkindness or suspicion from his countenance. Marguerite was suffered to hear and see nothing which might provoke her apprehensions or arrest her appetite. She was more than usually serene and cheerful, as, that day and evening, her lord was more than commonly indulgent. He, too, could play a part when it suited him to do so; and, like most men of stern will and great experience, could adapt his moods and manners to that livelier cast, and more pliant temper, which better persuade the feminine heart into confidence and pleasure. He smiled upon her now with the most benevolent sweetness; but while he earnestly encouraged her to partake of the delicacy specially put before her, he himself might be seen to eat of any other dish. The wretched woman, totally unsuspecting of guile or evil, undreaming of disaster, and really conscious of but little self-reproach, ate freely of the precious meat which had been placed before her. The eyes of Raymond greedily followed every morsel which she carried to her lips. She evidently enjoyed the dish which had been spiced for her benefit, and as she continued to draw upon it, he could no longer forbear to unfold the exultation which he felt at the entire satisfaction of his vengeance.

“You seem very much to like your meats to-night, Marguerite. Do you find them good?”

“Verily,” she answered, “this venison is really delicious.”

“Eat then,” he continued, “I have had it dressed purposely for you. You ought to like it. It is a dish of which you have always shown yourself very fond.”

“Nay, my lord, but you surely err. I cannot think that I have ever eaten before of any thing so very delicious as this.”

“Nay, nay, Marguerite, it is you that err. I *know* that the meat of which you now partake, is one which you have always found the sweetest.”

There was something now in the voice of the speaker that made Marguerite look up. Her eyes immediately met his own, and the wolfish exultation which they betrayed confounded her and made her shudder. She felt at once terrified with a nameless fear. There was a sudden sickness and sinking of her heart. She felt that there was a terrible meaning, a dreadful mystery in his looks and words, the solution

of which she shrunk from with a vague but absorbing terror. She was too well acquainted with the sinister expression of that glance. She rallied herself to speak.

“What is it that you mean, my lord? Something dreadful! What have you done? This food—”

“Ay, this food! I can very well understand that you should find it delicious. It is such as you have always loved a little too much. It is but natural that you should relish, now that it is dead, that which you so passionately enjoyed while living. Marguerite, the meat of that dish which you have eaten was once the heart of Guillaume de Cabestaign!”

The lips of the wretched woman parted spasmodically. Her jaws seemed to stretch asunder. Her eyes dilated in a horror akin to madness. Her arms were stretched out and forward. She half rose from the table, which she at length seized upon for her support.

“No!” she exclaimed, hoarsely, at length. “No! no! It is not true. It is not possible. I will not—I dare not believe it.”

“You shall have a witness, Marguerite! You shall hear it from one whom, heretofore, you have believed always, and who will find it impossible now to lie. Behold! This is the head of him whose heart you have eaten!”

With these dreadful words, the cruel baron raised the ghastly head of the troubadour, which he had hitherto concealed beneath the table, and which he now placed upon it. At this horrible spectacle the wretched woman sunk down in a swoon, from which, however, she awakened but too quickly. The wan and bloody aspect of her lover, the eyes glazed in death, but full still of the tenderest expression, met her gaze as it opened upon the light. The savage lord who had achieved the horrid butchery stood erect, and pointing at the spectacle of terror. His scornful and demoniac glance—the horrid cruelty of which he continued to boast—her conscious innocence and that of her lover—her complete and deep despair—all conspired to arm her soul with a courage which she had never felt till now. In the ruin of her heart she had grown reckless of her life. Her eye confronted the murderer.

“Be it so!” she exclaimed. “As I have eaten of meat so precious, it fits not that inferior food should ever again pass these lips! This is the last supper which I shall taste on earth!”

“What! dare you thus shamelessly avow to me your passion?”

“Ay! as God who beholds us knows, never did woman more passionately and truly love mortal man, than did Marguerite of Roussillon the pure and noble Guillaume de Cabestaign. It is true! I fear not to say it now! Now, indeed, I am his only and forever!”

Transported with fury at what he heard, Raymond drew his dagger, and rushed to where she stood. But she did not await his weapon. Anticipating his wrath, she darted headlong through a door which opened upon a balcony, over the balustrade of which, with a second effort, she flung herself into the court below. All this was

the work of but one impulse and of a single instant Raymond reached the balcony as the delicate frame of the beautiful woman was crushed upon the flag-stones of the court. Life had utterly departed when they raised her from the ground!

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This terrible catastrophe struck society every where with consternation. At a season, when not only chivalry, but the church, gave its most absolute sanction to the existence and encouragement of that strange conventional love which we have sought to describe, the crime of Raymond provoked an universal honor. Love, artificial and sentimental rather than passionate, was the soul equally of military achievement and of aristocratic society. It was then of vast importance, as an element of power, in the use of religious enthusiasm. The shock given to those who cherished this sentiment, by this dreadful history, was felt to all the extremities of the social circle. The friends and kindred of the lovers—the princes and princesses of the land—noble lords, knights and ladies, all combined, as by a common impulse, to denounce and to destroy the bloody-minded criminal. Alphonso, King of Arragon, devoted himself to the work of justice. Raymond was seized and cast into a dungeon. His castle was razed to the ground, under a public decree, which scarcely anticipated the eager rage of hundreds who rushed to the work of demolition. The criminal himself was suffered to live; but he lived either in prison or in exile, with loss of caste and society, and amidst universal detestation!

Very different was the fate of the lovers, whom man could no more harm or separate. They were honored, under the sanction of Alphonso, with a gorgeous funeral procession. They were laid together, in the same tomb, before the church of Perpignan, and their names and cruel history were duly engraven upon the stone raised to their memory. According the Provençal historians, it was afterward a custom with the knights of Roussillon, of Cerdagne, and of Narbonnois, every year to join with the noble dames and ladies of the same places, in a solemn service, in memory of Marguerite of Roussillon, and William of Cabestaign. At the same time came lovers of both sexes, on a pilgrimage to their tomb, where they prayed for the repose of their souls. The anniversary of this service was instituted by Alphonso. We may add that romance has more than once seized upon this tragic history, out of which to weave her fictions. Boccaccio has found in it the material for one of the stories of the Decameron, in which, however, while perverting history, he has done but little to merit the gratulation of Art. He has failed equally to do justice to himself, and to his melancholy subject.

## SONNET.—TO MARY M. R. W.

BOTH when the morning and the evening dews  
Moisten the earth, I pray thee, lady, seek  
Some lofty hill, whence many a swelling peak  
May be descried far in the distance. Views  
Like these shall tune thy spirit, and infuse  
Thoughts worthy of immortal life: thy cheek  
Shall glow with rosier healthfulness; thy meek  
And dove-like eyes shall drink in tints and hues  
Like those of heaven; and when the magic play  
Of colors, shifting o'er the mountain-side,  
Has mingled with thy fancy; when the ray  
Of rising or of setting sun has dyed  
Thy inmost soul with splendor—come away—  
For then thou shalt be almost deified.

T. E. V. B.

# THE LAST TILT.

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BY HENRY B. HIRST.

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AT twilight, through the shadow, fled  
An ancient, war-worn knight,  
Arrayed in steel, from head to heel,  
And on a steed of white;  
And, in the knight's despite,  
The horse pursued his flight:  
For the old man's cheek was pale,  
And his hands strove at the rein,  
With the clutch of frenzied pain;  
And his courser's streaming mane  
Swept, disheveled, on the gale.

*“Dong—dong!” And the sound of a bell  
Went wailing away over meadow and mere—“SEVEN!”  
Counted aloud by the sentinel clock  
On the turret of Time; and the regular beat  
Of his echoing feet  
Fell—like lead—on the ear—  
As he left the dead Hour on its desolate bier.*

The old knight heard the mystic clock;  
And the sound, like a funeral bell,  
Rang in his ears till their caverns were full  
Of the knoll of the desolate knell.  
And the steed, as aroused by a spell,  
Sprang away with a withering yell,  
While the old man strove again,  
But each time, with feebler force,  
To arrest the spectral horse  
In its mad, remorseless course,  
But, alas! he strove in vain.

*“Dong—dong!” And the sound of a bell  
Went wailing away over meadow and mere—“EIGHT!”*



*Counted aloud by the sentinel clock  
On the turret of Time; and the regular beat  
Of his echoing feet  
Fell—like lead—on the ear—  
As he left the dead Hour on its desolate bier.*

The steed was white, and gaunt, and grim,  
With lidless, leaden eyes  
That burned with the lurid, livid glare  
Of the stars of Stygian skies;  
And the wind, behind, with sighs,  
Mimicked his maniac cries,  
While through the ebony gloom, alone,  
Wan-visaged Saturn gazed  
On the warrior—unamazed—  
On the steed whose eye-balls blazed  
With a lustre like his own.

*“Dong—dong!” And the sound of a bell  
Went wailing away over meadow and mere— “NINE!”  
Counted aloud by the sentinel clock  
On the turret of Time; and the regular beat  
Of his echoing feet  
Fell—like lead—on the ear—  
As he left the dead Hour on its desolate bier.*

Athwart a swart and shadowy moor  
The struggling knight was borne,  
And far away, before him, gleamed  
A light like the gray of morn;  
While the old man, weak, forlorn,  
And wan, and travel-worn,  
Gazed, mad with deathly fear:  
For he dreamed it was the day,  
Though the dawn was far away,  
And he trembled with dismay  
In the desert—dark and drear.

*“Dong—dong!” And the sound of a bell  
Went wailing away over meadow and mere— “TEN!”  
Counted aloud by the sentinel clock  
On the turret of Time; and the regular beat  
Of his echoing feet*

*Fell—like lead—on the ear—  
As he left the dead Hour on its desolate bier.*

In casque and cuirass, white as snow,  
Came, merrily, over the wold,  
A maiden knight, with lance and shield,  
And a form of manly mould,  
And a beard of woven gold,  
When—suddenly!—behold!  
With a loud defiant cry,  
And a tone of stern command,  
The ancient knight, with lance in hand,  
Rushed, thundering, over the frozen land,  
And bade him “Stand! or die!”

*“Dong—dong!” And the sound of a bell  
Went wailing away over meadow and mere—“ELEVEN!”  
Counted aloud by the sentinel clock  
On the turret of Time; and the regular beat  
Of his echoing feet  
Fell—like lead—on the ear—  
As he left the dead Hour on its desolate bier.*

With his ashen lance in rest,  
Careered the youthful knight,  
With a haughty heart, and an eagle eye,  
And a visage burning bright—  
For he loved the tilted fight—  
And, under Saturn’s light,  
With a shock that shook the world,  
The rude old warrior fell—and lay  
A corpse—along the frozen clay!  
As with a crash the gates of day  
Their brazen valves unfurled.

*“Dong—dong!” And the sound of a bell  
Went wailing away over meadow and mere—“TWELVE!”  
Counted aloud by the sentinel clock  
On the turret of Time; and the regular beat  
Of his echoing feet  
Fell—like lead—on the ear—  
As he left the dead Year on his desolate bier.*

# THE ISLETS OF THE GULF;

## OR, ROSE BUDD.

Ay, now I am in Arden; the more fool  
I; when I was at home I was in a better place; but  
Travelers must be content. AS YOU LIKE IT.

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BY THE AUTHOR OF "PILOT," "RED ROVER," "TWO ADMIRALS," "WING-AND-WING," "MILES WALLINGFORD," ETC.

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[Entered, according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1846, by J. Fenimore Cooper, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States, for the Northern District of New York.]

*(Continued from page 252.)*

### PART XIV.

She's in a scene of nature's war,  
The winds and waters are at strife;  
And both with her contending for  
The brittle thread of human life.—MISS GOULD.

SPIKE was sleeping hard in his berth, quite early on the following morning, before the return of light, indeed, when he suddenly started up, rubbed his eyes, and sprang upon deck like a man alarmed. He had heard, or fancied he had heard, a cry. A voice once well known and listened to, seemed to call him in the very portals of his ear. At first he had listened to its words in wonder, entranced like the bird by the snake, the tones recalling scenes and persons that had once possessed a strong control over his rude feelings. Presently the voice became harsher in its utterance, and it said,

"Stephen Spike, awake! The hour is getting late, and you have enemies nearer to you than you imagine. Awake, Stephen, awake!"

When the captain was on his feet, and had plunged his head into a basin of water that stood ready for him in the state-room, he could not have told, for his life, whether he had been dreaming or waking, whether what he had heard was the result of a feverish imagination, or of the laws of nature. The call haunted him all that morning, or until events of importance so pressed upon him as to draw his undivided attention to them alone.

It was not yet day. The men were still in heavy sleep, lying about the decks, for they avoided the small and crowded fore-castle in that warm climate, and the night was apparently at its deepest hour. Spike walked forward to look for the man charged with the anchor-watch. It proved to be Jack Tier, who was standing near the galley, his arms folded as usual, apparently watching the few signs of approaching day that were beginning to be apparent in the western sky. The captain was in none of the best humors with the steward's assistant; but Jack had unaccountably got an ascendancy over his commander, which it was certainly very unusual for any subordinate in the *Swash* to obtain. Spike had deferred more to Mulford than to any mate he had ever before employed; but this was the deference due to superior information, manners, and origin. It was common-place, if not vulgar; whereas, the ascendancy obtained by little Jack Tier was, even to its subject, entirely inexplicable. He was unwilling to admit it to himself in the most secret manner, though he had begun to feel it on all occasions which brought them in contact, and to submit to it as a thing not to be averted.

"Jack Tier," demanded the captain, now that he found himself once more alone with the other, desirous of obtaining his opinion on a point that harrassed him, though he knew not why; "Jack Tier, answer me one thing. Do you believe that we saw the form of a dead or of a living man at the foot of the light-house?"

"The dead are never seen leaning against walls in that manner, Stephen Spike," answered Jack, coolly, not even taking the trouble to uncoil his arms. "What you saw was a living man; and you would do well to be on your guard against him. Harry Mulford is not your friend—and there is reason for it."

"Harry Mulford, and living! How can that be, Jack? You know the port in which he chose to run."

"I know the rock on which you chose to abandon him, Capt. Spike."

"If so, how could he be living and at the Dry Tortugas? The thing is impossible!"

"The thing is so. You saw Harry Mulford, living and well, and ready to hunt you to the gallows. Beware of him, then; and beware of his handsome wife!"

"Wife! the fellow has no wife—he has always professed to be a single man!"

"The man is married—and I bid you beware of his handsome wife. She, too, will be a witness ag' in you."

"This will be news, then, for Rose Budd. I shall delight in telling it to *her*, at least."

"'Twill be *no* news to Rose Budd. She was present at the wedding, and will not be taken by surprise. Rose loves Harry too well to let him marry, and she not present at the wedding."

"Jack, you talk strangely! What is the meaning of all this? I am captain of this craft, and will not be trifled with—tell me at once your meaning, fellow."

"My meaning is simple enough, and easily told. Rose Budd is the wife of Harry

Mulford.”

“You’re dreaming, fellow, or are wishing to trifle with me!”

“It may be a dream, but it is one that will turn out to be true. If they have found the Poughkeepsie sloop-of-war, as I make no doubt they have by this time, Mulford and Rose are man and wife.”

“Fool! you know not what you say! Rose is at this moment in her berth, sick at heart on account of the young gentleman who preferred to live on the Florida Reef rather than to sail in the Molly!”

“Rose is not in her berth, sick or well; neither is she on board this brig at all. She went off in the light-house boat to deliver her lover from the naked rock—and well did she succeed in so doing. God was of her side, Stephen Spike; and a body seldom foils with such a friend to support one.”

Spike was astounded at these words, and not less so at the cool and confident manner with which they were pronounced. Jack spoke in a certain dogmatical, oracular manner, it is true, one that might have lessened his authority with a person over whom he had less influence; but this in no degree diminished its effect on Spike. On the contrary, it even disposed the captain to yield an implicit faith to what he heard, and all so much the more because the facts he was told appeared of themselves to be nearly impossible. It was half a minute before he had sufficiently recovered from his surprise to continue the discourse.

“The light-house boat!” Spike then slowly repeated. “Why, fellow, you told me the light-house boat went adrift from your own hands!”

“So it did,” answered Jack, coolly, “since I cast off the painter—and what is more, went in it.”

“You! This is impossible. You are telling me a fabricated lie. If you had gone away in that boat, how could you now be here? No, no—it is a miserable lie, and Rose is below!”

“Go and look into her state-room, and satisfy yourself with your own eyes.”

Spike did as was suggested. He went below, took a lamp that was always suspended, lighted, in the main cabin, and, without ceremony, proceeded to Rose’s state-room, where he soon found that the bird had really flown. A direful execration followed this discovery, one so loud as to awaken Mrs. Budd and Biddy. Determined not to do things by halves, he broke open the door of the widow’s state-room, and ascertained that the person he sought was not there. A fierce explosion of oaths and denunciations followed, which produced an answer in the customary screams. In the midst of this violent scene, however, questions were put, and answers obtained, that not only served to let the captain know that Jack had told him nothing but truth, but to put an end to every thing like amicable relations between himself and the relict of his old commander. Until this explosion, appearances had been observed between them; but, from that moment, there must necessarily be an end of all professions of even civility. Spike was never particularly refined in his

intercourse with females, but he now threw aside even its pretension. His rage was so great that he totally forgot his manhood, and lavished on both Mrs. Budd and Biddy epithets that were altogether inexcusable, and many of which it will not do to repeat. Weak and silly as was the widow, she was not without spirit; and on this occasion she was indisposed to submit to all this unmerited abuse in silence. Biddy, as usual, took her cue from her mistress, and between the two, their part of the wordy conflict was kept up with a very respectable degree of animation.

“I know you—I know you, now!” screamed the widow, at the top of her voice; “and you can no longer deceive me, unworthy son of Neptune as you are! You are unfit to be a lubber, and would be log-booked for an or’nary by every gentleman on board ship. You, a full-jiggered seaman! No, you are not even half-jiggered, sir; and I tell you so to your face.”

“Yes, and it isn’t *half* that might be tould the likes of yees!” put in Biddy, as her mistress stopped to breathe. “And it’s Miss Rose you’d have for a wife, when Biddy Noon would be too good for ye! We knows ye, and all about ye, and can give yer history as complate from the day ye was born down to the present moment, and not find a good word to say in yer favor in all that time—and a precious time it is, too, for a gentleman that would marry pretthy, *young* Miss Rose! Och! I scorn to look at ye, yer so ugly!”

“And trying to persuade me you were a friend of my poor, dear Mr. Budd, whose shoe you are unworthy to touch, and who had the heart and soul for the noble profession you disgrace,” cut in the widow, the moment Biddy gave her a chance, by pausing to make a wry face as she pronounced the word “ugly.” “I now believe you capasided them poor Mexicans, in order to get their money; and the moment we cast anchor in a road-side, I’ll go ashore, and complain of you for murder, I will.”

“Do, missus, dear, and I’ll be your bail, will I, and swear to all that happened, and more too. Och! yer a wretch, to wish to be the husband of Miss Rose, and she so young and pretthy, and you so oud and ugly!”

“Come away—come away, Stephen Spike, and do not stand wrangling with women, when you and your brig, and all that belongs to you are in danger,” called out Jack Tier from the companion-way. “Day is come; and what is much worse for you, your most dangerous enemy is coming with it.”

Spike was almost livid with rage, and ready to burst out in awful maledictions; but at this summons he sprang to the ladder, and was on deck in a moment. At first, he felt a strong disposition to wreak his vengeance on Tier, but, fortunately for the latter, as the captain’s foot touched the quarter-deck, his eye fell on the Poughkeepsie, then within half a league of the Swash, standing in toward the reef, though fully half a mile to leeward. This spectre drove all other subjects from his mind, leaving the captain of the Swash in the only character in which he could be said to be respectable, or that of a seaman. Almost instinctively he called all hands, then he gave one brief minute to a survey of his situation.

It was, indeed, time for the Swash to be moving. There she lay, with three

anchors down, including that of the schooner, all she had, in fact, with the exception of her best bower, and one kedge, with the purchases aloft, in readiness for hooking on to the wreck, and all the extra securities up that had been given to the masts. As for the sloop-of-war, she was under the very same canvas as that with which she had come out from the Dry Tortugas, or her three top-sails, spanker, and jib; but most of her other sails were loose, even to her royals and flying-jibs, though closely gathered into their spars by means of the running gear. In a word, every sailor would know, at a glance, that the ship was merely waiting for the proper moment to spread her wings, when she would be flying through the water at the top of her speed. The weather looked dirty, and the wind was gradually increasing, threatening to blow heavily as the day advanced.

“Unshackle, unshackle!” shouted Spike to the boatswain, who was the first man that appeared on deck. “The bloody sloop-of-war is upon us, and there is not a moment to lose. We must get the brig clear of the ground in the shortest way we can, and abandon every thing. Unshackle, and cast off for’ard and aft, men.”

A few minutes of almost desperate exertion succeeded. No men work like sailors, when the last are in a hurry, their efforts being directed to counteracting squalls, and avoiding emergencies of the most pressing character. Thus was it now with the crew of the Swash. The clanking of chains lasted but a minute, when the parts attached to the anchors were thrust through the hawse-holes, or were dropped into the water from other parts of the brig. This at once released the vessel, though a great deal remained to be done to clear her for working, and to put her in her best trim.

“Away with this out-hauler!” again shouted Spike, casting loose the main-brails as he did so; “loose the jibs!”

All went on at once, and the Swash moved away from the grave of the poor carpenter with the ease and facility of motion that marked all her evolutions. Then the top-sail was let fall, and presently all the upper square-sails were sheeted home, and hoisted, and the fore-tack was hauled aboard. The Molly was soon alive, and jumping into the seas that met her with more power than was common, as she drew out from under the shelter of the reef into rough water. From the time when Spike gave his first order, to that when all his canvas was spread, was just seven minutes.

The Poughkeepsie, with her vastly superior crew, was not idle the while. Although the watch below was not disturbed, she tacked beautifully, and stood off the reef, in a line parallel to the course of the brig, and distant from her about half a mile. Then sail was made, her tacks having been boarded in stays. Spike knew the play of his craft was short legs, for she was so nimble in her movements that he believed she could go about in half the time that would be required for a vessel of the Poughkeepsie’s length. “Ready about,” was his cry, therefore, when less than a mile distant from the reef—“ready about, and let her go round.” Round the Molly did go, like a top, being full on the other tack in just fifty-six seconds. The movement of the corvette was more stately, and somewhat more deliberate. Still,

she stayed beautifully, and both Spike and the boatswain shook their heads, as they saw her coming into the wind with her sails all lifting and the sheets flowing.

“That fellow will fore-reach a cable’s length before he gets about!” exclaimed Spike. “He will prove too much for us at this sport! Keep her away, my man—keep the brig away for the passage. We must run through the reef, instead of trusting ourselves to our heels in open water.”

The brig was kept away accordingly, and sheets were eased off, and braces just touched, to meet the new line of sailing. As the wind stood, it was possible to lay through the passage on an easy bowline, though the breeze, which was getting to be fresher than Spike wished it to be, promised to haul more to the southward of east, as the day advanced. Nevertheless, this was the Swash’s best point of sailing, and all on board of her had strong hopes of her being too much for her pursuer, could she maintain it. Until this feeling began to diffuse itself in the brig, not a countenance was to be seen on her decks that did not betray intense anxiety; but now something like grim smiles passed among the crew, as their craft seemed rather to fly than force her way through the water, toward the entrance of the passage so often adverted to in this narrative.

On the other hand, the Poughkeepsie was admirably sailed and handled. Everybody was now on deck, and the first lieutenant had taken the trumpet. Capt. Mull was a man of method, and a thorough man-of-war’s man. Whatever he did was done according to rule, and with great system. Just as the Swash was about to enter the passage, the drum of the Poughkeepsie beat to quarters. No sooner were the men mustered, in the leeward, or starboard batteries, than orders were sent to cast loose the guns, and to get them ready for service. Owing to the more leeward position of his vessel, and to the fact that she always head-reached so much in stays, Capt. Mull knew that she would not lose much by luffing into the wind, or by making half boards, while he might gain every thing by one well directed shot.

The strife commenced by the sloop-of-war firing her weather bow-gun, single-shotted, at the Swash. No damage was done, though the fore-yard of the brig had a very narrow escape. This experiment was repeated three times, without even a rope-yarn being carried away, though the gun was pointed by Wallace himself and well pointed, too. But it is possible for a shot to come very near its object and still to do no injury. Such was the fact on this occasion, though the “ship’s gentleman” was a good deal mortified by the result. Men look so much at success as the test of merit, that few pause to inquire into the reasons of failures, though it frequently happens that adventurers prosper by means of their very blunders. Capt. Mull now determined on a half board, for his ship was more to leeward than he desired. Directions were given to the officers in the batteries to be deliberate, and the helm was put down. As the ship shot into the wind, each gun was fired, as it could be brought to bear, until the last of them all was discharged. Then the course of the vessel was changed, the helm being righted before the ship had lost her way, and the sloop-of-war fell off again to her course.



All this was done in such a short period of time as scarcely to cause the Poughkeepsie to lose any thing, while it did the Swash the most serious injury. The guns had been directed at the brig's spars and sails, Capt. Mull desiring no more than to capture his chase, and the destruction they produced aloft was such as to induce Spike and his men, at first, to imagine that the whole hamper above their heads was about to come clattering down on deck. One shot carried away all the weather fore-topmast rigging of the brig, and would no doubt have brought about the loss of the mast, if another, that almost instantly succeeded it had not cut the spar itself in two, bringing down, as a matter of course, every thing above it. Nearly half of the main-mast was gouged out of that spar, and the gaff was taken fairly out of its jaws. The fore-yard was cut in the slings, and various important ropes, were carried away in different parts of the vessel.

Flight under such circumstances, was impossible, unless some extraordinary external assistance was to be obtained. This Spike saw at once, and he had recourse to the only expedient that remained; which might possibly yet save him. The guns were still belching forth their smoke and flames, when he shouted out the order to put the helm hard up. The width of the passage in which the vessels were was not so great but that he might hope to pass across it and to enter a channel among the rocks, which was favorably placed for such a purpose, ere the sloop-of-war could overtake him. Whither that channel led, what water it possessed, or whether it were not a shallow *cul de sac*, were all facts of which Spike was ignorant. The circumstances, however, would not admit of an alternative.

Happily for the execution of Spike's present design, nothing from aloft had fallen into the water, to impede the brig's way. Forward, in particular, she seemed all wreck; her fore-yard having come down altogether, so as to encumber the fore-castle, while her top-mast, with its dependent spars and gear, was suspended but a short distance above. Still, nothing had gone over the side, so as actually to touch the water, and the craft obeyed her helm as usual. Away she went, then, for the lateral opening in the reef just mentioned, driven ahead by the pressure of a strong breeze on her sails, which still offered large surfaces to the wind, at a rapid rate. Instead of keeping away to follow, the Poughkeepsie maintained her luff, and just as the Swash entered the unknown passage, into which she was blindly plunging, the sloop-of-war was about a quarter of a mile to windward, and standing directly across her stern. Nothing would have been easier, now, than for Capt. Mull to destroy his chase; but humanity prevented his firing. He knew that her career must be short, and he fully expected to see her anchor; when it would be easy for him to take possession with his boats. With this expectation, indeed, he shortened sail, furling top-gallant-sails, and hauling up his courses. By this time, the wind had so much freshened, as to induce him to think of putting in a reef, and the step now taken had a double object in view.

To the surprise of all on board the man-of-war, the brig continued on, until she was fully a mile distant, finding her way deeper and deeper among the mazes of the

reef without meeting with any impediment! This fact induced Capt. Mull to order his Paixhan's to throw their shells beyond her, by way of a hint to anchor. While the guns were getting ready, Spike stood on boldly, knowing it was neck or nothing, and beginning to feel a faint revival of hope, as he found himself getting further and further from his pursuers, and the rocks not fetching him up. Even the men, who had begun to murmur at what seemed to them to be risking too much, partook, in a slight degree, of the same feeling, and began to execute the order they had received to try to get the launch into the water, with some appearance of an intention to succeed. Previously, the work could scarcely be said to go on at all; but two or three of the older seamen now bestirred themselves, and suggestions were made and attended to, that promised results. But it was no easy thing to get the launch out of a half-rigged brig, that had lost her fore-yard, and which carried nothing square abaft. A derrick was used in common, to lift the stern of the boat, but a derrick would now be useless aft, without an assistant forward. While these things were in discussion, under the superintendence of the boatswain, and Spike was standing between the knight-heads, conning the craft, the sloop-of-war let fly the first of her hollow shot. Down came the hurtling mass upon the Swash, keeping every head elevated and all eyes looking for the dark object, as it went booming through the air above their heads. The shot passed fully a mile to leeward, where it exploded. This great range had been given to the first shot, with a view to admonish the captain how long he must continue under the guns of the ship, and as advice to come to. The second gun followed immediately. Its shot was seen to ricochet, directly in a line with the brig, making leaps of about half a mile in length. It struck the water about fifty yards astern of the vessel, bounded directly over her decks, passing through the main-sail and some of the fallen hamper forward, and exploded about a hundred yards ahead. As usually happens with such projectiles, most of the fragments were either scattered laterally, or went on, impelled by the original momentum.

The effect of this last gun on the crew of the Swash was instantaneous and deep. The faint gleamings of hope vanished at once, and a lively consciousness of the desperate nature of their condition succeeded in every mind. The launch was forgotten, and, after conferring together for a moment, the men went in a body, with the boatswain at their head, to the fore-castle, and offered a remonstrance to their commander, on the subject of holding out any longer, under circumstances so very hazardous, and which menaced their lives in so many different ways. Spike listened to them with eyes that fairly glared with fury. He ordered them back to their duty in a voice of thunder, tapping the breast of his jacket, where he was known to carry revolvers, with a significance that could convey but one meaning.

It is wonderful the ascendancy that men sometimes obtain over their fellows, by means of character, the habits of command, and obedience, and intimidation. Spike was a stern disciplinarian, relying on that and ample pay for the unlimited control he often found it necessary to exercise over his crew. On the present occasion, his people were profoundly alarmed, but habitual deference and submission to their leader counteracted the feeling, and held them in suspense. They were fully aware

of the nature of the position they occupied in a legal sense, and were deeply reluctant to increase the appearances of crime; but most of them had been extricated from so many grave difficulties in former instances, by the coolness, nerve and readiness of the captain, that a latent ray of hope was perhaps dimly shining in the rude breast of every old sea-dog among them. As a consequence of these several causes, they abandoned their remonstrance, for the moment at least, and made a show of returning to their duty; though it was in a sullen and moody manner.

It was easier, however, to make a show of hoisting out the launch, than to effect the object. This was soon made apparent on trial, and Spike himself gave the matter up. He ordered the yawl to be lowered, got alongside, and to be prepared for the reception of the crew, by putting into it a small provision of food and water. All this time the brig was rushing madly to leeward, among rocks and breakers, without any other guide than that which the visible dangers afforded. Spike knew no more where he was going than the meanest man in his vessel. His sole aim was to get away from his pursuers, and to save his neck from the rope. He magnified the danger of punishment that he really ran, for he best knew the extent and nature of his crimes, of which the few that have been laid before the reader, while they might have been amongst the most prominent, as viewed through the statutes and international law, were far from the gravest he had committed in the eyes of morals.

About this time the Señor Montefalderon went forward to confer with Spike. The calmness of this gentleman's demeanor, the simplicity and coolness of his movements, denoted a conscience that saw no particular ground for alarm. He wished to escape captivity, that he might continue to serve his country, but no other apprehension troubled him.

"Do you intend to trust yourself in the yawl, Don Esteban?" demanded the Mexican quietly. "If so, is she not too small to contain so many as we shall make altogether?"

Spike's answer was given in a low voice; and it evidently came from a very husky throat.

"Speak lower, Don Wan," he said. "The boat would be greatly overloaded with all hands in it, especially among the breakers, and blowing as it does; but we may leave some of the party behind."

"The brig *must* go on the rocks, sooner or later, Don Esteban; when she does, she will go to pieces in an hour.

"I expect to hear her strike every minute, señor; the moment she does we must be off. I have had my eye on that ship for some time, expecting to see her lower her cutters and gigs to board us. *You* will not be out of the way, Don Wan; but there is no need of being talkative on the subject of our escape."

Spike now turned his back on the Mexican, looking anxiously ahead, with the desire to get as far into the reef as possible with his brig, which he coned with great skill and coolness. The Señor Montefalderon left him. With the chivalry and

consideration of a man and a gentleman, he went in quest of Mrs. Budd and Biddy. A hint sufficed for them, and gathering together a few necessaries they were in the yawl in the next three minutes. This movement was unseen by Spike, or he might have prevented, it. His eyes were now riveted on the channel ahead. It had been fully his original intention to make off in the boat, the instant the brig struck, abandoning not only Don Juan, with Mrs. Budd and Biddy to their fates, but most of the crew. A private order had been given to the boatswain, and three of the ablest bodied among the seamen, each and all of whom kept the secret with religious fidelity, as it was believed their own personal safety might be connected with the success of this plan.

Nothing is so contagious as alarm. It requires not only great natural steadiness of nerve, but much acquired firmness to remain unmoved when sudden terror has seized on the minds of those around us. Habitual respect had prevented the crew from interfering with the movements of the Mexican, who not only descended into the boat with his female companions uninterrupted, but also took with him the little bag of doubloons which fell to his share from the first raising of the schooner. Josh and Jack Tier assisted in getting Mrs. Budd and Biddy over the side, and both took their own places in the yawl, as soon as this pious duty was discharged. This served as a hint to others near at hand; and man after man left his work to steal into the yawl, until every living being had disappeared from the deck of the Swash, Spike himself excepted. The man at the wheel had been the last to desert his post, nor would he have done so then, but for a signal from the boatswain, with whom he was a favorite.

It is certain there was a secret desire among the people of the Swash, who were now crowded into a boat not large enough to contain more than half their number with safety, to push off from the brig's side, and abandon her commander and owner to his fate. All had passed so soon, however, and events succeeded each other with so much rapidity, that little time was given for consultation. Habit kept them in their places, though the appearances around them were strong motives for taking care of themselves.

Notwithstanding the time necessary to relate the foregoing events, a quarter of an hour had not elapsed, from the moment when the Swash entered this unknown channel among the rocks, ere she struck. No sooner was her helm deserted than she broached-to, and Spike was in the act of denouncing the steerage, ignorant of its cause, when the brig was thrown, broadside-to, on a sharp, angular bed of rocks. It was fortunate for the boat, and all in it, that it was brought to leeward by the broaching-to of the vessel, and that the water was still sufficiently deep around them to prevent the waves from breaking. Breakers there were, however, in thousands, on every side; and the seamen understood that their situation was almost desperately perilous, without shipwreck coming to increase the danger.

The storm itself was scarcely more noisy and boisterous than was Spike, when he ascertained the manner in which his people had behaved. At first, he believed it

was their plan to abandon him to his fate; but, on rushing to the lee-gangway, Don Juan Montefalderon assured him that no such intention existed, and that he would not allow the boat to be cast off until the captain was received on board. This brief respite gave Spike a moment to care for his portion of the doubloons; and he rushed to his state-room to secure them, together with his quadrant.

The grinding of the brig's bottom on the coral, announced a speedy breaking up of the craft, while her commander was thus employed. So violent were some of the shocks with which she came down on the hard bed in which she was now cradled, that Spike expected to see her burst asunder, while he was yet on her decks. The cracking of timbers told him that all was over with the Swash, nor had he got back as far as the gangway with his prize, before he saw plainly that the vessel had broken her back, as it is termed, and that her plank-sheer was opening in a way that threatened to permit a separation of the craft into two sections, one forward and the other aft. Notwithstanding all these portentous proofs that the minutes of the Molly were numbered, and the danger that existed of his being abandoned by his crew, Spike paused a moment, ere he went over the vessel's side, to take a hasty survey of the reef. His object was to get a general idea of the position of the breakers, with a view to avoid them. As much of the interest of that which is to succeed is connected with these particular dangers, it may be well to explain their character, along with a few other points of a similar bearing.

The brig had gone ashore fully two miles within the passage she had entered, and which, indeed, terminated at the very spot where she had struck. The Poughkeepsie was standing off and on, in the main channel, with her boats in the water, evidently preparing to carry the brig in that mode. As for the breakers, they whitened the surface of the ocean in all directions around the wreck, far as the eye could reach, but in two. The passage in which the Poughkeepsie was standing to and fro was clear of them, of course; and about a mile and a half to the northward, Spike saw that he should be in open water, or altogether on the northern side of the reef, could he only get there. The gravest dangers would exist in the passage, which led among breakers on all sides, and very possibly among rocks so near the surface as to absolutely obstruct the way. In one sense, however, the breakers were useful. By avoiding them as much as possible, and by keeping in the unbroken water, the boat would be running in the channels of the reef, and consequently would be the safer. The result of the survey, short as it was, and it did not last a minute, was to give Spike something like a plan; and when he went over the side, and got into the boat, it was with a determination to work his way out of the reef to its northern edge, as soon as possible, and then to skirt it as near as he could, in his flight toward the Dry Tortugas.

*[To be continued.]*

# BLIND!

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BY MRS. JOSEPH C. NEAL.

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## PART I.

The hand of the operator wavered—the instrument glanced aside—in a moment she was blind for life. MS.

Blind, said you? Blind for life!  
'Tis but a jest—no, no, it cannot be  
That I no more the blessed light may see!  
Oh, what a fearful strife  
Of horrid thought is raging in my mind.  
I did not hear aright—“forever blind!”

Mother, you would not speak  
Aught but the truth to me, your stricken child;  
Tell me I do but dream; my brain is wild,  
And yet my heart is weak.  
Oh, mother, fold me in a close embrace,  
Bend down to me that dear, that gentle face.

I cannot hear your voice!  
Speak louder, mother. Speak to me, and say  
This frightful dream will quickly pass away.  
Have I no hope, no choice?  
Oh, Heaven, with light, has sound, too, from me fled!  
Call, shout aloud, as if to wake the dead.

Thank God! I hear you now.  
I hear the beating of your troubled heart,  
With every wo of mine it has a part;  
Upon my upturned brow  
The hot tears fall, from those dear eyes, for me.  
Once more, oh is it true I may not see?

This silence chills my blood.  
Had you one word of comfort, all my fears  
Were quickly banished—faster still the tears,  
    A bitter, burning flood,  
Fall on my face, and now one trembling word  
Confirms the dreadful truth my ears have heard.

Why weep you? I am calm.  
My wan lip quivers not, my heart is still.  
My swollen temples—see, they do not thrill!  
    That word was as a charm.  
Tell me the worst, all, all I now can bear.  
I have a fearful strength—that of despair.

What is it to be blind?  
To be shut out forever, from the skies—  
To see no more the “light of loving eyes”—  
    And, as years pass, to find  
My lot unvaried by one passing gleam  
Of the bright woodland, or the flashing stream!

To feel the breath of Spring,  
Yet not to view one of the tiny flowers  
That come from out the earth with her soft showers;  
    To hear the bright birds sing,  
And feel, while listening to their joyous strain,  
My heart can ne'er know happiness again!

Then in the solemn night  
To lie alone, while all anear me sleep,  
And fancy fearful forms about me creep.  
    Starting in wild afright,  
To know, if true, I could not have the power  
To ward off danger in that lonely hour.

And as my breath came thick  
To feel the hideous darkness round me press,  
Adding new terror to my loneliness;  
    While every pulse leapt quick  
To clutch and grasp at the black, stifling air,  
Then sink in stupor from my wild despair.

It comes upon me now!  
I cannot breathe, my heart grows sick and chill,  
Oh, mother, are your arms about me still—  
Still o'er me do you bow?  
And yet I care not, better all alone,  
No one to heed my weakness should I moan.

Again! I will not live.  
Death is no worse than this eternal night—  
Those resting in the grave heed not the light!  
Small comfort can ye give.  
Yes, Death is welcome as my only friend  
In the calm grave my sorrows will have end.

Talk not to me of hope!  
Have you not told me it is all in vain—  
That while I live I may not see again?  
That earth, and the broad scope  
Of the blue heaven—that all things glad and free  
Henceforth are hidden—tell of hope to me?

It is not hard to lie  
Calmly, and silently in that long sleep;  
No fear can wake me from that slumber deep.  
So, mother—let me die;  
I shall be happier in the gentle rest  
Than living with this grief to fill my breast.

## PART II.

God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb. STERNE.

Thank God, that yet I live.  
In tender mercy, heeding not the prayer  
I boldly uttered, in my first despair,  
He would not rashly give  
The punishment an erring spirit braved.  
From sudden death, in kindness. I was saved.

It was a fearful thought  
That this fair earth had not one pleasure left.



I was at once of sight and hope bereft.  
My soul was not yet taught  
To bow submissive to the sudden stroke;  
Its crushing weight my heart had well nigh broke.

Words are not that can tell  
The horrid thoughts that burned upon my brain—  
That came and went with madness still the same—  
A black and icy spell  
That froze my life blood, stopped my fluttering breath,  
Was laid upon me—even “*life in death.*”

Long weary months crept by,  
And I refused all comfort, turned aside  
Wishing that in my weakness I had died.  
I uttered no reply,  
But without ceasing wept, and moaned, and prayed  
The hand of death no longer might be stayed.

I shunned the gaze of all.  
I knew that pity dwelt in every look.  
Pity e’*en* then my proud breast could not brook,  
Though darkness as a pall  
Circled me round, each mournful eye *I felt*  
That for a moment on my features dwelt.

You, dearest mother, know  
I shrank in sullenness from your caress.  
Even *your* kisses added to distress,  
For burning tears would flow  
As you bent o’*er* me, whispering “be calm,  
He who hath wounded holds for thee a balm.”

He did not seem a friend.  
I deemed in wrath the sudden blow was sent  
From a strong arm that never might relent.  
That pain alone would end  
With life, for, mother, then it seemed to me  
That long, and dreamless, would death’s slumber be.

That blessed illness came.  
My weakened pulse now bounded wild and strong,  
While soon a raging fever burned along

My worn, exhausted frame.  
And for the time all knowledge passed away.  
It mattered not that hidden was the day.

—

The odor of sweet flowers  
Came stealing through the casement when I woke;  
When the wild fever spell at last was broke.  
And yet for many hours  
I laid in dreamy stillness, till your tone  
Called back the life that seemed forever flown.

You, mother, knelt in prayer.  
While one dear hand was resting on my head,  
With sobbing voice, how fervently you plead  
For a strong heart, to bear  
The parting which you feared—"Or, if she live,  
Comfort, oh, Father! to the stricken give.

"Take from her wandering mind  
The heavy load which it so long hath borne,  
Which even unto death her frame hath worn.  
Let her in mercy find  
*That though the Earth she may no longer see,  
Her spirit still can look to Heaven and Thee.*"

A low sob from me stole.  
A moment more—your arms about me wound—  
My head upon your breast a pillow found.  
And through my weary soul  
A holy calm came stealing from on high.  
Your prayer was answered—I was not to die.

Then when the bell's faint chime  
Came floating gently on the burdened air,  
My heart went up to God in fervent prayer.  
And, mother, from that time  
My wild thoughts left me—hope returned once more—  
I felt that happiness was yet in store.

Daily new strength was given.  
For the first time, since darkness on me fell,

I passed with more of joy than words can tell  
Under the free blue Heaven.  
I bathed my brow in the cool gushing spring—  
How much of life those bright drops seemed to bring.

I crushed the dewy leaves  
Of the pale violets, and drank their breath—  
Though I had heard that at each floweret's death  
A sister blossom grieves.  
I did not care to see their glorious hues,  
Fearing the richer *perfume* I might lose.

Then in the dim old wood  
I laid me down beneath a bending tree,  
And dreamed, dear mother, waking dreams of thee.  
I thought how just and good  
The power that had so gently sealed mine eyes,  
Yet bade new pleasures and new hopes arise.

For now in truth I find  
MY FATHER all his promises hath kept;  
He comforts those who here in sadness wept.  
“Eyes to the blind”  
Thou art, oh, God! Earth I no longer see,  
Yet trustfully my spirit looks to thee.

# MY LOVED—MY OWN.

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BY WILLIAM H. C. HOSMER.

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NOR the hush of the shadowy night.  
Nor the glare of the busy day,  
Nor the many cares of the world, from thee  
Ever lure my thoughts away.  
In dreams thou art by my side,  
With thy babe, a rose unblown,  
And thy voice for me breathes melody,  
My loved—my own!

The page of the laureled bard  
Thrills me not, since thou art gone;  
And from earth below, and the sky above  
Is an olden charm withdrawn.  
Come back with thy beaming smile,  
For my heart is mournful grown—  
Fast the wild bird flies, when her sad mate cries,  
My loved—my own!

I have prayed for a spell whereby  
I might question the wind of thee,  
And learn if thy cheek is flushed with health,  
Or wan, while afar from me:  
And I start when the casement jars,  
And I hear a hollow moan,  
But the churlish gale will tell no tale,  
My loved—my own!

Not sooner the noon-parched flower  
Would revive in summer rain,  
Than a glimpse of thee and thy laughing boy  
Would my sick heart heal again.  
We have been, since wed, like leaves  
By the breath of Autumn blown;  
But home's green bowers may yet be ours,

My loved—my own!

# THE DARKENED HEARTH.

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BY HENRY G. LEE.

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ESCAPED from the heat and noise of the city, I went, a few years ago, some fifty miles into the country, to spend a short time with a friend, who lived in a pleasant village, the quiet air of which had never been disturbed by rushing steamboat or rumbling car. There was to me a Sabbath stillness about the place that made the brief time I sojourned in Heathdale a period of rest to my spirit.

The scenery around the village was rather picturesque than bold. There were high hills, but no mountains; deep valleys, but no abrupt precipices. Far away along the distant horizon lay heavy blue masses, like clouds; but, though their shapes looked fantastic, they never changed.

My friend was a physician, and his practice lay for miles around the village of Heathdale. In order to have the pleasure of his society, as well as to enjoy the beautiful scenery, I usually went with him in all his country visits.

One morning he said to me, "I shall have rather a longer ride than usual to-day; but as it will be through some of the finest scenery we have, you must be my companion."

I did not hesitate. Recreation of mind and body was my object in visiting the country, and in no better way could I find both. So, when the doctor's light carriage drove up, I was ready to step into it.

In talking of the past, the present, and the future, as well as in remarking upon the various objects of interest around us, we spent an hour, by which time we were riding along an old, grass-covered road, winding in many a graceful sweep, and lined by tall poplars that had seen their palmiest days.

"Wealth and taste have left their marks here," I said, as a fine old mansion, situated upon a gentle eminence, came in sight.

"Yes," replied the doctor, "both have been here."

"But are hardly present now, I should think."

"No. They disappeared long since. Ten years ago a lovelier spot than this could hardly have been found; nor one in which were happier hearts. But now the hearth is desolate. 'The bright fire quenched and gone.' I never like to come here. Of the many who lived and loved in this sweet spot one only remains shivering by the darkened fireside."

The doctor appeared to be disturbed. He was silent for some moments, during

which time my eyes were marking all that was peculiar about the place. The house that we were approaching was a large, square-built, two-story edifice, with a portico, and handsome Corinthian columns in front. It stood, as just said, upon an eminence, one slope of which was in a beautiful green lawn, and the others terraced for gardens and shrubbery. Of the gardens, only the plan remained; and rank weeds grew where once had blossomed the sweetest flowers. The untrimmed shrubbery as strongly attested, by its wildness, tangled and irregular growth, the want of care and culture. Everywhere that my eye turned, I could see that the hand of taste had been—but not of late. The summer-house was in ruins; the fish-pond grown over with weeds; the statues that stood here and there, broken.

“To whom did this, or does this place belong?” I asked, rousing by my question the doctor from the musing mood into which he had fallen.

“To an English gentleman of fortune, taste, and intelligence, named Belmont,” he replied. “When a young man, he came to the United States for the purpose of seeing the country, with ample means and freedom from business. He lingered wherever he went as long as pleased his fancy. Something drew him to this part of our state, where he spent two or three months. In his rambles about he fell upon this spot, which had been cleared by a farmer, whose log-cabin stood upon the very site of that fine old mansion. Struck with its natural beauty, Belmont made the man a liberal offer for his farm, which was accepted. A year afterward he returned and commenced and completed as rapidly as possible, all the main improvements you now see. But, as we are at the door, I must defer this narrative until I have seen my patient.”

The doctor then left me in the carriage while he went into the house. He was gone nearly half an hour. When he returned he looked graver than when he went in.

“It always gives me the heart-ache to visit here,” he said, as we rode away. “My medicine can do no good.”

“Your patient has a disease of the mind?”

“Yes, an incurable one,” he replied. “Hers is a heart-sickness beyond my skill to heal. She needs a spiritual rather than a bodily physician. But to resume where I left off. Mr. Belmont was occupied about two years in building that handsome house, and in improving these grounds. A part of his time was spent in superintending these improvements in person; but the greater portion of it was passed in England. When all was completed, the house was elegantly furnished, and Mr. Belmont, with a lovely bride, retired from the world, to live here in beautiful seclusion. People wondered why a young couple, who had evidently mingled in the gayest circles, and been used to elegant and refined society, should hide themselves, as it were, in the vicinity of a small village in Pennsylvania, thousands of miles away from their old homes and country. For a while there was a great deal of gossip on the subject, and dozens of little stories afloat as to what this, that, or the other servant at the ‘white house’ had said about the young wife of Belmont. It was alledged that she was often seen weeping, and that she was not at all happy. This, however, was not generally

believed; for Mrs. Belmont was seen every Sabbath at the village church, and looked so cheerful, and leaned so lovingly toward her husband, that all idea of her being unhappy was banished from the mind. Still, people continued to wonder why a young and wealthy Englishman, of noble blood, for aught they knew, should prefer the deep seclusion of an almost forest-life in America. Subsequent events threw light on this subject, and enables me to give you the history of this young couple.

“Belmont belonged to a wealthy English aristocratic family, and was the legal heir, on the death of his father, to a large estate. As is too generally the case where the law of primogeniture exists, Belmont, as the eldest son, was not left to consult his affections in a matter of so much importance as marriage. A bride was chosen for him, long before he was old enough to think of or care for a bride. But when the boy became the man, he felt little inclined to enter into so close a union as that of marriage with one for whom not a single affection stirred.

“Not long after the young man entered society, he met Catherine H——, the only daughter of Lord H——, a lovely young creature, who soon captivated all his feelings. Catherine, it happened, had, like him, been early betrothed by her parents. Her hand was not therefore free. He might admire, but not love her. Unlike Belmont, she was not indifferent toward her betrothed. As they grew up together from childhood, their young affections intertwined, until the friendship of youth became love at mature age.

“A year spent on the Continent, and particularly in the gayest circles of Paris, tended in no wise to elevate the moral sentiments of Belmont; nor did absence from home weaken the attachment he felt for Catherine H——, whose society he sought on his return at every favorable opportunity. Between the ardor of a lover who seeks to win a heart, and the quiet, gentle, unobtrusive attentions of one who believes that he has already made a love-conquest, there is and must be a marked difference. This was just the difference between the manner of Belmont and the lover of Catherine. The lady, not indifferent to admiration, found, ere long, the image of the former resting upon her heart, and hiding that of the latter. Belmont was quick to perceive this; but the lover of Catherine, who was not of a jealous temperament, remained altogether unconscious that any change had taken place in the feelings of his bride elect.

“From his false and delusive dream, something, not necessary to mention, awoke Belmont; and in the effort to break through the meshes of love in which he was entangled, he left England, and spent nearly twelve months in the United States. While here, the beautiful site upon which he afterward built himself an elegant residence, struck his fancy, and, in a moment of enthusiastic admiration, and with, perhaps, a half-formed resolution to attempt what was afterward done, he purchased it, and then went back to England. When he again met Catherine H——, he was struck with the change a year had wrought in her appearance; and he was also struck with the marked expression of pleasure with which she received him. The half-



quenched fire which he had been endeavoring to extinguish in his bosom, again burst into a flame, and burned more brightly than ever. In a moment of passion, he avowed his love, and the maiden sunk in silent joy upon his bosom.

“Meantime, the betrothed of Belmont, as well as her friends, were fretted and angry with the coldness and indifference which he manifested toward her. A near relative, a young man of a fiery temper, undertook to ask explanations, and considering himself insulted by the answer he obtained, sent Belmont a challenge to fight. This was accepted; and at the hostile meeting which followed, the young man received a severe wound that came near costing him his life. Belmont took advantage of this circumstance to break off all intercourse with the lady, and to arm himself, ready to give any of her friends who chose to espouse her cause, whatever satisfaction they might desire. All this caused a good deal of excitement in the circles immediately affected by it, and a good many threats were made by the lady’s friends; but they amounted to nothing.

“Erskine, the lover of Catherine H——, at length saw cause for suspicion that all was not right. He had repeatedly urged her to consent to an early performance of the marriage rite; but she had as often evaded any direct response to his wishes. At length there was no disguising the fact that she was becoming colder toward him every time they met. He complained of this; but his complaint elicited no warm denial of what he alledged. Erskine, who was deeply attached to the lady, now became alarmed. It was too plain that she had grown indifferent. Why, he was for some time at a loss to understand. But at length his suspicions took the right direction. Just as he was about demanding from Belmont an explanation of his conduct toward Catherine, the father of the latter died; and before he could with any appearance of decency refer to the matter after this afflictive occurrence, Belmont left England, it was said, for America. His errand to this country you know. As soon as he had completed the improvements he had projected, he returned home to consummate the purpose that had been uppermost in his mind for nearly two years. He married Catherine H—— secretly, and left for the United States before the fact had transpired, bringing with him his lovely and loving young bride.

“I do not wonder that the servants sometimes saw Mrs. Belmont weeping. Smiles could not always rest upon her sweet face. And yet she was happy—that is, happy as she could be under the circumstances, for she loved devotedly her husband, and he in turn almost idolized her.

“Erskine, when the truth became known, was deeply afflicted at the infidelity of his ‘betrothed,’ and for a time suffered the severest pangs. The reaction upon this was angry indignation, and a final vow of retribution. The ardent lover was changed to a cruel hater and seeker for revenge.

“‘I’ll bide my time,’ he said, bitterly. ‘When they think I have forgotten all, my hand will find them out, and my shadow will fall upon them. When their fire burns brightest, I will extinguish it.’

“Year after year he nursed this bitter purpose in his heart. He had found no

difficulty in learning where the young bride had retired with her husband, and from thence he managed to obtain frequent intelligence. All that he heard but made the fire of hate burn fiercer in his bosom. Catherine was represented as being happy amid her blooming children; and the lovely spot where she dwelt was described as a little paradise.

“Fifteen years were permitted to go by, and then Erskine sought to effect his fiendish purpose. An instrument by which this was to be done, came into his hands, as he felt, most opportunely, in a young man of fine exterior, elegant manners, intelligence, and varied accomplishments, but without honor or feeling. He was a perfect man of the world, and at heart an unprincipled villain. The name of this person was Edgerton. By loans of money and other favors, Erskine attached this man to him. The tie was, of course, that of self-interest. To him he unfolded what was in his mind. He told him of the wrong he had sustained, and the burning thirst for revenge that ever since had filled his heart. Then he described, in glowing language, the beautiful spot where Catherine dwelt, and the happiness that filled her bosom.

“‘Will you steal, as did the serpent of old, into this lovely paradise?’ he asked. ‘I have been your friend, but if you will serve me now, you may command me in every thing. The wife of Belmont you will find to be a lovely creature; and if you can win her from him, as he won her from me, you will gain possession of a magnificent woman. She is a prize, Edgerton—just the prize for a man like you. Gain it, and I will furnish you with all the means of flight and security.’

“An adventure like this just suited the debased, impure, heartless Edgerton; and he entered upon it with an ardor of feeling, and coolness of purpose, that too sorely foreshadowed success.

“For sixteen years scarcely a cloud had rested upon the hearts of the happy family of Belmont. He had three daughters, between each of whom there was but little over a year’s difference in age. The oldest was a tall, exquisitely beautiful girl of fifteen, and her sisters gave the same promise of opening loveliness. Just at this time, and while Mr. Belmont was in search of a musical instructor for his children, Edgerton managed to fall in his way, and by the most perfect address and assumption of a false exterior, to win his good opinion. He showed credentials of ability from well-known personages in New York and Philadelphia; and also testimonials of character from eminent clergymen, and others. These represented him as highly educated, belonging to a good family, and distinguished for high moral excellence. They were, of course, spurious.

“When Edgerton was introduced to the family of Mr. Belmont, Mrs. Belmont shrunk from him with instinctive aversion. This was her first impression; but it slightly wore off during the interview; and she was rather inclined, after he had gone away, to think that she had permitted herself to feel prejudiced against him without a cause.

“After due deliberation, Edgerton was engaged as instructor of the young ladies

in music and the modern languages—in all of which they had made some proficiency; and also to superintend their studies in other branches. To do all this Edgerton was fully qualified. He entered upon his duties with patience and assiduity. In all his intercourse with the family he was modest and unassuming, yet managed, in every conversation that passed between himself and either Mr. or Mrs. Belmont, to show that he possessed a discriminating, well-furnished mind. He had traveled throughout Europe and Asia Minor, and been an accurate observer. This made him an interesting and intelligent companion to both Belmont and his wife, who had been over the same ground. In short, Edgerton soon became the highly valued friend of the parents, as well as the instructor of their children.

“For two years Edgerton remained in the family of Mr. Belmont, during which time nothing occurred to awaken a suspicion, or to shake his confidence in the young man. About this time business required him to go to New York. He was absent over two weeks. Separation from his family was painful to him, and therefore he hurried home as quickly as possible. He had never, since his marriage, been so long absent from his wife, and he grew impatient to be with her again, and to hear her voice, which, in memory, was sweeter than it had ever seemed. He wrote her, during his absence, many times, each letter warmer in its expressions of tenderness than the one that preceded it. In the last letter, written three or four days before he reached home, he said,

“‘I do not think I shall ever venture to go away from home again without taking you with me. The separation has filled my heart with an indescribable sadness. I think of you all the while; I see you all the while; there is not a moment that I do not hear the sound of your voice. But I cannot press my lips to yours, glowing with love; I cannot take you in my arms—you are not really present. Dear Catherine! I shall soon be with you. Ah! how the idea will force itself upon me that the day must come when there will be a longer separation than this. But I will drive the cruel thought from my mind.’

“As Belmont approached his home, his impatient spirit chafed at what to him seemed the slow pace of the stage-horses, by which he was conveyed the last twenty miles. At last time and distance intervened between him and his earthly paradise no longer. As he sprung from the horse that had borne him with swift feet from the village, he felt a slight chill of disappointment at not seeing his wife at the door, with open arms, to meet him. In the hall he was met by his youngest daughter, in whose face there lighted up a smile, but it was not the free, glad, heart-smile that ought to have been there.

“‘Where is your mother?’ he eagerly asked.

“‘I do not know. She went away somewhere day before yesterday, before we were up in the morning.’

“‘Who did she go with?’

“‘I don’t know. But Mr. Edgerton went away at the same time. We think she went with him.’

“Belmont caught hold of the door, and leaned hard against it.

“‘Where are your sisters?’ he asked.

“‘Catherine has been sick ever since. I can’t tell what is the matter with her; but she cries all the time. Mary is in her room with her.’

“‘Does nobody in the house know where your mother is gone?’

“‘No, sir. She went away before any body was up. But there is a letter for you in your room.’

“Belmont tried to run up stairs, but his knees trembled so, and were so weak, that it was with difficulty that he could support himself. When he reached his room, he grasped the letter to which his daughter had referred, and sunk into a chair. It was sometime before, with his quivering hands, he could break the seal, and then many minutes passed before he could read a line. The blasting contents were as follows:

“‘MY HUSBAND,—How can I break to you the dreadful truth that must be told? Long and devotedly as I have loved you, and still love you, I am impelled to leave you, under the influence of a stronger, more fiery, and intenser passion. I am mad with the bewildering excitement in which I am whirling, as in the charmed circle of a fascinating serpent. I do not love you less, but I love another more. Forgive me, if you can forgive, and in mercy both to you and to your unhappy wife, forget me. You know not how I have been tempted and tried; you know not how, by the most imperceptible approaches, the citadel of my heart has been taken. God forgive him who has wronged you, and her who permitted herself to be made an instrument in that wrong. You will be far happier than she can ever be. As for my chil—’

“Here the paper was blotted and soiled, as if by a gush of tears. It contained no word more.

“An hour afterward, when Mary Belmont and her younger sister stole softly into their father’s chamber, they found him sitting motionless in a chair, with the letter he had read crumpled in his hand. His eyes were closed; and he did not open them as they drew near. They spoke to him in timid voices, but he did not look up, nor appear to hear them.

“‘Father! dear father!’ they said, coming up close to his side.

“Slowly he drew an arm around each, and pressed them tightly to his bosom—but he did not utter a word.

“‘Papa, where has mother gone?’ asked Mary, in a quivering voice.

“‘I do not know,’ was the low, mournful reply.

“‘Will she never come back?’

“‘No—never!’

“The children burst into tears, and wept for a long time bitterly. The agitation of

Belmont's mind now became agonizing. It was his first wish to conceal what he felt as much as possible from his children; he therefore asked to be left alone. Mary and her sister retired from the room, but with slow and lingering steps. When left to himself, the father sunk down again, like one paralyzed, not to think but to feel. An hour afterward, Ella, his youngest daughter, came quietly in, and said,

“Papa, I wish you would see Catherine. She does nothing but cry all the while.”

“Feeling the necessity, at least for his children's sake, of rousing himself under this terrible affliction, for which there was no healing balm, Mr. Belmont arose, and taking the hand of Ella, went with her to the chamber of his eldest child, now a tall, beautiful young girl, in her eighteenth year. Her face was turned toward the door when he entered. At a single glance he saw that it was exceedingly pale, had a strange expression, and was full of anguish. In a moment after it was buried beneath the bed-clothes, while the whole body of Catherine shivered as if in an ague fit. Sobs and deep moans of anguish followed. To all that the father could say, not a word of reply was given. Suddenly there flashed through his mind a dreadful suspicion, that caused him to clasp his forehead tightly with his hands, and stagger a few paces backward. Soon after he left the chamber, and retired to his own room to make an effort to think. But it was a vain effort—all the elements of his mind were in wild confusion. At one moment he would start up with a fierce imprecation on his lips, resolved to pursue the fugitives; but before reaching the door of his room, a thought of the utter hopelessness of his condition would cause him to droop, nerveless, into a chair, or sink with a groan upon the bed.

“For nearly the whole of the night that followed, Belmont paced, with slow and measured tread, the floor of his chamber. Toward morning, his mind became calmer and clearer. He was like a man suddenly pressed to the earth by a burden that seemed impossible to be borne, who had re-collected his strength, and risen with the burden upon his shoulders, feeling that though almost crushing in its weight, he could yet bear up under it. The first clear determination of his mind was to ascertain, if possible, the cause of Catherine's strange distress. He had a heart-sickening dread of something that he dared not even confess to himself. He felt that the specious villain who could draw his wife from virtue, would not be one to hesitate on the question of sacrificing his child, if by any means he could get her into his power.

“Late in the morning he left his bed, and had nearly completed dressing himself when some one knocked at his door. On opening it, he found Ella, with the tears raining over her cheeks.

“‘Oh, papa!’ she exclaimed, ‘Come, quick! and see Catherine. I don't know what's the matter with her, but she says she is dying.’”

“A cold shiver passed through every nerve of the unhappy man. He sprung away at the last word of Ella, and was quickly at the bed-side of his daughter. A great change had taken place since he saw her on the day before. Her face, that was pale then, was now of an ashy whiteness, but her eyes and lips had a calm expression.

“‘Papa,’ she said, in a voice that thrilled through the heart of the unhappy man,

it was so inexpressibly mournful, 'I do not think I can live long. I have a strange feeling here,' and she laid her hand upon her heart. 'If I have done wrong in any thing; if I have been betrayed into evil, I pray you forgive the innocence that suspected no wrong, and the weakness that could not endure in temptation.'

"'Catherine, my dear child! why do you speak thus? What is it that you mean?' asked her father. 'Has that villain dared—'

"Mr. Belmont checked himself for he saw that his daughter had become greatly disturbed. She raised up partly from her pillow, while a rapid play of the muscles agitated her whole face. Before, however, she was able to articulate a word, she sunk back paler than ever. Two or three deep groans struggled up from her heart, and then all was still—still as death. Mr. Belmont looked for some time at the young, white face of his first-born and dearly beloved child, upon which the great destroyer had so suddenly set his seal, and then, answering groan for groan, turned from the withered blossom that lay before him, and again sought the silence and solitude of his own room.

"Two months subsequently to this, Erskine received a letter from Edgerton. It was in these words:

"'MY DEAR SIR,—The work is done—and well done. I have succeeded fully in my plans. Your old flame has been with me in New York for a month. But she takes the matter rather too hard, and weeps eternally. I can't stand this; and if she does not improve very shortly, shall abandon her. If it had not been for my wish to follow your instructions to the letter, I should have taken the eldest daughter instead of the mother, who is much more to my fancy. I have not yet heard any thing from Belmont, though I look every day for him to pounce down upon me; but I am not afraid of him. I suppose this affair will drive him half mad, for he was exceedingly fond of his wife. This I mention for your particular gratification. You may expect to see me in England by the next arrival. Whether I shall bring my lady-love along or not, I cannot say. It is, however, doubtful. Addio.

EDGERTON.'

"The death of his oldest daughter, under circumstances of so much doubt and distress, added to the desertion of a beloved wife, wrought a great and melancholy change in Mr. Belmont. I only saw him a few times afterwards, and then it was at his own house, where I was called to visit as a physician. A few months had made the impression of years. His face was thin, and marked with strong lines; his countenance dull and depressed; his eyes drooping and sad. He moved about slowly, and spoke in a low, quiet, pensive voice.

"One cold night in November, some six or seven months after the afflictive events just described had occurred, Mr. Belmont, after laying awake for hours, trying in vain to sleep, arose from his bed, and going to the window, stood there for

some time. The moon was shining brightly through the clear, frosty air, making every object distinctly visible. After standing at the window for some time, Belmont was about turning away, when his eye was arrested by a figure that came slowly along the main avenue through which we drove up to the house a little while ago. Sometimes it would stop for the space of a minute, and then move on again, until at length it stood in the clear moonlight, directly under his window. He then saw that it was a woman. Her head was bowed down at first, but soon she looked up, and the moonlight fell strongly upon her face. Belmont started with a low exclamation, and retreated from the window, and staggering back, sunk with a groan upon the bed, where he lay for nearly five minutes. He then arose, dressed himself, and descended with a deliberate air. On opening the hall-door, he perceived that the woman had sunk down upon the steps. She did not move at his approach.

“‘Catherine!’ he said, in as firm a voice as he could assume.

“But there was no motion—no reply.

“‘Catherine!’ But she did not answer.

“Stooping down, he placed his hand upon her, and then she looked up, and the moonbeams fell upon her face. Her lips were thin and tightly compressed; her pale cheeks deeply sunken; her eyes tearless, but, oh! how full of mingled penitence, humility, and hopelessness. She uttered no word, but lay upon the cold marble, at the threshold of her husband’s mansion, with her eyes fixed upon his face, that, if not stern and angry, betrayed no sign of affection.

“‘Catherine,’ he said at length, in a cold, steady voice, ‘you have returned to the old home that your conduct has made desolate. I do not see that you have been any happier than those you left behind. I forgive you, as I hope God will. I believe you were once worthy of all the love I bore you, and for the sake of what you then were, I will not spurn you back from the threshold you now seek to pass.’

“He then took her arm, and raising her up, conducted her into the house, and up into her old chamber, where every thing remained as she had left it. The thoughts and feelings of other days came rushing upon his heart, but he sternly drove them back. It was too late. They could never again have place in his bosom. What she thought and felt is not known, and can hardly be imagined. In the old chamber Belmont left his fallen wife, with but a single word, and that a caution to remain where she was until he visited her in the morning.

“Belmont did not again retire that night. Until near day he was busily engaged in writing, and in evident preparation for a journey. About 5 o’clock the servants were aroused, and directed to prepare an early breakfast. The coachman was ordered to have the carriage at the door by 7 o’clock. Then Ella and Mary were awakened by their father, who desired them to dress immediately, and come to him in the library. When there, he informed them that it had become necessary for him to leave for England immediately, and that he wished them to accompany him. All necessary preparation could be made in New York, where he would remain two or three weeks. The girls were surprised, as may well be supposed, by this announcement;

but their father was too much in earnest to leave them room to ask for a longer time to prepare for the journey than he had given them. Precisely at seven they entered the carriage and drove into Heathdale. On arriving there, Mr. Belmont said that he would have to return, and that while he was gone they must remain at the hotel. Mary wanted to go back with him for something that she had forgotten, but he said that he would rather have her remain where she was, in a tone that prevented her from saying any thing more.

“The object of Mr. Belmont in returning, was to have a parting interview with the mother of his children, for whom he could not but feel the deepest commiseration. But her own hands had placed the burden upon her heart, and it was not in his power to remove it. She had been false to her marriage vows, and false to those who had called her by the tender name of ‘mother.’ He could not again take her to his bosom, nor again bring her back among her children. He found her a sad wreck, indeed, and could scarcely keep back the tears when he met her again, with the searching light of day making visible all the marks of grief, crime, and suffering.

“‘Catherine,’ he said, in a voice that trembled, spite of all his efforts to be composed, ‘I meet you now for the last time. I shall return to England, never again, I hope, to visit this country. This is your home for life, if you wish to make it so. I have settled upon you an annuity; and these papers, which I leave here upon the table, will give you all necessary information in regard to the manner of drawing it. I will not upbraid you for what you have done, for I do not wish to add a single pang to the thousands you must suffer; I would rather mitigate than increase them.’

“‘My children,’ she said, in an eager voice, as he paused, ‘where are they—am I not to see them?’

“‘But two remain,’ Belmont replied, ‘and you cannot see them. You are dead to your children, and must remain so. Catherine is in heaven. She died, to all appearance, of a broken heart, a few days after you went away.’

“The whole frame of this wretched woman quivered.

“‘Dead!’ she ejaculated, in a deep, hoarse whisper; and then covering her face, wept for some moments violently.

“‘But Mary and Ellen,’ she at length said, looking up with streaming eyes. ‘May I not see them? They are my children, Edward, and, erring and sinful as I have been, I still love them. Do not, then, in mercy, deny me this, the only boon I will ever ask at your hands. Oh! Edward, let me see my children once before I die.’

“Belmont was deeply moved, but his purpose did not falter.

“‘You are dead to them, Catherine,’ he replied, with assumed coldness, ‘and must remain so.’

“Even on her knees the wretched woman prayed to see her children; but she prayed in vain. Hard as it was for Belmont to resist her agonized entreaties, he remained firm to his well-formed purpose.

“The moment of parting with her, and leaving her in loneliness and misery on



the very spot where she had once been so happy, and with a thousand things around her to remind her of that happiness, was a most painful one. It was with difficulty that Belmont could restrain the desire he felt to take her in his arms, press her to his bosom, and forgive and forget all. But her sin had been too deep—she had fallen too low. He could not throw over the past the blessed mantle of forgiveness; and so he left her alone, to shiver by the cold ashes of a darkened hearth.”

“Has her husband never returned?” I asked.

“Never! Five years have passed since he left, but no one has seen him in this region. There came a rumor a few years ago, that he had met Edgerton, and made him account with his life for his crime. But I know not whether this be so.”

A year afterward I received a letter from my excellent friend, the doctor, in which he mentioned that death had given the unhappy Mrs. Belmont a kind release; “and, we may hope,” he remarked, “that through much suffering she was purified and forgiven.”

# THE WAYSIDE DREAM.

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BY J. BAYARD TAYLOR.

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THE deep and lordly Danube  
Goes winding far below;—  
I see the white-walled hamlets  
Amid his vineyards glow,  
And southward, through the ether, shine  
The Styrian hills of snow.

O'er many a league of landscape  
Sleeps the warm haze of noon;  
The wooing winds come freighted  
With fragrant tales of June,  
And down amid the corn and flowers  
I hear the water's tune.

The meadow-lark is singing  
As if it still were morn;  
Sounds through the dark pine forest  
The hunter's dreamy horn;  
And the shy cuckoo's plaining note  
Mocks the maidens in the corn.

I watch the cloud armada  
Go sailing up the sky,  
Lulled by the murmuring mountain-grass,  
Upon whose bed I lie,  
And the faint sound of noontide chimes  
That in the distance die!

A warm and drowsy sweetness  
Is stealing o'er my brain;  
I see no more the Danube  
Sweep through his royal plain—  
I hear no more the peasant-girls  
Singing amid the grain!

Soft, silvery wings, a moment  
Seem resting on my brow:  
Again I hear the water,  
But its voice is deeper now,  
And the mocking-bird and oriole  
Are singing on the bough!

The elm and linden branches  
Droop close and dark o'erhead,  
And the foaming forest brooklet  
Leaps down its rocky bed;  
Be still, my heart! the seas are passed—  
The paths of home I tread!

The showers of creamy blossoms  
Are on the linden spray,  
And down the clover meadow  
They heap the scented hay,  
And glad winds toss the forest leaves  
All the bright summer day.

Old playmates! bid me welcome  
Amid your brother band!  
Give me the old affection—  
The glowing grasp of hand!  
I worship no more the realms of old—  
*Here is my Fatherland!*

Come hither, gentle maiden,  
Who weep'st in tender joy!  
The rapture of thy presence  
Overcomes the world's annoy,  
And calms the wild and throbbing heart  
Which warms the wandering boy.

In many a mountain fastness—  
By many a river's foam,  
And through the gorgeous cities,  
'Twas loneliness to roam,  
For the sweetest music in my heart  
Was the olden songs of home!

Ah! glen, and foaming brooklet,  
And friends, have vanished now!  
The balmy Styrian breezes  
Are blowing on my brow,  
And sounds again the cuckoo's call  
From the forest's inmost bough.

Veiled is the heart's glad vision—  
The wings of Fancy fold;  
I rise and journey onward.  
Through valleys green and old,  
Where the far, white Alps reveal the morn  
And keep the sunset's gold!

## SONNET.

SUN of the new-born year! I hail thy light;  
As bursting through the dark clouds that so long  
Had veiled the glories of each morn and night,  
Thou pourest over all thy radiance strong;  
Bidding the chilling rains their fury cease,  
And smiling on the drenched and languid earth,  
That, all exulting in her glad release,  
Puts on the beauty of a second birth,  
And joys to greet thee. Type art thou, O Sun!  
Amid the parting clouds thy bright path making,  
Of that clear Star—the never setting One!  
That through the pall of darksome ages breaking,  
With healing beams, still moves, eternal on!  
And lights the living soul when life's dim day is gone!

# SOPHY'S FLIRTATION.

## A COUNTRY SKETCH.

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BY MRS. M. N. M'DONALD.

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"WELL, to *my* mind, a nicer young man doesn't live any where than Archie Harris. So pleasant spoken, so good tempered, so civil as he is. You 'may go farther and fare worse,' I can tell you, Sophy. It's all very well for girls to be dainty and particular about looks, when they are young and handsome themselves, and think they may catch anybody, but it's no joke for a girl to settle herself with a man who may be unkind to her by and bye. Archie Harris has that in him which will last in dark days as well as sunshine; something that wont wear out in old age, like your grandfather here, that I've lived with forty-five years come next Christmas, and found him just the same, winter and summer. So, as I said before, 'you may go farther and fare worse,' Sophy." And having delivered her sentiments, old Mrs. Middleton took a pinch of snuff, drew her chair a little nearer the fire with an emphatic "hem," and then resumed her knitting, while she glanced over her spectacles to observe what had been the effect of her speech upon her pretty granddaughter, who was seated on the opposite side of the little round table, engaged in sewing.

Sophy Middleton plied her needle with something of a petulant air, while her grandmother spoke, and answered with a slight tone of vexation—"Everybody can't think alike, that is certain. Archie Harris is well enough in his way, but he isn't the only man in the world, that is one comfort."

"And why don't you like him?" pursued the old lady, resolved not to give up the point. "Tell me of one in the whole place that is better, or kinder, or cleverer. *I* never saw such a one at any rate, and once upon a time, Sophy, you thought Archie a little better than most folks yourself, and have only changed your mind since Philip Greyson came home, I'm thinking."

"Philip Greyson, indeed!" exclaimed Sophy, with a toss of her head, while her cheeks crimsoned in spite of herself.

"Yes, Philip Greyson," said the old lady. "I suppose you think, Sophy, because I wear spectacles, I am half blind, and can't see as far as I used to do. But I have my eyes about me, and maybe spy a little farther for my glasses, and I fancy that Philip, with his spruce uniform and navy buttons, will make you forget poor Archie altogether."

“I am sure,” said Sophy, whose thread at that moment had got into such a knot that her undivided attention was necessary to disentangle it. “I’m sure Philip Greyson is nothing to *me*.”

“I hope he never may be, indeed,” said Mrs. Middleton emphatically. “These young midshipmen are wild blades, my dear, and I should never know a minute’s peace if you were to marry one. But Archie Harris, ah! Sophy, he is the husband for you; such a good son and brother—so quiet, and steady, and—”

“Stupid,” said Sophy, supplying with a laugh the word for which her grandmother paused. “Why, last night at Mrs. Morgan’s he scarcely said ten syllables, and say what you will, grandmother,” she continued, roused by the recollection of her last evening’s visit, “everybody likes a merry, talkative beau, who has seen something of the world, better than a fellow who sits by with a long face, and can do nothing to amuse one.”

“And that fellow isn’t Philip Greyson, I guess,” said her grandfather, who, on the opposite side of the fire, was calmly knocking the ashes from his pipe. “Phil is one of those chaps that have no lack of words in any company, if I may judge from the way in which I have heard him chatter at his own father’s table.”

“Chatter! that he can, like a magpie, and with but little more sense, to my mind,” said the old lady. “If Archie Harris speaks but seldom, his words are always to some purpose, and he doesn’t think it amiss to be civil to old people either. Philip has enough and enow to prate about to young folks, but if an elderly person comes by, he is at no pains to entertain him. Times have changed since my day, when young men and women were taught to reverence their betters. Ah! well,” and Mrs. Middleton drew a long deep sigh, and shook her head significantly as she leaned over to mend the fire.

It was in the prettiest, neatest white house, in the main street of a pretty village, somewhere in the Empire State, that Sophy Middleton and her grand-parents resided. Samuel Middleton, who from his silvery hair, and general knowledge of past events, together with the melancholy fact that he is totally blind, has long been dignified with the title of “the oldest inhabitant,” which title, by the way, the old gentleman particularly glories in, being fond of relating anecdotes of the place, which happened when he was a boy, and adventures with persons long since dead, and though Brookville has not improved materially during the last twenty years—being off the rail-road—yet the old man imagines in his blindness that great changes have taken place, because the Episcopalians have built a church, and Squire Edgewood a new house and barn, and descants largely upon the good old times, when Brookville was just settled, and “no folly or fashion had got into it.”

A youth of industry—for it was not until advancing years that darkness fell upon him—had secured for Samuel Middleton a moderate competency, and at the old homestead, with the kind partner of his joys and sorrows, and the orphan child of an only son, he had learned to bear with patience and fortitude the sore trial which it had pleased God to send him; thankful for the past, contented with the present, and

fearless of the future.

Sophy, so early orphaned as scarcely to remember any other care than that of her grand-parents, was the life and light of the old man's home. Her cheerfulness beguiled very many of his wearisome hours, and her merry voice, and mirth-inspiring laughter, seemed to cheat him of half his sorrow. He knew her step upon the gravel walk when she came in from school, as readily as if his sightless eyes could have looked upon her face, and felt only too proud and happy when his friends said "that Sophy was growing up a comely girl, and would be a beauty one of these days." As his beloved child grew older, this prophecy seemed likely to prove true. Sophy's blue eyes were full of vivacity, and her oval cheeks and sweet lips were colored with Nature's pure carnation. By degrees the scrawny figure of the school girl was moulded to the grace of early womanhood, and we introduce Sophy Middleton to our readers, at this particular moment, a blooming country maiden of nineteen summers, very much petted at home, sufficiently admired abroad, and therefore a little, very little bit *spoiled*.

But who is Archie Harris, that we find the old lady eulogizing so warmly? Why, Archie Harris and our Sophy went to the same school; sat on the same bench; learned out of the same book, and were friends from the time they were "no bigger than a midge's wing." Being next door neighbors, this friendship had strengthened with their years rather than diminished. Sophy had found a sister in Mary Harris, and, in the natural course of things, a lover in Archie; and although no positive engagement existed between them, it seemed such a matter of course that they should love each other, and so desirable a connection on both sides, that everybody—that wise person found in all villages—said it would certainly be a match at some future day.

Philip Greyson, too, was a Brookville boy, and had been a schoolmate of Sophy's years ago. But Philip's ambition soared higher than a life of usefulness at home. He longed to see the world; to brave the ocean; to tread on foreign shores; and when, through the influence of friends at Washington, he procured a midshipman's warrant, and left Brookville to join his vessel at Norfolk, what cared he for aught he was leaving, when the future stretched so brightly before him? His parents, teachers, school-fellows, he bade them good-bye without a moment's regret; and as to Sophy Middleton, if he thought of her at all, it was but as an unformed girl, rather more indifferent to him than his own sisters, and whom he might perhaps never see again. On his return, however, after a three years' cruise, Philip found, to his surprise, this same little Sophy grown a young lady, and a pretty one, too; and, charmed at the sight of so much beauty where he least expected it, renewed his acquaintance with delight, while Sophy, pleased and flattered by his attentions, and dazzled by the glitter of his gilt buttons, danced and flirted with the young midshipman to her heart's content, exciting the envy of sundry other damsels to whom nature had denied bright eyes and rosy lips, and vexing poor Archie, by her unwonted vanity, in the most uncomfortable degree.



Had Sophy related to her grandmother what passed between Archie and herself on the previous night, as they walked home from Mrs. Morgan's tea-party, the old lady would have been inexpressibly distressed, for Archie, in the warmth of his feelings, upbraided Sophy for her coquetry and coldness, which Sophy's high spirit would not brook. She bade him remember that no engagement had taken place, and therefore she was free to choose for herself, though everybody seemed to think—why she could not tell—that because they lived next door to each other, they were “as good as married.” Philip Greyson, she said, was an old friend as well as he, and she would not give up the pleasure of talking to him, if she liked, for *anybody*, and so at the garden-gate they parted, with a cold “good-night.” Archie to mourn over the fickleness of the girl he dearly loved, and Sophy to dream of—Philip Greyson.

Probably Mrs. Middleton suspected something of this, however, from her urgent appeal to her granddaughter in behalf of their neighbor's son, and might, perhaps, have gone on still further to expostulate, had not a knock at the outer door interrupted the conversation; and Sophy, who had risen to answer the summons, returned in a few minutes with a letter directed to her grandfather.

“A letter for you, grandfather,” she said, placing it in the old man's hand. “Mr. Norris sent it up from the post-office. It came by the late mail.”

“For me?” said Mr. Middleton, turning it over, and placing his finger upon the large, red seal. “I did not expect any letters just now. Read it, wife.”

Mrs. Middleton, who had been adjusting her spectacles, eagerly seized the mysterious letter, and carefully cutting it open, read the signature aloud. “Henry Willetson.”

“I don't know such a person,” said the old man, leaning forward to catch every word. “Go on, Hannah.”

The letter was a brief one; and the old lady glanced her eye over it before she began—but that glance was sufficient to tell the whole story. There it was, written down in few but fearful characters; and suddenly throwing the paper upon the table, she exclaimed, “Merciful Father! we are ruined! All swept away! Oh! Samuel, Samuel, what shall we do in our old age? All gone, all gone!”

“Tell me what it is. Let me know the whole truth,” said the old man, groping his way to the table, and stretching his hand over it to find the letter. “Tell me what has happened, Hannah—I can bear it.”

“All gone, all gone!” murmured poor Mrs. Middleton, as if deprived of the power to say more.

“What is gone? Tell me, Hannah?” said the agitated old man. “Oh, this awful blindness! Sophy, where are you? Do you read it for me.”

Pale and trembling, Sophy obeyed. The letter was from the agent of a mercantile house in New York, in which Mr. Middleton had been persuaded to invest the bulk of his small property, announcing the entire failure of the concern, which would not, in all probability, at the winding up of its affairs, pay five cents on the dollar; and

thus the fruits of patient industry, during the best years of Samuel Middleton's life, were swept away by the reckless speculation of others, and nothing remained to him, save the pretty cottage in which he lived, and the good name which no dishonest act had ever tarnished.

Had the old man been in the possession of his eye-sight, the blow had not, perhaps, fallen so heavily; but unable by personal exertion of any kind to repair the mischief, with no children to lean upon, his bark seemed stranded among the breakers, and Samuel Middleton bowed his head upon his hands, and sought for strength, in this hour of darkness, from the source whence alone he felt certain of obtaining it. There was silence for a few moments in the little apartment, disturbed only by the stifled sobs of poor Sophy, and the moans of Mrs. Middleton, as she rocked backward and forward in her arm-chair, till the old man spoke.

"We have received good at the hand of the Lord, and shall we not receive evil?" he said. "Hannah, this is a sore trial—but it comes from God, and we must submit. If He sends poverty upon us in our old days, depend upon it, He will send strength to bear it. The trouble and the comfort always seem to go hand-in-hand. Let us be thankful it is no worse."

"It seems the worst that *could* have happened, Samuel," said the old woman, her voice choked with sorrow.

"The worst!—oh, no! Think if we had been parted by death, Hannah; or if Sophy had gone off with some wild, idle fellow, or many another thing that might befall us. Don't cry, Sophy, darling, grandfather specially grieves on your account. But it's all for the best, dear child. I feel as sure of that as I do that I sit here this moment. Wife, don't moan so; it isn't Christian-like to despair. God's will be done."

"Ah! husband, if I had your faith; but it comes so sudden, I can't seem to bear it."

"Bring the Bible, Sophy," said her grandfather, "and read to grandmother and me how Job bore the loss of all his possessions."

Sophy brought the Bible, and read with trembling voice, as Mr. Middleton directed. When she had finished, the old man knelt down, and reverently clasped his hands. He prayed for the patience of the patriarch of old; for faith to believe it was in love as well as wisdom they had been afflicted; for entire and cheerful submission to the Divine will; and strengthened by this near approach to the Great Chastener of his children, the little family lay down to rest that sorrowful night, tranquil at least, if not altogether resigned.

Before noon the next day, everybody in Brookville had been made acquainted with the misfortune of the Middletons; and neighbors came with kind offers, which the old man could not accept. He had settled what to do, he told them, and thought it was the best plan. The white cottage must be sold or rented, and, indeed, he had already dictated a letter, which Sophy had written, to a gentleman in New York, who was looking for a summer residence, and had once expressed himself pleased

with the situation of Mr. Middleton's house, and the scenery about Brookville. The income accruing from this would enable him to hire an old broken-down tenement, about five miles off, where they would remove without delay, and with strict economy, and good use of a little garden-plot, become as contented, he hoped, if not as happy, as they once were.

To this arrangement, reasonable as it appeared, everybody objected, and suggested, of course, something else. One would take Sophy to live with him; another would help to pay the rent of a better place; and a third proposed some other grand expedient; but the old gentleman was firm.

"I thank you, my friends," he said, "but I would keep my independence if I can. Let me feel that I still eat my own bread, though it be coarser and harder than it once was, and pray for a contented heart, which seems to lighten almost any burden."

A purchaser for the neat homestead was easily found, in the gentleman to whom Sophy had written by her grandfather's dictation; and at the appointed time, Samuel Middleton and his family removed to their new abode, not, however, until kind hearts and willing hands had contributed to make the old place tolerably comfortable; to lay out and improve the garden, long run to waste, and even to plant a few rose-bushes and flowering shrubs about the door-way, that Sophy's eyes, if not her grandfather's, might find some pleasant memento of Brookville and its inhabitants, in these silent marks of their affection and respect.

When moving-day came, everybody came to help. Squire Edgewood's men and fine team, and Mr. Harris, with his strong market cart, to transport the furniture, and when these were fairly off, arrived neighbor Maynard's light wagon, to carry Sophy and her grandmother down, with sundry small baskets and boxes, while the minister himself drove the old gentleman in his gig; and it was sad, though soothing, to catch the kind farewell words as they passed down the village street, when many a one pressed forward to shake hands, and to wish "good health, and God's blessing on their new home."

And over this new home, in answer, perhaps, to these good wishes, some benevolent brownie seemed already to preside; for when Mrs. Middleton unpacked her valuables, she found, stored away in cupboards, supposed, of course, to be entirely empty, such loaves of cake, and jars of butter, with preserves, pickles, eggs, et cætera, as to excite her astonishment in the highest degree; nor could any inquiries or surmises detect the mysterious donors; and the old lady, amid her sighs and bemoanings at their altered condition, could not but smile as she surveyed the kind remembrances; and Sophy, poor girl, would have smiled too, since she duly estimated the kind feelings which had induced them, but that she was too miserable for any thing to interest her now—so home-sick and lonely, that she cared for nothing, save the luxury of shedding tears, when she could steal away from her grandmother's side, and, unobserved, weep over the change which had so suddenly befallen them.

But all this time, amid these adverse circumstances, where were Sophy's

admirers? Was she to find them only *summer* friends, who, like migratory birds, flew off in darker weather? Alas! it seemed too true. Once or twice after their removal Philip Greyson rode down to Mr. Middleton's, and then Sophy resumed her smiles, and was happy; but his visits were few and far between, and she learned that a pretty girl in the midst of plenty and prosperity was very different from a pretty girl fallen in fortune, and obliged to perform all sorts of menial offices for her grand-parents. But Archie Harris, the companion of her childhood, surely *he* might have come to offer consolation, where he knew it was so much required. Was it altogether right in *him* to stand back under such circumstances? Sophy felt it was unkind, "unbrotherly," as she mentally termed it, yet could scarcely blame him either, when she remembered their last conversation, the indifference she had evinced toward him, and the decided preference she had given to Philip; and while her heart smote her for this, she felt more inclined to forgive a coldness which she had herself so entirely provoked.

Our friend Archie, however, despite his seeming indifference, had not forgotten. He had been wounded to the quick by her preference for his rival; and the manner in which she appeared to rejoice that no previous troth-plight would prevent her accepting Philip, made him feel how little she valued true affection, when compared with a dashing exterior, or a greater share of personal beauty. "Let her go! the vain, cold-hearted girl!" he mentally ejaculated, as they parted on that eventful night. "Let her try if he *can* love her half so well as I do—as I *have* done," he added more bitterly. "Fool that I was, to believe she ever cared for me. That conceited peacock! I wish—" and Archie, the best-tempered, kindest-hearted creature in the world, conceived from that moment such an unutterable dislike and contempt for all navy officers, and navy buttons, as to wish, in his awakened ire, that Philip Greyson was on the coast of Africa, or the deep waters of the Pacific.

But when misfortune came, Archie's resentment at once gave way. Sophy was in sorrow, and he longed to go and assure her that his love was brighter than any skies could darken. But had she not rejected his love? Then why should he urge it now? Philip was still at Brookville, and might follow up the advantage he had gained; and Archie would not for the world have interposed his own wishes. Pride, therefore, more than anger, kept him back from any other attention than common civility required; and he resolved by every means in his power to drive away the remembrance of the past, and wait as calmly as he might the issue of future events.

While such was the state of affairs with Archie, Sophy Middleton, in her new home, was learning many valuable lessons, which, perhaps, she had never gained but for these untoward circumstances. Lessons of patience and submission, of industry, activity, and economy; and though she did not recover her usual flow of spirits, still, as the months rolled on, and her employments increased, a tolerable degree of cheerfulness returned also. She found pleasure in her garden-beds and flower-borders; pleasure in leading her good old grandfather about through the house and ground, making him familiar with every thing, and instructing him how

to find his way, unaided, to the arm-chair in the porch; pleasure, too, in devising plans with her grandmother for the better arrangement of their little household, that pleasure which ever comes with the faithful discharge of duty; and if Sophy could not forget, if she still remembered Archie's slighted love with bitter self-reproach, or Philip's short-lived admiration with mortification and disdain, she was still calm, and patient, and resigned; less gay, perhaps, but not less loveable or lovely.

The first year of their misfortunes had passed away, and during that time Archie and our heroine had met but seldom, when the calm current of the blind man's life was ruffled by the intelligence that Mr. Wilson had "sold out," and the white cottage at Brookville gone into other hands.

That the beloved home of his early years, and of his married life, should belong to another, had always seemed to Samuel Middleton but as an unpleasant dream, from which he vainly tried to rouse himself, and believe that it was, indeed, a reality. He could not discern the changes around him, or miss the familiar objects which still lingered on his memory; and this news, communicated rather abruptly by his wife, on her return from a visit to Brookville, appeared to awaken all his past regrets, and remind him anew of other and happier days.

"Why did Wilson sell, I wonder?" he said. "Dear me, I'm very sorry for it. I'm afraid somebody may get there who will abuse the place."

"It will make no difference to us *now*, grandfather," said Sophy, quietly.

"I don't know as to that," replied the old gentleman, rather testily. "I don't know as to that. Wouldn't it make you feel badly, Sophy, to walk past there, and see every thing going to rack and ruin? And if I can't see it, I can remember just how it all looked when we came away. If any one should cut down those two elm trees in front of the house, it would go nigh to break my heart, I think. Why, my father planted those elms with his own hands when I was a boy; and I do hope nobody will cut them down while *I* live."

"I hope not, indeed," said Sophy, in a soothing tone, "but I don't suppose there is much danger of that, grandfather, they shade the house so pleasantly."

"Maybe not," said Mr. Middleton, fidgeting in his chair, as if the very idea had made him nervous, "but there is no telling how it will be. People are so crazy to make money now-a-days, that nothing is safe. Who did you say had bought it, wife?"

"I didn't hear his name," replied Mrs. Middleton; "but I was so busy with other matters, that maybe I didn't ask. However, we can hear all about it to-morrow, Samuel, for to-morrow is election-day, you know, and Mr. Harris says he must have your vote, and they'll send down their wagon for you and me in good season, so that we can take a dish of tea with them, if Sophy don't mind being alone *one* afternoon."

Sophy expressed her entire willingness to remain at home, and, indeed, was rejoiced at the prospect of so doing; and at the appointed hour next day, when Mr.

Harris's wagon came rattling down the lane, gladly assisted her grand-parents to prepare for their visit, and saw them drive away with, it must be confessed, a feeling of relief, somewhat difficult, perhaps, to analyze.

Instead, however, of setting about the various little tasks which, to beguile her loneliness, Mrs. Middleton had suggested, Sophy sat down by the window, and was soon lost in deep thought. What was the subject of her meditations, I think I *would* not tell, even if I could, because I do not choose to betray all the weaknesses of my sex; but I am sure her eyes were wet, and her face very sorrowful, when who should come trotting to the door but Archie Harris himself, the very last person in the world one might have expected on election-day, when everybody, young or old, was, or ought to have been, busy at the Brookville poll. Be this as it may, however, here, as I said, came Archie, who threw the bridle of his pretty bay pony over the gate-post, and walked into the sitting-room, saying, "I met your folks just now going to the village, and hearing you were at home, called to see you."

Sophy received him with a mixture of reserve and cordiality quite unmistakable, and a blended shower of tears, smiles, and blushes, which Archie interpreted favorably, I suppose, for he said, "Then you *are* glad to see an old friend once more, Sophy."

"Certainly I am, and it is a long time since you were here."

"Long! let me see—six weeks, I guess. You don't call that a great while, do you?"

"Oh, yes, I do," replied Sophy, blushing. "We are so lonely now that we have learned to think much of our friends."

"Have you?" said Archie, regarding her with a look half pleased, half sorrowful, as if some painful recollection at that moment crossed his mind; "that is enough to make *some* of us almost glad that you have left Brookville."

"Oh! never say you are glad of *that!*" cried Sophy, earnestly, "when it made me so unhappy."

"Not glad on some accounts, certainly," said Archie, "not that you should have met with misfortune, but only because you think more of old friends here than there."

"True! real friends are the same everywhere," said Sophy, not exactly knowing what to say.

"Sometimes—not always," replied Archie, significantly. "But if friends bring bad news, are they less welcome?"

"I don't believe you have any *bad* news to tell me this afternoon," said Sophy. "You look very well pleased."

"Oh! it is not disagreeable news to *me*, but perhaps it may be to *you*," said Archie, smiling.

"Let me hear it, then," said Sophy, "or maybe I can guess it. Mr. Wilson has

sold the old place.”

“Yes, the old place has changed hands again, and *I* think for the better; but that is not the news I mean.”

“Do tell me, then,” said Sophy, impatiently, “for I cannot guess.”

“Perhaps,” said Archie, suddenly becoming grave, “it may make you sorry; and if so, I had rather not be the one to tell it; but—Philip Greyson is married.”

“Is that all?” asked Sophy, blushing to the very eyes at the mention of Philip’s name. “I thought your news was *bad*.”

“And don’t you *really* care about it?” said Archie. “Let me look in your eyes, Sophy, and see if you are in earnest—if you really do not care.”

“No, indeed, I *do not*,” said Sophy, looking in Archie’s face with a smile which spoke entire truth. “I should not care if he had married all the girls in Brookville.”

“You thought differently once,” said Archie, “and I am not sure, Sophy, that you will care to hear an old story of true love over again, after the last talk we had on the subject.”

“Oh, Archie! will you never forget that foolish business!” exclaimed Sophy, bursting into tears.

“People forgive easier than they forget, sometimes,” said Archie; “and I can’t, for my life, forget any thing that concerns you. I may be mistaken, but I think, that, after Philip Greyson, you care more for me than any one else; and now that he is married—”

Sophy answered him with a glance, which told a whole story of penitence, and a world of reproach.

“And if you think I could make you happy, as I would try to do, dear Sophy,” he continued, “why then, perhaps, you wont object to go back to Brookville, and live with me at the ‘old place,’ and take grandfather and grandmother with you, hey, Sophy?”

Poor Sophy was crying so heartily, from a mingled feeling of joy and sorrow, that she could not answer, and so Archie proceeded.

“I have been very fortunate this last year. I suppose, because I had nothing to draw me off from business, and have been able to buy the place from Mr. Wilson. I will put it in good order again, and we shall be so happy there—shan’t we, Sophy, darling? But you don’t speak.”

“Because I am so happy that I have no words to tell it,” replied Sophy, smiling through her tears. “But will you really forgive all my foolishness and vanity, dear Archie? And shall we really go back to Brookville; to the ‘old place’—and with *you*, too? Oh! it seems like a blessed dream.”

“A dream that will last, I hope,” said Archie, “and pay us for all the sorrow we have had the past year—for you haven’t been sad alone, Sophy; I have thought of you, and loved you just the same; and longed to come and tell you so, often and

often, only I thought if you did like Phil Greyson best—”

“Please don’t name him again,” said Sophy. And Archie, nothing loth to discard a disagreeable topic, promised—I believe with a kiss—that he would not. Unfortunately for grandmother Middleton’s little jobs, Sophy found the time pass so rapidly that she quite forgot them—since Archie stayed all the afternoon, while his poor horse stood, kicking off the flies, at the garden-gate—wondering it may be, at his master’s unusual delay, or sudden love of gossiping.

The old gentleman and his wife came home in excellent spirits, having heard who had become the purchaser of their former abode, and Mr. Middleton’s mind quite at ease respecting his favorite elm trees; and when they learned further of all that had occurred during their absence, and how their darling Sophy—now so smiling and happy—was to become the mistress once more of the dear ‘old place,’ their cup of joy and contentment seemed full to overflowing. Grandmother reminded Sophy that “she had told her a year ago that Archie Harris would make the best husband in the world—always excepting *her* old man;” while grandfather could only clasp his withered hands, and raise his sightless eyes in silent ejaculations of gratitude and love.

Genuine lovers of love stories like to hear of that devoutly wished-for consummation—a wedding; but editors, and some other people, best fancy jumping at the conclusion at once. So, most kind reader, whoever you may be, please to imagine Archie Harris and his bride quietly settled at Brookville before the autumn commenced—the happiest people in the wide world; while grandmother is busiest of the busy, all day long, in her accustomed haunts; and grandfather sits under the shadow of his beloved elms, almost forgetting his misfortunes, or their year of exile, in the added happiness of his darling Sophy.



# THOU'RT NOT ALONE.

Written on hearing a young lady exclaim, "Alas! I'm all alone!"

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BY N. CURTISS STINE.

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THOU'RT not alone—the greenwood's shades are round thee,  
When summer comes, with all her joyous train;  
And playful winds at eve have often found thee,  
And murmured in thine ear Hope's sweetest strain.  
Thou'rt not alone—each gaily tinted flower,  
That smiling greets us on the dewy lea,  
The painted clouds at sunset's golden hour,  
To me are friends, and should be so to thee.

Thou'rt not alone—the red stars gleaming o'er thee,  
At midnight lone, with whispering voices tell,  
Old tales of those who passed away before thee,  
In brighter lands beyond the sun to dwell.  
And when the robe of Autumn gaily shining,  
With rainbow hues is o'er the forest thrown,  
Go, list the winds among their boughs repining,  
And learn on earth thou ne'er can'st dwell alone.

Thou'rt not alone—the shades of the departed,  
On radiant wings are soaring softly by—  
Thou can'st not see them, but the gentle hearted  
To visit thee oft leave the azure sky.  
What though the world in chasing flying Pleasure,  
With icy heart should past thee coldly hie?  
Look—look on high—thou hast a richer treasure,  
Than all its gems and glittering dross can buy.

# THE WIDOW AND THE DEFORMED.

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BY MRS. CAROLINE H. BUTLER.

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## PART I.

MR. OAKLY was a rich man. Stately dwellings and noble warehouses were his; he owned large and flourishing farms, and the sails of his ships whitened the ocean. No man enjoyed a higher reputation on 'change; no merchant's opinion was more quoted or depended on; no man's integrity considered more spotless. Blest, too, with an excellent wife, the world pronounced Mr. Oakly a very happy man. But where the mere surface of things forms the criterion of judgment, the world, wise as it is, is very apt to be mistaken. Mr. Oakly was *not* a happy man. Neither was he a favorite with the multitude; and had not the magic of riches surrounded him, he would have had fewer professed friends, and many more open enemies—for his manners were arrogant and repulsive, while his deeds of charity were but as a feather in the scale with his *power* of being charitable.

Mr. Oakley had paid a great price for his riches—no less a jewel than his own peace of mind. He might count over his heaps of gold, and talk about the just reward of long years of industry and economy, and try to cheat even himself into the belief that his prosperity was but his deserts, yet well he knew that the foundation of his fortune was based on crime. Flatter himself, then, as he would, the whispers of conscience told him louder than the jingling of coin that it was mockery all! His only child, too, was miserably deformed and lame; thus it proved, with all his great wealth, he was neither an enviable or a happy man.

Mr. Oakly, with his family, were spending the warm months at his delightful country-residence on the banks of the Susquehanna; and there our story takes us on a sultry August morning. Breakfast is just over, and now, while Mr. Oakly breaks the seals of various letters which the postman has just brought to the door, Mrs. Oakly listlessly looks over the city journals.

“So John is dead at last!” exclaimed Mr. Oakly, with something of relief in his tone, and throwing down upon the table a dirty-looking letter, with a huge black seal. “Died a pauper! Well, I expected it, and so might he, when he refused compliance with the wishes of his friends.”

Mrs. Oakly looked up with some surprise.

“Of whom are you speaking, my dear—a relative of yours?” she inquired.

“Only my brother,” replied her husband, coolly.

“Your brother—and died a pauper! You amaze me! Pray how did it happen?”

“It happened, and justly, too, through his own folly and imprudence,” cried the cold-hearted man—for even had his brother been the basest of criminals, he was his brother still. Death should have inspired some faint shadow of grief, if no more.

“The fact is,” continued Mr. Oakly, “John was too much favored in early life. He was my father’s idol, and, to my disadvantage, favor after favor was heaped upon him. Although younger by several years than myself, *he* was sent to college, *I* was kept at home—*he* had choice of a profession, *I* was forced to measure off tape and calico by the yard. He became dissipated, was wounded in some rowdy frolic, fell in love with, and married, a girl of low family, who took care of him during his illness. Such conduct highly exasperated my father, who vowed that unless he would abandon this low connection forever, and return home, he not only would disinherit him, but would never see him more. John refused the terms; the consequences were as my father had said, who shortly after died. I was his only heir, and, of course, as such, was bound to hold all my father’s views sacred; and as he never forgave my ungrateful brother, consequently, neither did I.”

So much for Mr. Oakly’s version of his brother’s history. We shall see, by and bye, how far it may be depended upon.

“But were you not aware of your brother’s destitute situation?” said Mrs. Oakly, somewhat reproachfully.

“Why, not exactly—at least I—I did not know it for a *fact*. But, what then—suppose I did; he chose his own path—what had I to do with it?”

Mrs. Oakly shook her head and sighed.

“Did your brother leave any family?”

“Yes, so it seems—for here comes a begging letter from some country scribe, whereby it appears he has left a widow and two children—girls, too; but read it yourself.”

Mrs. Oakly took the letter.

“SIR,—Your brother, Mr. John Oakly, was buried yesterday at the expense of the parish. Upon his death-bed he requested that notice should be forwarded you of the event, and some assistance solicited on behalf of his destitute family. He leaves a widow, in delicate health, and two small children, both girls. As they are without any means of support save the little which the mother can earn by labor, I trust this appeal to your sympathy will not be in vain.”

“Well, my dear,” said Mrs. Oakly, looking inquiringly at her husband, as she finished reading.

“Well!” echoed her husband, “what concern is it of mine if they do starve! It was all owing to his connection with this same woman that his misfortunes fell upon him; and now do you think I am going to encourage her arts by aiding her in her justly deserved poverty—no, not I, Mrs. Oakly!”

“Revoke that cruel sentence, I beseech you, Alfred,” said his wife; “you surely will not let this appeal to your sympathy pass without notice; do not, I entreat you, let the poor little ones suffer for their parents’ fault!”

“Really, Mrs. Oakly,” cried her husband sarcastically, “really, I hope I may do as I please with what is mine. Those who have no money of their own, and never had a cent in their lives, may well cant upon charity.”

There was evidently a bitter meaning couched under these words, for Mrs. Oakly colored deeply, and tears filled her eyes, though she made no reply, but throwing open the window upon the lawn, was about to step forth, when the nurse entered the room, leading by the hand a poor deformed little girl apparently about two years of age. The sight of his only and unfortunate child appeared to awaken a new train of ideas in the mind of Mr. Oakly. For some moments he walked the room in deep thought, now looking at the child, now at his wife, and then again resuming his measured tread. At length motioning the nurse, with her charge, to leave the room, he approached his wife, and in a much less arrogant manner, said,

“My dear, a new idea has occurred to me, which, if I mistake not, may be productive of much good, not only to ourselves, but also to those for whom your sympathy appears so foolishly urgent. The more I consider of my purpose, the better I think of it. My brother, it seems, has left two little girls—very well. Now I propose taking the youngest of these children as our own—”

“This is indeed noble of you, my dear husband!” exclaimed Mrs. Oakly.

“In lieu of our own poor Agatha,” said Mr. Oakly.

Mrs. Oakly screamed, and clasping her hands, sat pale as marble looking up into the face of her husband.

“Nay, my dear,” said he, taking her hand with some tenderness, “I dare say you will feel very badly at first, but only consider the benefits which will arise from the exchange. Agatha is a poor unhappy object, and as long as she lives, will be a sorrow and reproach to us. It will be very easy for me to induce this woman, my brother’s widow, I mean, to yield up one of her own children to me, upon the condition that if she will take all future charge of our poor Agatha, her own shall be brought up in every tenderness and luxury. There is one proviso, however, to which I shall require oath—that is, the transaction is to remain forever secret—she is never to claim her own child, but on the contrary, to acknowledge Agatha as hers.”

Mr. Oakly paused, but his wife made no reply. It seemed as if surprise and grief had deprived her of speech.

“We can pursue our plan the better,” he continued, “as we have always kept Agatha secluded from observation. It will be very easy for us now to give out word that she is under skillful treatment. By degrees we can report of her wonderful improvement, until at the end of some months, or even a year, we can produce our adopted child in proof of our assertions.”

“But why is it necessary to do this?” cried Mrs. Oakly, falteringly, “why not

keep our own poor unfortunate, and at the same time adopt one or both of your brother's children? God knows, Alfred," she added, earnestly, "I will be a mother to them—I will cherish and love them; but, oh, not so tenderly as my own poor Agatha!"

"Nonsense, nonsense!" interrupted Mr. Oakly, hastily, "don't you see how much disgrace and trouble you will save yourself by my arrangement?"

"Disgrace, Alfred! and from our innocent babe!"

"Hear me, if you please. You will have the double satisfaction of knowing that she will be well provided for, and kindly treated, while at the same time she can never trouble you by her agitating presence."

"And to such a woman as you have described your brother's wife to be, would you confide so precious a trust?" said Mrs. Oakly, hoping this appeal might arrest her husband's views.

"Why not? She may be well enough for our purpose; her kindness I can secure by money. As to any refinement, or education, it will never be of much importance to Agatha. She will never be called upon, it is likely, for any display of accomplishments, poor thing—to eat, sleep, and read verses in the Bible, will fill up the measure of her days better than any thing else."

This cutting and cruel remark aroused all the mother. Rising to her feet, she said, slowly and emphatically,

"Alfred Oakly! can you speak thus lightly of your own flesh and blood! Now, shame upon you! God has given us this unhappy child; she is our own to love and protect. Were she the loveliest babe that ever fond mother circled to her heart, I could not love her more. I might be proud of such an one; but *love*—oh, I could not so deeply, so tenderly!"

"Well, there we differ, Mrs. Oakly; it is precisely because she is such a child that I am anxious to be rid of her," replied the heartless father. "Understand me, my dear, I wish no harm to poor Agatha; it is for her good, I assure you, that the change should be made. What answer, then, have you to my plan?"

"That I will never consent to it," she replied, firmly.

"Very well—you will not. Then it must be done without your consent. I am fixed; neither your refusal, or your tears, will avail any thing; so you may as well make up your mind to yield, madam, without further argument." So saying, Mr. Oakly turned coolly on his heel and left the room.

Now wo to the poor wife—for well did she know her husband's unflinching determination. If it is possible for a woman to be too amiable, Mrs. Oakly was so; while her husband, far from appreciating such a character, ruled over her like some petty despot. Her only hope now rested upon the belief that the widow could never be induced to give up one of her children for the unfortunate Agatha.

"O, would she were ten times more repulsive!—my poor child!" cried the unhappy mother, "I should still love her, but *she* would shrink from an object so

unsightly.”

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It was at the close of a chill, rainy day, near the middle of September, that a handsome traveling-carriage drew up at the door of a small inn, in a retired country town. Such an occurrence was rare; and no sooner, therefore, was it seen entering the long street of straggling houses, than it was followed by a noisy set of bare-footed urchins, yelping dogs, and idle loungers, so that by the time it reached the inn, a motley assemblage was formed around it.

As the carriage stopped, the glass was let down; a thin, sallow face looked sharply forth, and a voice not the most gentle, demanded,

“Here, some of you—can you tell me where one Widow Oakly lives?”

The landlord, who by this time had reached the scene of wonder, imperatively thrust aside all other aspirants to the honor of answering the stranger, and himself began.

“The Widow Oakly—ah, yes. The Widow Oakly you said, sir?”

“To be sure I did. I ask you to direct me to her residence.”

“Certainly, sir. Well, you see the widow lives in that small house yonder, on the bank of the creek—that is, she has a room there; an honest little woman, but poor—very poor!”

“Drive on!” cried the gentleman, sternly, without deigning further notice of the loquacious landlord.

The driver cracked his whip, and the spirited horses obeying the impulse, dashed through the crowd at the imminent risk of trampling some of the throng under their feet.

“There, I told you,” cried the landlord, “there was something uncommon about them Oakly’s, poor as they are; and now you see what a grand coach comes after them. Run down there, Jimmy, my boy, and find out what it means.”

And not only Jimmy, but a dozen others set off on full trot in the rear of the carriage.

In the meantime the object of so much curiosity had reached the house pointed out as the residence of the widow; and carefully mincing his steps across the muddy pathway, Mr. Oakly rapped loudly at the door with his gold-headed cane, for knocker there was none. After several repetitions of the same, each more vehement than the last, the door was finally opened by a middle-aged woman, whose red face, and scowling brows told she was in no very pleasant frame of mind. Around her head was tied an old black handkerchief through which, in several places, her grizzly hair shot up like “quills upon the fretted porcupine.” She was slipshod, and stockingless—her dress drabbed and torn.

“Well,” she exclaimed, not at all daunted at sight either of the carriage or its owner, “what’s all this rumpus—what do you want, that you knock a body’s house

down about their ears?"

"Is there a Mrs. Oakly lives here?" inquired the gentleman, involuntarily retreating a step or two.

"Well, if there is—what do you want?" said the woman, surlily.

"That is my business," answered Mr. Oakly, looking daggers. "If there is such a woman here I must speak with her."

"Then go round to the other door, and knock that down too," replied the woman. "Eh, maybe you are one of her husband's relations. I've heard tell he had powerful rich ones."

Mr. Oakly turned away without deigning reply to this half interrogatory.

"Eh," she continued, her voice becoming shriller and shriller, "and a plaguy proud set you are, I'll be bound. You can ride in your coach, can you, and let your brother, as maybe he was, die on straw. *Ho-oo-t!*" she shrieked, her face inflamed with anger, as she found her taunts unnoticed, "*ho-oo-t* away with you off my door-steps—did you ever hear of Dives and Lazarus? Your gold wont keep *your* back from scorching, old Dives. Faith I should like to have the basting of you myself!" Saying which she boxed the ears of the nearest unlucky wight who stood grinning with the rest at her eloquence, and then giving him a shake, which nearly sent his head off, she slammed the door, and retreated.

Her last words were inaudible to the person they were intended for. Glad to escape from such a virago, he had hastily bent his steps around to the back entrance of the domicil. Here he knocked several times, but as no answer was given, he ventured at length to lift the latch, and enter.

It was a low, dark room in which he found himself, little better than a cellar. I fancy it would have been impossible even for those who dwell upon the charms and romance of poverty, and who, with well-fed stomachs, in slippered ease, on Turkey carpets, descant so eloquently upon this theme, to have found aught charming here. The floor was broken and uneven; two low windows, which could only boast of three whole panes between them, the rest being patched with paper, or their places supplied by rags, through which the rain had forced its way, and now trickled in long streams across the floor. There were two chairs, a low bedstead, miserably furnished, a pine table, and some few articles of crockery and cooking utensils of the poorest kind.

Upon an old quilt, thrown down upon the floor in one corner of the room, two little children, entwined in each other's arms, were sleeping. At this sight the knees of Mr. Oakly trembled, his teeth chattered, and for a moment he leaned for support against the wall—for a voice seemed whispering in his ear, "*Look wretch! thy brother's children—this is thy work!*"

And perhaps it will be as well here as elsewhere, here, in the scene of that brother's death, to relate the events which led to so sad an end.

In Mr. Alfred Oakly's summary of his brother's life, there was some truth, but

not the whole truth. John was the favorite of his father; for beside that his mind was of a much higher order than his brother's, his disposition and deportment were also far more amiable and respectful. Mr. Oakly preferred not sending both his sons to college, so he very wisely resolved it should be the younger, as one whose talents would most honor the expense. This excited the envy and jealousy of Alfred, and from that moment he resolved to work his brother's undoing. It happened that at the same college—and in the same class with John Oakly, was a wild, dissipated fellow of the same name, who was continually getting into disgrace. Accident furnished Alfred with this clue, which he determined should lead to his desired wishes. By degrees whispers of misconduct began to reach the father's ears. Then came letters to corroborate these rumors, filling the heart of Mr. Oakly with sorrow. Letters, too, were continually being received, demanding money, which, if forwarded, it is unnecessary to say never reached its destination. Mr. Alfred took good care of that; for, of course, the letters his father received, purporting to be from his brother, originated in his own wicked mind, while those actually penned by John, as also his father's, were suppressed by the same crafty power.

When Alfred first originated this scheme, it is probable he had no idea its success would result in so much misery; his desire was as much to be revenged on his father, for his partiality to his brother, as upon his brother for being the object of that partiality; but when once he had entangled himself in the meshes of deceit, he could not break through without sure detection of his wickedness. The father and son met but once after the latter went to college. He was then received with coldness and reproaches. Conscious of his innocence, John was too proud to make any explanations, and left his father's roof in bitterness. Soon after Mr. Oakly went abroad, as wretched as his son, leaving Alfred in sole charge of his business. The constitution of John was never strong; and no doubt the unmerited treatment of his father hastened the work of disease. He commenced the practice of the law, but in pleading his first cause, unfortunately ruptured a blood-vessel, and was borne from the court-room to his lodgings in apparently a dying state. Through the kindness and careful nursing of the lady with whom he boarded, he at length partially recovered; or it may be that the beauty and gentleness of Louisa, her only daughter, contributed somewhat to his restoration. Certain it is, a mutual affection sprang up between them, and, though in no situation to marry, the death of her mother a few months after, by which Louisa was left alone and destitute in the world, brought the event about.

And now love and poverty were henceforth to bear them company on their life-journey—for a final blow was put to any expectation which John might have indulged secretly of a reconciliation with his father, through the machinations of his brother. It seems the other John Oakly had, in the meanwhile, absconded with a girl of low character. Of this fact Alfred availed himself, and communicated the same to his credulous father, who immediately wrote to his youngest son, that unless he renounced at once, and forever, the disgraceful connection, he would disinherit him. This letter, as referring to his darling Louisa, the most amiable and lovely of wives,



filled John with indignation and anger. He answered the letter in terms which nothing but his feelings as a *husband* could excuse—and the rupture was complete. Mr. Oakly soon after returned home in miserable health, and died, cutting off John entirely in his will, and leaving the whole of his property to Alfred. This event the latter communicated to his brother, generously enclosing a *fifty dollar* note, with the assurance that as his father had died so incensed against him, out of respect to that father's memory he must decline all further intercourse with him.

When sickness and poverty meet, the path of life's pilgrimage is hard. Too unwell to practice his profession, John attempted writing, but this at best was precarious, beside that the exertion again brought on pain in the side, and difficulty of breathing. He had fine talents, and had health permitted, no doubt might have succeeded as a writer. Sometimes he would dictate, and his faithful Louisa commit his ideas to paper; but this could not continue. New and precious cares were added, which required all her time, so that this resource was abandoned. He soon grew so feeble as to be unable to leave his room. A kind physician recommended country-air, and through his assistance the unfortunate couple, with their two little ones, were enabled to reach a small country town. Here living would be cheaper, and hope whispered to Louisa that by industry and economy, she might support comfortably her dear husband and little ones. Poor girl! on offering herself as a seamstress, the good people looked at her with surprise—they did all their own sewing. She offered to teach painting or music, at very low rates; but they laughed at her, and wondered what she thought they wanted of such foolish fashions. At last she was thankful, for her children's sake, to be employed even in the most menial offices, if thereby she might get them bread. Once did John Oakly address a letter to his brother, in which he stated his ill-health and destitution. It was never answered. Again, on his death-bed, did he give to the clergyman who attended his last moments his brother's address, requesting him to write when he should be no more, and crave that assistance for his babes, which, while he lived, was refused to *him*.

The result of this appeal is already known.

The unfortunate widow met with little sympathy from her rough neighbors. Not that they meant unkindness or uncharitableness, but each one was too busy with their own affairs to give more than a chance thought to a poor widow and a stranger. They were themselves industrious and frugal; and it was difficult for her even to get a day's work from such economical, thrifty people.

And hither now had the rich man come—and on what errand? Not to sympathize—not to succor or relieve, but to prosecute his own selfish views, both cruel and unnatural.

But to return. We left Mr. Alfred Oakly gazing upon his brother's sleeping babes. The opening of a door aroused him; he turned, and the wan countenance of the widow met his view. She did not look to be more than three-and-twenty. She was tall, and her figure slender and delicate, but her small feet were bare, her garments coarse. On her sunken cheeks there was no trace of color, and the lines of

suffering too plainly drawn around her beautiful mouth. Her dark eyes were large, but their brilliancy dimmed by tears of sorrow, and her long, raven hair—that splendid hair that had once been the admiration of all—was now combed carelessly back from her high brow, and concealed by a plain muslin cap. The man of the world was abashed, and the widow the first to break the silence.

“I presume I speak to Mr. Alfred Oakly,” she said.

The gentleman bowed, but had his life depended upon utterance, he could not have spoken. Their mother’s voice, though low, at once aroused the sleeping innocents, and springing from their hard couch, they bounded to meet her. At sight of a stranger, however, the youngest, not two years old, hid her face in the folds of her mother’s dress, but the elder looked up inquiringly into his face, and then raising herself on her little toes, and putting back her sunny ringlets, said, “Me will tiss you.”

Mr. Oakly *did* stoop to those little rosy lips, and even lifted the little creature for a moment in his arms; but that was all—he placed her on the floor again, as cold, as unimpassioned as ever.

This little scene overcame the fortitude of the mother; folding both little ones to her bosom, she burst into tears, and for many moments wept bitterly. This gave Mr. Oakly time to recover himself. He would fain have believed the tears of the widow called forth more for effect than for real grief; but there was something too lofty and pure in her pale countenance to encourage such base thoughts. At length feeling himself bound to say something by way of consolation, in a husky, fettering voice, he began. The words “we must all die—sorry—death—unfortunate—in heaven—” being alone intelligible.

As if indignant with herself for having given way to her feelings in the presence of one so heartless, Mrs. Oakly instantly dried her tears, and with something of scorn on her features, listened to this lip-language—for well she knew the heart had little to do with it.

“I have come here,” he continued, “as the near relative of your late husband, to remove you from this miserable spot. You must leave this place, madam; it is entirely too poor and wretched for you.”

“Wretched and poor as it is, on *that* bed your brother died!” said the widow, pointing as she spoke to the low, miserable bedstead.

Mr. Oakly was evidently put down. After a moment’s silence he added,

“It is my intention, as my brother’s widow, to treat you with every kindness.”

“Your kindness, sir, comes late,” replied Mrs. Oakly, “and will prove but thankless. He whom it should have rescued from the grave, is now beyond your cruelty; and to me, therefore, your *kindness*, as you term it, is little else than cruel.”

The brow of Mr. Oakly contracted with anger, but the object he had in view was too important to be thwarted by a woman’s reproaches; so, dissembling his mortification, he continued.

“I wish you to remove from here at once to a pleasant town which I shall name to you; and it is also my desire and intention to adopt your youngest child as my own.”

“Separate me from my children! No, that you shall never do!” cried the widow, pressing them to her bosom.

“Do not be so hasty in your decision, my dear madam,” said Mr. Oakly, blandly, “but listen to me with reason. This child shall be most tenderly and carefully brought up. My wife will love her as her own; and her education shall be the best which the city can give. You yourself shall not only live in comfort, but also have ample means to educate your other daughter as you could wish. Nay, more; I do not ask you to give me your daughter without an equivalent. Now,” continued he, drawing his chair still closer to Mrs. Oakly, and taking her hand, “I want you to listen to me—neither do I wish you to give me an answer to-night; you shall have time to reflect upon my proposition, and to consider well the immense benefit which will result to yourself from conceding to my wishes, or, in case of refusal, the poverty and wretchedness which will still surround you and these poor babes, aggravated, perhaps, by the thought that you might have spared their tender frames, but would not.”

The countenance of the widow flushed with indignation; she spoke not, however, but turning her full dark eye upon him, prepared to hear what further this man had to say.

“It has pleased the Almighty,” he continued, “to give me one child, now nearly three years of age; but this child he has blasted with the most hopeless deformity. You have two beautiful children—then give me one, and receive to your maternal care my poor, blighted Agatha.”

“And are you a *father!* and can you talk thus easily of severing the holy bond of parent and child!” interrupted Mrs. Oakly. “Have you not a wife—is there no *mother* to be consulted in your most unnatural scheme!”

“Yes—an unhappy mother; but she has already consented. Aware that in perfect retirement her poor child can alone know happiness, she is willing to yield her up to your gentle treatment, and will in return bestow her love and tenderness upon your own babe. Reflect, you will still have one lovely child to console you, while the future welfare of both your children will be secured by the sacrifice; furthermore, there will be the heartfelt pleasure of knowing that through your watchful care an unfortunate being is made happy.”

“Do you know aught of the pleasures of *duty*, that you talk so feelingly?” said the widow, scornfully.

“Nay, reproach me not thus; look at your two children, those little beings confided to your care—can you see their little frames wasted by hunger, or sinking through toil; or, should you die, what then is there for them but a cold and bitter lot of poverty and death—or maybe a fate worse than death. You shudder; then why

hesitate, when by simply yielding to my wishes you are all made comfortable and happy. I see you are moved. I have but one stipulation to make, should you consent, as I think you will; it may alarm you at first, but upon reflection you will see its propriety. It is this—you are to promise solemnly never to claim your child, but to acknowledge poor Agatha to be *yours*, and never, on any account or any emergency, divulge this important secret. Do not answer me,” said he, hastily, as he saw the widow was about to speak; “take time to consider my views—I will call at an early hour in the morning for your reply. Good night!” Then kissing the half-frightened children, the plausible brother of poor John Oakly softly closed the door, and once more entering his carriage, returned to the inn.

It is difficult to conceive the pain and agitation with which this interview filled the breast of the poor widow. Doubts distracted her; and decision either way filled her with dread. One moment she resolved to spurn the offered ransom from poverty, the next, as her eyes dwelt on her helpless little ones doomed by such decision to years of toil and want, she wavered, and almost consented to part forever with her darling Louisa, if by the sacrifice their comfort might be secured. Then her mind wandered to the poor, cast-off Agatha, whom, perhaps, cruelty and harshness might destroy. She had well divined the father’s selfishness, and should she refuse the charge, he might entrust her to other hands less faithful—for already she felt her heart warm toward the unfortunate.

Unconscious of their mother’s distress, the children had once more fallen asleep. Softly removing the little arm of the youngest from her neck, she carefully placed them on her humble bed, and then kneeling down beside them, she prayed that strength and resolution might be given her that she might decide justly and wisely. Mournfully the wind sighed around that dismal dwelling; the rain beat against the shattered windows—but she heard it not, knew it not. Through that long, long night, without lamp or food, unto the dawning of another dismal day, the widow remained on her knees by the bed-side of her beloved children. Years seemed added unto her by the sufferings of that night.

Her decision was made—made with an anguish which mocks at consolation.

Blame her not, fond mother, as, surrounded by all the comforts of life, you fondly circle your own dear babes to your bosom, and think no power but death can separate you from them. Blame her not, that in poverty and destitution, in forlornness and widowhood, to save her poor infants from a lot so wretched, she at length, with grief too deep for tears, decided to yield up forever to *another*, her youngest born—her darling Louisa.

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To a pleasant seaport town, many miles distant from the scene of the preceding chapter, and still further removed from the residence of Mr. Oakly, our story now takes us. We must allow, too, for a flight of years, which shall be as noiseless as those circling so swiftly around the head of the young and happy.

With the exception of one long street, consisting mostly of mechanics' shops, a few stores, a rope-walk, and a tavern, the dwellings, clustered here and there in a most picturesque and delightful manner. The land rising rather abruptly a few rods from the shore, and slightly undulating, gave to each little cottage a distinct and pretty appearance, each with its little garden-plot of bright-green vegetables and brilliant flowers, some half hidden behind the huge brown trunks of forest-trees, others mantled with the vine or honey-suckle. To the south and west, the horizon rested upon the bosom of the majestic ocean; northward towered hill on hill until the blue sky kissed their dark summits; while to the east stretched a beautiful vista of finely cultivated fields, and glowing orchards, with the spires of distant villages proclaiming—*God above all!*

It was the hour of noon, on a bright June day. A band of happy, sportive children were just let loose from school, and with whoop and huzza, with careless laugh, and merry song, away bounded the gay young things, happy that the four brick walls of A B C-dom were behind them, yet now and then glancing back with a look of fondness to their school-mistress, as she slowly crossed the play-ground to her own residence. In the path before her gayly frolicked a beautiful girl of perhaps ten summers, the very embodiment of health and innocence, skipping and dancing onward, light as any fairy, or with sunny smiles bounding back with a flower and a kiss for the child her mother was so tenderly assisting. This poor little creature was not only very lame, but was terribly hunchbacked, and otherwise deformed. Although really older than little Ruth Oakly, (for in the school-mistress the reader finds the widow,) she was not taller than most children at five. One little hand was clasped in her mother's, (she knew no other mother,) who, with the most tender care, guarded her steps, now and then, as the eyes of the child were lifted to hers, stooping down to kiss her, and encouraging her in the most endearing terms. The other hand held a wreath of flowers, which she had woven for her dear sister Ruth.

As they entered the gate opening upon the nicely graveled walk leading up to the cottage-door, Ruth ran and brought a little arm-chair on rollers, softly cushioned, and placed it on the grass beneath the shadow of a large apple-tree, whose pendant branches, nestling down amid the sweet clover, thus formed a beautiful bower for the children's sports.

"There, Gatty," cried Ruth, flinging herself down at her feet among the clover, "now let's play the story you were reading this morning. You shall be queen, and I will be the little girl that was never happy; would it be wrong, Gatty, to *play* you were never happy—would it be telling a lie; for you know, Gatty, dear, I am very, very happy—aren't you?"

"Yes—very happy," said Agatha, thoughtfully, "but, Ruth, I cannot be queen, you know—how I should look! No, you must be queen; and see, I have made this pretty wreath on purpose for you. I will be the ugly old fairy, and ma'ma shall be Leoline, that was never happy—for, Ruthy, do you know I think dear ma'ma is sometimes very miserable. I wonder what makes her cry so; for every night when

she kneels down by our bed-side I can feel the hot tears on my cheek as she kisses me.”

“Ah! and so can I—poor ma’ma!” said Ruth, and both children remained sad and thoughtful, the arm of Ruth thrown across the lap of her sister, whose little hand, still clasping the wreath, rested on Ruth’s shoulder. At length Agatha spoke, but her voice was low and broken.

“Ruth,” said she, “maybe ma’ma weeps for me, because—because—I am not more like *you*.”

“How like me?” said the little girl, raising her eyes to the sad face bent over her.

“Why you know, Ruth, you are so straight and so pretty, and can walk so nicely, while I—I—”

“You are a thousand times better than me, dear Gatty,” cried Ruth, springing up and throwing both arms around her weeping sister—for it was almost the first time she had ever heard Agatha allude to her deformity; “indeed you are a great deal prettier and better. Oh! how many times I have heard dear ma’ma say she wished I was as good as you.”

“Ruth,” said Agatha, laying her hand on her sister’s arm, and looking earnestly in her face, “I *am* a frightful looking child, am I not?”

“*You*, Agatha!” exclaimed little Ruth, “*you* frightful! O, no; don’t every body love you, Gatty, dear?”

“Everybody is very *kind* to me,” said the child, unconsciously making the distinction—“but then, Ruth, sometimes I hear people say, ‘*O, what an ugly little thing!*’ ‘*Did you ever see such a fright?*’ and then sometimes the children call me a *spider*, and say I have arms like an *ape*, and cry, ‘*Hunch-Bunch, what’s in your pack?*’ ”

“O, stop, dear Agatha!” said Ruth, tenderly kissing her, “don’t talk so—pray don’t! it is only rude stranger children that say so; it is because they don’t know what a sweet, dear child you are.”

“I pray to God every night,” continued Agatha, “to forgive them, for they don’t know what it is to be lame, and deformed, and helpless; and I pray God to make *me* good and amiable, too, that *I* may forgive them.”

“Don’t cry, Gatty, dear,” sobbed Ruth, and then both little heads sunk lovingly together in a paroxysm of tears.

When Mrs. Oakly came to call the children to dinner, she was surprised to find them both weeping and sobbing bitterly. There was never any concealment from their mother; so Ruth, in a simple, earnest manner, related the conversation between Agatha and herself. Mrs. Oakly was grieved to find the mind of her hitherto happy child dwelling on a subject so hopelessly calamitous. Raising the poor little girl in her arms, she fondly kissed her.

“My darling,” said she, “is it not better to be good and lovely in your heart, than

to possess the most beautiful form, and yet be wicked, and have no love for God and his commandments? My dear little girl, listen to me; it was the will of the Almighty to strike you with lameness, and to render your frame less pleasing to the sight than that of other children; but reflect how many blessings he has also granted you. Suppose you were blind; suppose you could never look upon the face of your dear little sister Ruth, or your ma'ma's; could not see the beautiful flowers, nor the grass, nor yonder ocean, which you now so much love to look upon, or the beautiful blue sky above you; or, Agatha, what if you were deprived of speech and hearing. Ah! my child, do not sorrow any more, for you see how good God has been; you must not let the speech of thoughtless children thus disturb you—will you promise me, Agatha?"

"I will *try*, dearest ma'ma—I must not promise, for I may be wicked again, and forget that God is so good," answered the child.

Mr. Alfred Oakly had so far fulfilled the promises he made the widow as to remove her from the wretched spot where he had first sought an interview with her to the home she now occupied. He had purchased the cottage, which was pleasantly located, and presented her with the title deed. He had furnished it neatly, adding also a piano, and a small collection of books, to the other equipments. Half yearly she received a stipulated amount of money, which, though small, would, with economy, have been sufficient for her support, had she chosen to avail herself of its uses. But this sum she considered sacred to Agatha. In case of her own death, she saw how utterly hopeless and dependent her situation would be, and she nobly resolved not to encroach upon it any more than was absolutely necessary for the first six months. She therefore exerted all her energies to support herself and the children, independent of this allowance. In this laudable endeavor she found the piano one great resource. She gave lessons in music, also in drawing and painting, and was engaged as teacher in the village school, in which capacity she was much beloved and respected both by parents and children.

Thus years rolled on. Although she still grieved for her darling Louisa, and wept in secret those tears of which none but a *mother* may know the bitterness, still she was most fondly attached to the unfortunate little Agatha, while the affection subsisting between Ruth and the poor deformed was truly lovely to witness. There could not be a much greater contrast than in the looks of these two children, although their dispositions were in perfect harmony. Ruth possessed a rich olive complexion, with cheeks which might vie with June roses, they were so bright and glowing; her eyes were black and sparkling; and her raven hair closely cut to her beautifully rounded throat, was parted on top of her finely formed head, and waved over each temple in one rich, glossy curl. Her figure, tall for her age, was light and graceful. The complexion of Agatha, on the contrary, was dazzlingly fair, save where dashed by the small, violet veins; her large, deep-hazel eyes possessed that peculiar brightness and intensity which usually designates those who suffer from like causes; long ringlets of light-brown hair, fell around her almost to the ground as

if to hide within their beautiful redundance the mis-shapen form of their little mistress. But it was the expression of her innocent face which called forth the pity and kindness of every one; that look, so gentle, so confiding, as if pleading with every one to love her, though she knew how hard it would be to take to their hearts a helpless deformed little object such as she was.

Incapable of joining in the sports of other children, Agatha devoted a great portion of her time to reading, of which she was passionately fond; and possessing a retentive memory, she was better informed, perhaps, at ten years of age than most children at fourteen. She had a great taste for drawing and for music; these Mrs. Oakly had assiduously cultivated, knowing what a source of comfort and amusement they would afford her, and also contribute to draw her from dwelling too much upon herself and her misfortunes, which would only tend to sour and destroy her happiness.

From its proximity to the sea, and consequent advantages of sea-bathing, the village in which Mrs. Oakly resided was, in the summer season, a frequent and favorite resort for invalids.

There was a certain wealthy bachelor of the name of Sullivan, who, for two successive seasons, had made this his place of residence. Every one granted his claim to invalidism the first season, but when with robust frame, and fresh, healthy countenance, he appeared the second, people shook their heads, and talked of *hypochondriacs*. By and bye, it began to be whispered about that Mr. Sullivan was often seen coming from the little cottage of the Widow Oakly; and at last it was asserted that he was soon to bear off their good school-mistress as his bride. This was all true. Mr. Sullivan was talented, agreeable, good looking, and rich; one who, in his youthful days, need not fear the frown of any damsel, and who now, in the prime of manhood, might still have won the fairest. But the heart of the handsome bachelor seemed invulnerable, for nearly forty years resisting all the charms of beauty. He came to the seashore to restore his head, and lost his heart.

“When I said I should die a bachelor,  
I did not think I should live to be married,”

thought he, blushing like a school-girl at his ridiculous plight.

The acquaintance between Mr. Sullivan and Mrs. Oakly commenced by means of the children. He one day met them on the beach as they were gathering shells, and being always interested in children—a sure sign that his heart was good—he stopped to speak with them. The beauty and vivacity of Ruth charmed him, while her unfortunate little companion filled him with deep sympathy and pity. By and bye he found himself thinking less of the children and more of the mother, until in fact he made the astonishing discovery that he was in love.

Mrs. Oakly, now in her thirty-eighth year, had preserved her beauty through all the troubles and vicissitudes of her life. There are some forms and faces we see, upon which time appears unwilling to lay his withering hand—and Mrs. Oakly was



one of these. The rose yet lingered on her cheek; her eyes were still soft and brilliant; her mouth had not lost its freshness, nor her teeth their pearly hue, while the dark hair folded over her fine brow was as thick and glossy as in the days of girlhood.

You may be sure the bachelor was not for any long delay in the matter—that “Happy’s the wooing that’s not long a doing,” was precisely his idea—so he made proposals at once, and was accepted.

The evening previous to her marriage, Mrs. Oakly addressed a letter to Mr. Alfred Oakly, informing him of the event, though she entered into no particulars, not even giving the name of her intended husband. All the request she made was, that he would continue to place the same amount of money which he had previously forwarded to her, in some safe deposit, for the benefit of Agatha; that should she survive those whose happiness it was now to do for her, she might not be entirely thrown upon the cold charity of the world. Not one word did she breathe of her yearning for her own precious Louisa; she felt he would not understand her if she did, so she coldly bade him farewell.

The marriage was solemnized in the widow’s own little parlor; after which, amid the tears and blessings of the villagers, Mrs. Sullivan departed with her happy husband for his beautiful residence near Lake George.

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## PART II.

We will now return to Mr. Alfred Oakly, and learn how the world in the interim has fared with him. Prosperity at the helm, his richly freighted vessels careered over the wide ocean, no devastating fires destroyed his dwellings, no whirlwinds uprooted his forests, no blight or mildew stole over his fields to nip the golden harvest, and yet, with all this, there was many a beggar who gleaned the refuse from his kitchen, who knew more of happiness than did this cold, selfish man. In the first place his wife had never recovered from the shock to her affections in being forced to yield up her unfortunate child—not only her health but her temper suffered severely. Toward her husband in particular this change seemed pointed, and as much as she had loved him previously her coldness was now proportionate. Unhappily, too, for Louisa, the innocent cause of this rupture, it extended itself even to her, and thus childhood, that rainbow-tinted period of life was to her clouded and joyless. Her father, stern and morose, secluding her from playmates of her own age—her mother seldom greeting her with a word of affection or a smile of encouragement—her caresses met by both with coldness, and all the winning graces of childhood frowned down with disfavor. Her education, however, went on as though her frame were formed of iron. There was a stiff governess, whose cold gray eye was ever on her, to watch that she did not loll in sitting or stoop in walking—that her toes turned out and her elbows turned in—that she neither spoiled her

mouth by laughing (little danger!) nor her eyes by crying. Then came the music-master with commands for six hours daily practice for those little fingers—and the dancing-master, saying “*Ma’amselle*, you must be very gay—you cannot never learn de dance ven you do look so vat you call fat-i-gued.” Then came the drawing-master, and the professor of languages; nor were these all to which her mind was tasked, for besides, were those branches which her governess professed to teach—her governess, Miss Pinchem, with whom in comparison Miss Blimber of Blimber Hall would have shrunk into insignificance!

Poor little Louisa!

She would sometimes wonder if the little children she read of in the Bible had to learn all such things to make them good—for Miss Pinchem was great on goodness—always beginning and ending her exhortations with, “Now, Miss Louisa, you must be *good*, and not raise your eyes from your book”—“You must play that tune with more scientific grace, Miss Louisa, or you will not be *good*”—“You must turn out your toes if you want to be *good*”—“You will never be *good* if you don’t pronounce better”—in short there was a great deal of goodness on Miss Pinchem’s wiry tongue, let people say what they would, and though Louisa wondered *what* made *Miss Pinchem* good!

No sooner had Mr. Oakly accomplished his object in ridding his sight of the poor deformed, than he would fain have held himself excused from all obligation to the widow—but he dared not act out his wishes, fearful in such case that she would claim her own, and thus betray his disgraceful secret. When he received Mrs. Oakly’s letter informing him of her intended marriage, his apprehensions were anew awakened. Could it be possible she would keep the secret from her husband! Doubtless she would scorn the imputation that so unsightly a child as Agatha was her own offspring, and thus to preserve her maternal pride forfeit her word! O! a thorny pillow was that Mr. Oakly nightly pressed! How often in his dreams did the pale corse of his injured brother rise up before him, and ever in its fleshless arms it bore the shrunken form of Agatha! But as month after month rolled on, swelling finally to years, and hearing nothing further from the late Mrs. Oakly, he felt more at ease, so much so that he entirely forgot her request relative to the future advantage of his discarded child! an oversight very natural to such a man!

Louisa reached her seventeenth year, and as the bud gave promise so proved the flower, beautiful indeed and lovely. Mr. Oakly was really proud of this! He mentally contrasted her light elegant figure with the *probable* appearance of Agatha, and congratulated himself that he had not to bear about the shame of acknowledging the latter! Still, he did not *love* Louisa—strange that he almost hated her for possessing those very attributes of loveliness for which he had preferred her above his own offspring!

When Louisa emerged from the seclusion of the school-room to the brilliant circles of fashion, she was caressed, flattered, adored. Wealth and beauty tripping hand in hand seldom fail to win favor, and brought a throng of admirers to the feet

of the heiress, who, however, did not seem easily moved; and many were the suitors to her favor who met with a kind but firm refusal. But, beware, Louisa, your affections will be held by your tyrant father just as much enslaved as your person; and now, wo to you, should they centre where he does not approve.

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Moonlight, golden, twinkling stars, fragrant zephyrs, sweet from the lip of the lily, soft music from tinkling leaves, a murmur from the rippling river, and through the winding shrubbery, slowly along the path tessellated by the moonbeams, which glint through the leafy curtain, Louisa is straying—but not alone. A youth is by her side, one whose arm her own encircles, who clasps her willing hand in his; one whose whispers are of love, and to whom her own voice, gentle and low, speaks of hope and happiness in return.

Ah! foolish, foolish Louisa! what are you thinking of? Only a poor painter—and *you* in love! True, he has talent, worth, grace, refinement, but—*no money!* And you, unfortunate youth, why did you love this beautiful maiden? Know you not that man of heartlessness and pride, her father, would gladly crush you to the earth for lifting your eyes heaven-ward to his daughter; that he would sooner buy her winding-sheet than that she should don her wedding-robe for *thee!* And yet, even now, closer and closer are you both riveting the chain, drawing heart to heart, which no hand but death can loose.

It was the second summer after Louisa's initiation into the gay world that the Oakly family were once more assembled at Oak Villa, their annual resort during the warm months of July and August. With no taste for reading, a mind not attuned for meditation, and the querulousness of an *ungraceful* old age gradually stealing upon him, Mr. Oakly found the time drag most wearily on amid those quiet groves. In his extremity an idea suddenly flashed across his brain, which he eagerly caught at, as it promised to relieve somewhat of that tedious vacuum between those hours when such a man and happiness may alone be said to look each other in the face: viz., the hour of meals—and this was to summon an artist to the villa, for the purpose of decorating the walls of the saloon with the portraits of its inmates. He had not thought of it before, but, quite luckily, it now occurred to him that he already had the address of a young artist in his pocket, for whom some friend of struggling genius had solicited patronage. Now he could kill two birds with one stone, as it were, secure the plaudits of the world by taking the artist by the hand in so flattering a manner, and at the same time pull away the drag from the wheels of time. He looked at the card—"Walter Evertson,"—and to Walter Evertson did he immediately address a letter, requesting his presence at the villa.

He came—a fine, handsome youth of three-and-twenty, with an eye like an eagle, and hair dark as a starless night—a dangerous companion, we must allow, for the gentle Louisa. He was met with condescending affability made most apparent by the master of the house, and by Mrs. Oakly, who seldom manifested much interest in any thing, with cool indifference. No wonder, then, that he turned with a thrill of

pleasure tingling his heart-strings, to the gentle Louisa, whose manners, at once so courteous and refined, offered so agreeable a contrast.

There are some, perhaps, whose hearts have never yet felt the power of love, who rail about love at first sight as a theory too ridiculous to dwell upon—a chimera only originating in the heads of romantic school-girls and beardless shop-boys; very well, let them have it so; I only assert that both Louisa and the artist, at that first interview, were favorably impressed; and that a brief intercourse under the same roof cemented their young hearts with all the strength of a first and truthful affection. Love (himself a sly artist) traced each on the other a heart in fadeless tints. Sincere and unselfish was the love which Walter Evertson had conceived for Louisa; a love which he intended to bury within his own throbbing breast—for he dared not flatter himself that it would be returned—she, the heiress of thousands—he, the poor, unfriended artist. Vain resolve! It was the evening with which this chapter commences, that, in an unguarded moment, he had revealed to her his love, and received the blest assurance of her own in return. But their cup of joy was even then embittered by the consciousness that her father, in his cold, selfish nature, would tear their hearts asunder, even though he snapped their life-strings.

In the meantime the business which had brought him to the villa was being accomplished. Mr. and Mrs. Oakly saw themselves to the life on canvas, and now it only remained to consummate his work by portraying the features of Louisa. Delightful, yet difficult task! Mrs. Oakly had so far aroused herself from her usual lethargy, as to insist that the figure of Louisa herself should be but secondary in the picture about to be executed. She was tired, she said, of those stiff, prim figures on sombre-tinted ground, looking out from gilded frames with eye-balls ever coldly glaring upon one, and would have a large painting of rare design and skill—woods, fountains, birds, and flowers, to relieve the form and face of Louisa from this dull sameness. Various were the sketches brought forward for her approval; and whole days, which Evertson wished might never end, were spent in vain endeavors to settle upon some one of them for the purpose. Accident, however, at length furnished the desired *tableau* although it would be doing injustice to Evertson to imply that he lacked talent or originality—fine as were his sketches, they failed to please Mrs. Oakly, because—she would not be pleased.

One morning Louisa strolled out alone, and unconsciously pursued her ramble until she reached a beautiful meadow fringed with fine old trees, whose branches bent down to meet their dark, leafy shadows in the bright waters of the Susquehanna. Birds were singing merrily, butterflies sported their golden wings, and the grasshopper chirped, blithely leaping through the tall grass. Here and there, where the rays of the sun had not yet penetrated, were the gossamers of elfin broidery—mantles dropped by fairies on their merry rounds in the checkered moonlight beneath those old trees; there was a drop of bright nectar, too, left in the cup of the wild-flower, and the large, red clover-tops were sparkling with dew-gems. I cannot assert that Louisa saw all the beauties of this fine morning; for,

absorbed in pleasing thoughts, upon which we will not intrude, satisfied as we ought to be that the artist occupied a full share, she seated herself beneath one of those shadowing trees, and resting her chin within the palm of her little hand, most likely, I am sorry to say, heard neither the warble of the birds, the cheerful chirping insect, or saw the bright glancing river, with the little boat which was just then dancing over its silver ripples.

The sound of voices approaching in the opposite direction suddenly broke in upon her trance, and she then, for the first time, reflected that she had passed the boundaries of her father's land. The estate adjoining had lately been purchased by a wealthy Englishman, it was said. For many weeks repairs had been going on in the old mansion, which for several years had been tenantless; and the family were daily expected to arrive. That they had now done so was Louisa's conclusion. The voices drew nearer; but, trusting to the thick foliage for concealment, she remained perfectly still; when apparently within but a few paces of her the party stopped.

"What a lovely view!" exclaimed a soft female voice. "I wish ma'ma had not turned back, she would have been so delighted."

"It is truly fine," was the reply, in a masculine tone; "it is even more beautiful than the view from the lawn we so much admired last evening; what if you were to sketch it."

"If I had only brought my crayons, I would do so now. How lovely it is!" answered the lady.

"If you have strength for it after your long walk," was the reply, "I will return for your portfolio; here is a nice shady seat for you—I will soon be back, but do not ramble away from this spot."

Louisa heard the retreating footsteps, and was about to make good her own, when a beautiful Scotch air, very sweetly warbled, arrested her attention. The song ceased abruptly, giving place to a scream so loud and shrill, as blanched the cheek of Louisa with the hue of death. She sprang to her feet, and panting with terror, emerged from her shelter into the open meadow just as the scream was again repeated. She now almost breathlessly looked around to detect the cause of alarm. In a moment she saw it all. A noble stag, having probably leaped the park-pailings, came bounding swiftly across the meadow directly toward the spot where Louisa was now standing, no doubt with the intention of slaking his thirst at the tempting stream. The terrors of Louisa were at once allayed; and she now hastened to the spot whence the screams issued, to soothe, if possible, the fears of the unknown.

Trembling with fright, and clinging to a tree for support, was a female, dwarf-like in stature, and deformed in shape. Her countenance was deadly pale, and her eye-balls, almost fixed with terror, were strained upon the animal, as he came leaping onward. Ere Louisa could speak he had approached within a few paces, and, as if now first aware of their presence, he suddenly halted, arched his beautiful, glossy neck, and bending his antlered head, stood at bay. Seeing how utterly helpless was the poor unknown, Louisa sprung forward, and telling her not to be

alarmed, quickly placed herself before her; but the noble stag, as if disdainful to war with women, after gazing upon them a few seconds with his wild eyes, suddenly turned, and tossing his head proudly, trotted off in another direction.

At that moment how rejoiced was Louisa to see her lover rapidly approaching—for the stranger had already fainted.

“Water! water!” she cried, “quick, or she will die!”

Without speaking, Evertson rushed to the river, and filling his hat with its cooling waters, was in a second at her side.

“Poor girl! she will die with terror, I fear. What fine features, and what beautiful hair!” said Louisa, as she swept back the long tresses from her neck and brow, purer than alabaster.

In a few moments the object of their solicitude opened her eyes. She could not speak, but pressing the hand of Louisa to her lips, pointed toward a mansion just discernible through a dense shrubbery at some distance.

“Shall I bear you home?” inquired Evertson.

The stranger looked her thanks; and lifting her in his arms as tenderly as if she were a babe, he proceeded with his almost lifeless burthen in the direction pointed out.

Thus met, for the first time, the discarded Agatha and the innocent usurper of her rights.

The fancy of Walter Evertson seized at once upon a scene so interesting as the one he had just witnessed. No sooner did he part with Louisa at the door of the saloon, than, hastening to his studio, he began sketching the outlines of his truthful conceptions. Rapidly did he hasten on his own misery—blissfully unconscious the while of the sad termination of his labors. Never had he wrought so well and so rapidly—not a stroke but told. There was the beautiful meadow, with its brave old trees, and the river gleaming through their branches; the fine stag, his antlered front bent toward the two females; the graceful form of Louisa standing beneath the old oak, shielding the terrified stranger, one arm thrown around her, the other slightly raised as if motioning the animal away. Love surely guided his hand; for, without a sitting, the artist had transferred from his heart to the canvas the gentle features of Louisa with an accuracy undisputable. Strikingly, too, had he delineated the form and face of the deformed—her long, waving tresses—her pale countenance—her large eyes fixed in terror upon the stag, and her small, mis-shapen figure. Something, too, had he caught, even in that short interview, of the features of Agatha. He could not, however, proceed in his task until it had received the approbation of the master and mistress of the mansion. He had purposely requested Louisa to be silent respecting the morning’s adventure, that he might, by surprise, obtain the mastery over the whims of Mrs. Oakly, so hard to be gratified. They were now respectfully invited to the picture-room, together with Louisa, to pass judgment upon his (to him) beautiful sketch.

To depict the scene which followed the withdrawal of the curtain he had placed before it would be impossible. Mrs. Oakly gave one look, and with a dreadful shriek, exclaiming, "*My child!*" fell senseless to the floor. Mr. Oakly, foaming with rage, his face livid and distorted, rushed upon the astonished artist, and in a voice choked with passion, cried,

"Out of my house, villain! Ha! do you beard me thus! Who are you, that have thus stolen my secret, and dare to show me that picture—dare to place that hateful image before me? Out of my house, I say, ere I am tempted to commit a worse crime!"

Astonished, bewildered, confounded, Evertson for a moment could not speak, nor would the enraged man hear him when he did. In vain Louisa, while striving to restore animation to her mother, interceded, explained, expostulated—alas! her tears and agitation only betraying to her father a new source of anger. Seizing her by the arm, and bidding her seek her chamber, he thrust her from the room, and then turning once more to the artist, as he raised the still inanimate form of his wife,

"I give you half an hour to make your arrangements for leaving my roof—beware how you exceed that time; when you are ready, you will find the sum due you in this cursed room—begone, sir!"

Without any attempt to see poor Louisa again, and trusting he might be able to communicate with her in a few days, Walter Evertson left the villa.

When Mr. Oakly next entered the painting-room the money of the artist was still there—but the fatal picture had disappeared.

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A few years after his marriage, Mr. Sullivan took his family to Europe, where they remained until within a few months previous to the singular meeting of Louisa and Agatha.

In a beautiful cottage on the borders of Loch Katrine, their lives had been one uninterrupted scene of happiness—always excepting the yearning of a mother's heart for her lost child. The education of Ruth and Agatha had formed their chief care, and was such as a kind-hearted, intelligent man like Mr. Sullivan was proud to give them, sparing neither money nor precept, and aided, too, by the superior judgment and example of their excellent mother. Ruth had grown up lovely and amiable, and at the time the family returned to America, was affianced to a fine young Scotchman. Poor Agatha had become even more unsightly in figure, yet retained all the simplicity and amiableness of her childhood. Whatever may have been her own private feelings upon her unfortunate deformity, it was rare, indeed, that she ever made allusion to it. When she did, it was with meekness and resignation to her Maker's will; for early in life had Agatha given herself to Him whose love is more precious than all earthly advantages. She seldom mixed with society, yet when she did, even strangers, after a slight acquaintance, thought no more of her unshapeliness. The sweet expression of her countenance interested, her

intelligence charmed them.

When Mrs. Sullivan took possession of her new residence on the Susquehanna, little did she dream how short the distance which separated her from her youngest born; and when Agatha related the fright she had received during her morning ramble, and spoke with such enthusiasm of the beautiful girl who had so nobly come to her assistance, how little did she think *whose* arms had encircled the trembling Agatha, *whose* voice it was had tried to soothe her fears.

Mr. Sullivan avowed his determination of calling immediately upon their neighbors to express his thanks to the fair maid, and the gallant young gentleman who had so opportunely come to the assistance of dear Agatha, his pet and favorite. He did so the next day, but he was too late—the house was deserted.

Agatha evinced much regret at the circumstance.

“How sorry I am!” said she; “O, I do hope we may hereafter meet again; the countenance of that charming girl haunts me like a dream—so lovely, and somehow so familiar to me—a stranger, sad yet not a stranger. Sometimes, ma’ma, when you look at me as you do now, I almost fancy her eyes are on me; and then again, only for being a blonde, it appears to me she greatly resembled dear Ruth.”

Mrs. Sullivan changed color, and evidently much agitated, she inquired of her husband if he knew the name of their late neighbor.

“I do not,” was his reply, “and our servants are as ignorant as ourselves. Ah! here comes an honest lad with berries to sell—and a fine tempting load, too. I will ask him while I purchase the fruit.”

As the boy measured out the berries, Mr. Sullivan said,

“Well, my son, can you tell me who lives in the fine old stone house just at the bend of the river?”

“Oakly, sir—*Squire* Oakly we call him here.”

“Quick, quick, father, ma’ma is fainting!” screamed Ruth, springing to her side.

For a moment all was alarm and confusion; but at length Mrs. Sullivan slowly opening her eyes desired to be led to her chamber.

“I will lie down a few moments—I shall soon be better; it is nothing—nothing,” she answered to their affectionate solicitude.

When alone, then did she give way to her joy. What happiness! her dear Louisa—her long lost was found. She was good, too, and lovely; her kindness to a stranger proved the former, and the assertions of the grateful Agatha the latter. She might now hope by some fortunate chance to see her—they might now meet. O, how could she keep down her throbbing heart; how would she be able to refrain from clasping her to her bosom, and avowing herself her mother. When she thought she had recovered sufficient composure, she again joined the family; but it was almost as soon dissipated by the conversation which followed her entrance into the sitting-room.



“My dear,” said Mr. Sullivan, “do you know these foolish girls are for making out a relationship between themselves and our runaway neighbors—claiming a cousinship, even if several degrees removed, to the fair heroine of Agatha’s story—can it be so, think you?”

“This Mr. Oakly may possibly have been some connection of their father’s,” faltered Mrs. Sullivan.

“Had papa no brothers?” said Agatha.

“Yes, one; but some unhappy family disagreement, however, prevented any intercourse. They were as strangers to each other.”

“What if this Mr. Oakly should prove our uncle. Had he any family, ma’ma?” asked Ruth.

“I believe—one—one daughter,” was the almost inaudible reply.

“Do not say any more,” whispered Agatha to her sister, “don’t you see how it distresses ma’ma?”

Mr. Sullivan had observed the same thing, and the subject was dropped.

In a few days the papers announced among the list of passengers sailed for Havre, the name of Mr. Alfred Oakly, lady and daughter.

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Another flight of years, and behold what changes in the fortunes of Mr. Oakly. Adversity had at last seized its victim, gorging to the full its revenge for those years when its existence had been but as a phantom to the wealthy merchant; he now felt its iron clutches to be something more tangible than shadows. The sea had swallowed his vessels; flames had greedily swept over his warehouses; blight had devastated his fields; failures of firms he considered as good as the bank—nay, even the bank itself failed; and in the short space of one year, Mr. Oakly found himself stripped of all save a mere pittance, which, with the most scrupulous economy, could hardly support his family. The teachings of adversity upon the cold, selfish heart, are sometimes blessed with happy fruits. And thus it proved with Mr. Oakly.

True, the change was not instantaneous; he lost not his property to-day, to become a Christian, a philosopher to-morrow. But as a drop of water will in time wear away the hardest rock, so, little by little, were the flinty feelings of his heart softened and purified. The wicked and selfish deeds of his past life arose up before him, each with its own accusing tongue. That fortune, for which he had risked his soul, had crumbled away, but these stood out plain and distinct, only to be effaced through the mercies of One whose most sacred obligations he had violated.

Mrs. Oakly met this reverse of fortune humbly and uncomplainingly. Happily, she was ignorant of the sin of her husband, in having, like a second Cain, destroyed his brother. Yet she felt that for another crime—the *disowning of his own offspring*—the punishment was just. Her own conscience, too, reproached her for the unjust feelings in which she had indulged toward the innocent Louisa; and now, almost for

the first time in her life, she treated her as a daughter.

Kind, gentle, affectionate Louisa! only that she saw her parents deprived of many comforts which would have soothed their declining years, she would have rejoiced in a change of fortune which had brought with it their love. In her heart there was a secret sorrow which she might breathe to none—it was her love for Walter Evertson. Never, since that fatal day, had she seen or heard again from him; but that he was faithful, and would be faithful unto death, her trusting heart assured her. When ease and affluence surrounded her, this sudden separation from her lover, and under such afflicting and inexplicable circumstances, had seemed to paralyze her energies. Books, music, travel, all failed to excite more than mere mechanical attention; but now, in the sorrows of her parents, she lost the selfishness of her own, and strove in every way to comfort them.

What now had become of the once proud merchant? His name was no longer heard on 'change, unless coupled with a creditor's anathema; and summer friends, like the sun on a rainy day, were behind the cloud.

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It was a cold, cheerless day in December; one of those days when one hugs close to the fire-side, and when even a glance at the dull, sombrous out-of-door atmosphere makes, or ought to make, one thankful for the blessings of a pleasant fire, to say nothing of the society of a friend, or the solace of a book. With all these comforts combined, the family of Mr. Sullivan had assembled in the breakfast parlor. There was the grate, heaped to the topmost bar of the polished steel, with glowing anthracite; the soft carpet of warm and gorgeous hues; luxuriant plants of foreign climes, half hiding the cages of various little songsters, whose merry notes breathed of spring-time and shady groves; and the face of grim winter shut out by rich, silken folds of crimson drapery.

The pleasant morning meal was already passed, and the breakfast things removed, with the exception of the beautiful coffee-set of Sevre's china, which Mrs. Sullivan was so old-fashioned as to take charge of herself; in preference to trusting it with servants. Seated at the head of the table, a snowy napkin in her hand, she was now engaged in this domestic office. Mr. Sullivan and Mr. Danvers (the husband of Ruth) had just gone into the study, to talk over some business affairs. Ruth had taken the morning paper, and upon a low ottoman by the side of her mother, was reading the news of the day—now to herself, or, as she found a paragraph of peculiar interest, aloud for the general entertainment. Agatha was reclining upon the sofa, and nestling by her side was a beautiful boy of two years old, playing bo-peep through the long, sunny curls of "Aunt Gatty," his merry little shouts, and infantile prattle, quite overpowering ma'ma's news.

"Why what can this mean?" suddenly exclaimed Ruth; "do hear this, ma'ma. 'If the former widow of Mr. John Oakly (the name of her present husband unknown) be still living, or the children of said John Oakly, they are requested to call at No. 18

— street, and inquire for A. O., or to forward a note to the same address, stating where they may be found.’ What can it mean, ma’ma?”

Without answering, Mrs. Sullivan rose from her chair; she trembled in every limb, and her countenance was deadly pale.

“Ruth, dearest,” said she, “ring the bell, and order the carriage immediately to the door.”

“Ma’ma, you surely will not go out alone,” said Ruth.

“Yes, alone! do not disturb your father,” answered Mrs. Sullivan; “alone must I meet this trial. My dear girls,” she continued, “ask me no questions. God knows what I am about to learn, whether tidings of joy or sorrow; but I trust all may be explained when I return.”

In a few moments the carriage was at the door, and tenderly embracing Ruth and Agatha, she departed upon her anxious errand.

After passing through so many streets that it seemed they must have nearly cleared the city, the carriage turned into a narrow street, or rather lane, and stopped at No. 18, a small two story wooden building. Mrs. Sullivan alighted and rang the bell. The door was opened by a little servant-girl, to whom she handed a card, on which she had written with a trembling hand, “A person wishes to speak with A. O.”

In a few moments the girl returned and ushered her up stairs into a small parlor. Her fortitude now nearly forsook her, and it was with difficulty she could support herself to a chair. As soon as she could command herself she looked around to see if she could detect aught which might speak to her of her child. Upon the table on which she leaned were books. She took up one, and turned to the title-page; in a pretty Italian hand was traced “Louisa Oakly.” Several beautiful drawings also attracted her eye—they, too, bore the name of “Louisa Oakly.” But before she had time to indulge in the blissful hopes this caused her, the door opened, and Mr. Oakly, with an agitation nearly equal to her own, entered the room.

Many years had flown since they met, and time on both had laid his withering hand; but while Mrs. Sullivan presented all the beautiful traits of a peaceful, happy decline into the vale of years, the countenance of Mr. Oakly was furrowed and haggard with remorse, and all those evil passions which had formerly ruled his reason. Quickly advancing, he extended his hand, and attempted to speak, but emotion checked all utterance, while the big tears slowly rolled down his cheek.

“O, speak—speak! tell me—Louisa!” cried Mrs. Sullivan, alarmed at his agitation.

“Compose yourself,” replied Mr. Oakly, “Louisa is well. I have sought this interview, that I may make all the reparation now left me for my injustice and cruelty. You see before you, madam, a miserable man, haunted by remorse, and vain regrets for past misdeeds. From my once proud and lofty standing,” he continued, glancing around the apartment, “I am reduced to this. Yet think not I repine for the loss of riches. No! were millions now at my command, I would barter all for a clear,

unaccusing conscience. Wealth, based on fraud, on uncharitableness, must sooner or later come to ruin. I once despised poverty, and cherished a haughty spirit toward those I arrogantly deemed my inferiors. Have I not my reward!”

“But my child—tell me of my child!” interrupted Mrs. Sullivan, scarce heeding his remarks, “where is she? May I not see her!”

“Bear with me a little while longer,” said Mr. Oakly, “in half an hour she shall be yours forever!”

“My God, I thank thee!” exclaimed Mrs. Sullivan, bursting into tears of joy.

“Yes, I yield her to your arms,” continued Mr. Oakly, “the loveliest daughter that ever blessed a mother, and relieve you forever from the charge of an unfortunate, to whom my conduct has been both brutal and unnatural. Listen to me, madam, for a few moments.”

He then as briefly as possible made confession of the base part he had acted toward his brother, and the means employed to ruin him with his father; the selfish motives which led to the exchange of the children; related the incident of the picture, and consequent removal from Oak Villa—for well did he divine *who* the deformed was. He then spoke of Louisa; of her uniform loveliness of character, and the gentleness with which she had borne, as he acknowledged, his oft repeated unkindness.

“She knows all,” said he in conclusion, “and waits even now to receive a mother’s embrace. I will send her to you, and may her tears and caresses plead my forgiveness!” So saying, Mr. Oakly quickly withdrew.

A moment—an age to Mrs. Sullivan—the door gently unclosed and mother and child were folded in each other’s arms!

There are feelings which no language can convey—and which to attempt to paint would seem almost a sacrilege!

In a short time Mr. Oakly re-entered, accompanied by his wife. The meeting between the mothers was painful—for each felt there was still another trial for them! Mrs. Oakly now really loved Louisa, and that Mrs. Sullivan was most fondly attached to poor Agatha the reader already knows.

“O she has been a solace and a comfort to me!” said she to Mrs. Oakly. “A more noble-minded—a more unselfish, pure being never lived than our dear Agatha! believe me, to part from her will cause a pang nearly as great as when I first gave my darling Louisa to your arms!”

Another hour was spent in free communion, and then tenderly embracing her new found daughter, the happy mother returned home—the events of the morning seeming almost too blissful to be real!

It was sometime ere she could command herself sufficiently to the task before her. At length summoning all her resolution she made known to her astonished husband and Ruth the strange secret she had so long buried in her breast.

Mr. Sullivan undertook to break the intelligence to Agatha.

Poor Agatha was very much overcome, and for several hours her distress was such as made them almost tremble for her reason. Although the circumstances were related in the most guarded and delicate manner, nor even a hint given as to the motives of an act so unnatural as her father had been guilty of toward her—her sensitive mind too well divined the cause.

“Yet how can I blame them,” said she, glancing in a mirror as she spoke, “who could love such a being! Ah forgive me,” she cried, throwing her arms around the neck of Mrs. Sullivan, who now joined them—“forgive me—you—you received me—my best, my dearest, my only mother—you took the little outcast to your arms—you could love even the mis-shapen child whom others loathed!”

Mrs. Sullivan strove by the most gentle caresses to sooth her agitation, and at length succeeded so far that Agatha listened calmly to all she had to say, and expressed her desire to be guided by her in every thing relating to this (to her) painful disclosure.

Almost in a fainting state was Agatha given to her mother’s arms, and at sight of her father she shuddered and buried her face in her hands.

O the pang that went to the soul of her wretched father as he witnessed this!

“Agatha, my *child*, will you not then look upon me! will you not say you forgive me?”

She extended her hand wet with tears:

“Father, I have nothing to pardon. I am not now less hideous in form than when to look upon me caused you shame and sorrow. In giving me to my dearest aunt you gave me every blessing, every happiness, this world has for me—but do not, O do not now tear me from!”

“O God! I am rightly punished!” exclaimed Mr. Oakly—“my own child in turn disowns me!”

“Agatha,” said Mrs. Oakly, “will you not love *me*—love your mother, Agatha?”

Agatha hesitated, and her beautiful eyes streamed with tears—

“*Mother!* I can give that name to but *one!*—*here—here* is my *mother!*” turning and throwing her arms around the neck of Mrs. Sullivan.

Not so was it with Louisa. Like a dove long panting for its rest, she had at last reached that haven of love—a mother’s heart!

Indeed so much distress did the thought of being separated from her more than mother cause poor Agatha, that, fearful for her health, Mr. and Mrs. Sullivan prevailed upon her parents to take up their residence with them for a few months, to which request they finally acceded.

Soon after her first interview with Mr. Oakly, Mrs. Sullivan presented him with a deed of the cottage, which so many years before he had given her, little dreaming that any reverse of fortune would ever make *him* grateful for so humble a shelter!

“The rent,” said she, “has been regularly paid into the hands of a faithful person, who also holds in trust the remittances which you from time to time forwarded me. I placed them there for the benefit of Agatha, should she survive me. It came from you originally—it is again your own—then hesitate not to receive it from my hands.”

“Excellent, noble woman!” exclaimed Mr. Oakly, overwhelmed with emotion, “how little have I merited this kindness!”

Indeed, together with principal and interest, what at first was but a trifling sum, had in the course of eighteen or twenty years amounted to quite a little fortune. It was now settled that as soon as the Spring opened Mr. and Mrs. Oakly were to take possession of the little cottage, and rather than be separated from their dear Agatha, the Sullivans were soon to follow and take lodgings for the summer months.

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“But, my dear madam,” says the reader, “you have entirely forgotten to tell us what became of the unfortunate artist, the lover of Louisa, whom you appear to think happy enough in her present situation *without* a lover.”

“O no, dear reader—but this is not a love-story, you know—if it were I would tell you the particulars of a most interesting love scene between Walter Evertson and his adored Louisa. Suffice it to say, they were married, and that the picture which caused their unhappy separation occupies a conspicuous place in their beautiful villa, a few miles from the city of P——.”

## ON A SLEEPING CHILD

STEP softly! step lightly! I would not disturb her!  
She's wrapt all unconscious in innocence's charms;  
Her slumbers are peaceful, her dreams are as gentle  
As when she reposed in her fond mother's arms.

And thus may it last—may no cause for repining  
E'er darken the unsullied days of her youth—  
May she as age deepens, when backward reviewing,  
Find mem'ry well stored with Virtue and Truth.

S. E. T.

# THE RASH OATH.

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TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY MRS. JANE TAYLOE WORTHINGTON.

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DURING my childhood my mother carried me every year, toward the close of autumn, to spend a month with one of my aunts. It has been a long while since then, but, nevertheless, the memory of my sojourn with her appears as vivid as the events of yesterday, and I fancy myself once more in her handsome château, which was situated on the right branch of the river Meuse, at the place where the stream, still far from its mouth, has not attained its greatest width, and where it is bordered with rugged rocks and precipitous steeps, which remind one of many portions of Switzerland, and of the delicious banks of the Rhine.

To linger near a beloved sister was a great pleasure to my mother; she had arrived, too, at that age when the glories of nature produce the deepest impression, and enjoyed with enthusiasm the exquisite landscape unrolled before our eyes. As to myself, I dwelt but little on the picturesque charms of the country. I was too young for the inhabitants of the château to interest themselves much concerning my amusements, and left to follow my own will, I discovered sources of happiness which I tested with all the eager vivacity of a child. First I found an orchard filled with young fruit, which, though still indifferent, I gladly availed myself of; then in the mountain I claimed a grotto, whose entrance I closed with boughs of trees, and pompously styled it my house; and lastly, I delighted in a gallery that was narrow and dimly lighted, and hung on both sides with old family portraits.

I saw there, warlike men, clothed in complete armor, the hand clenched, the head held high and proudly; others, habited in black, wearing immense ruffs, and having their hair braided, and their beards cut in a point; and others were handsome gentlemen, with coats of embroidered velvet, and *coiffés*, with enormous wigs, which covered even their shoulders.

The ladies there were yet more numerous. Some of them wore their hair in small curls, and long robes bordered with fur; others had hoops, and powdered heads, laden with plumes, pearls, and flowers, carrying in their hands an immense rose, or a very small bird. Several were in fancy costumes; there were Dianas, the quiver on their shoulders, the crescent on their brows; Floras, in white satin, sprinkled with blossoms; and shepherdesses, with a crook, and tiny hat.

I passed in this gallery every moment I could steal from my lessons and my mother. I glided there unperceived, and remained until I imagined all those figures, their eyes fixed on mine, seemed to move from their frames; sometimes I thought



their features grew more stern, their smiles more scornful—and I would depart hastily, in fear and trembling, with the firm resolution to return no more. But what is it at last—the firm resolution of a little girl. By the next day I had forgotten the terrors of the preceding one, and found myself again in the gallery, feverish with emotion, and drawn by some powerful attraction I could not resist, to gaze on those old pictures I had so often contemplated.

Among these paintings, the one that I loved the best, that I always sought for, and that never frightened me, was the portrait of a youthful woman, dressed in a black robe. The sleeves were looped with agrafes, inlaid with pearls, leaving uncovered the loveliest arm in the world, and long, fair hair, entirely unadorned, flowed in large waves on her shoulders. With her large, blue eyes, her peculiarly regular features, and singularly gentle expression, her beauty would have been faultless, but for the frightful paleness which spread itself over her countenance. She was as white as the column of marble against which her brow was pictured as leaning; and I have frequently thought since, that there was, perhaps, something of coquetry in this posture. The melancholy face of the young lady, contrasted with the smiling visages of the dames who surrounded her, and this strange sadness, combined with the languid grace of her position, exercised over my mind a sort of inexplicable fascination. In my childish admiration, I asked myself if a being so beautiful had ever really existed. The impression produced by her haunted me every where; and I remembered it even in my dreams. One day, which had been appointed for a visit in the neighborhood, I contrived to escape, for the purpose of seeing again my cherished favorites, before leaving them for several hours. I had intended remaining with them but a moment; and I flattered myself my absence would be unperceived by the family. But gradually I forgot the anticipated trip, the pleasure awaiting me, my aunt, my mother, in fact, every thing, and lingered, as if chained to my stand, with eyes fixed rapturously on the Pale Lady, (it was thus I designated her,) and blending her image with the wildest adventures my youthful imagination could conceive.

Already I had been called twenty times, and the domestics were sent to search for me; but my abstraction was so profound, that I was insensible to all, and still lingered motionless before the portrait, when my aunt opened the door, and surprised me in the gallery. My lengthened absence had begun to occasion alarm, and the frightened manner of my aunt recalled suddenly my wandering thoughts. Perhaps conscious of my fault, or it may be, ashamed of being thus entrapped, I threw myself into my aunt's arms, and a few tears moistened my cheeks. The reprimand died upon her lips, but yielding to the astonishment inspired by my intense admiration for these old pictures, she said,

“My child, you are beholding a woman who has been very beautiful, and very unhappy.”

“Very unhappy!” I had then imagined rightly. “Dear aunt, will you relate to me her history!”

“Not this morning, they are waiting for us; and beside, you are yet too young.”

“Too young to hear her history? Ah! how unfortunate that is! But never mind, by our next visit I shall be twelve years of age, then I will be tall—promise I may hear it then.”

She granted the wished for promise, and a few days afterward we quitted the château.

The following year we repaired, as usual, to my aunt's, and had scarcely exchanged the greeting caresses, before, longing to satisfy my impatient curiosity, I seized my aunt's hand with an air of gravity whose cause she did not comprehend. I conducted her to the gallery, and pausing before my favorite picture, “Good aunt,” I said, “now is the time to fulfill your promise!” She regarded me, surprised and smiling, and deferred only until that evening the recital of the history so much desired.

Orders were issued to prepare the gallery for our reception, and in the presence of the portrait of Wilhelmine de Cernan, I learned the strange misfortunes of her life. They appeared to me so interesting that I have since endeavored to find further details to fill the deficiency of my memory; and it is her history which, in my turn, I am about to relate to you.

Wilhelmine de Cernan, reared by her mother in the country, had grown to girlhood in the seclusion of her own family, and the intimacy of a few cherished friends. Her simple tastes prompted her to love retirement, and her disposition, naturally a melancholy one, shrunk timidly from much which usually makes the happiness of women. The pleasures of society, those gay balls and animated assemblies youth is prone to love so intensely, had for her no attractions. Her mother, by whom she was idolized, never imagined that this tendency of character could injure her daughter; she therefore never sought to subdue it, and only strove to inculcate those doctrines of piety which had formed the basis of her own education.

Religion appeared to the spirit of Wilhelmine robed with all its noblest and sublimest coloring; and its mystical beauty tinged for her the most trivial details of life. She seemed almost like an angel, who claimed communion every day, every moment, with heaven. God and her mother! in these two thoughts lay all her existence.

When she had attained the age of eighteen, the Baron de Breuil was presented to her as a desirable connection, and scarcely pausing to interrogate her heart as to the nature of her sentiments, she tranquilly accepted his hand, confident that she could repose on her mother the care of her happiness. Wilhelmine could not, in truth, have made a selection more worthy of her, for M. de Breuil was in all respects a good and estimable man. His château was but a league distant from the residence of Madame de Cernan; the mother and daughter met daily, and nothing was changed for Wilhelmine. The baron believed himself the most fortunate of men, and was unceasingly occupied in cultivating the powers of his young wife. He lavished all

his care to adorn her intellect, to direct her talents, and to elevate her mind to the appreciation of whatever is truly grand and beautiful. One portion of their time was dedicated to reading, another to drawing, a third to music and exercise; and they never concluded a day without a visit to some poor dwelling, where their presence carried consolation and benefit. In the midst of these peaceful employments and pure pleasures, the life of Wilhelmine glided tranquilly on. The spectacle of crime had never saddened her eyes; and misery had appeared to her only to be relieved. It seemed as if an existence so uniform, so gentle, should have lasted long; but He whose will is not as our will, had ordained otherwise. At the end of two years of happiness, the Baron de Breuil was attacked by violent illness, and the physicians soon declared his life was in imminent danger. Wilhelmine, bathed in tears, never quitted the bedside of her husband, but, unable to conceal the agony of her grief, she lavished upon him all the attentions of the truest tenderness. Himself resigned to death, but profoundly grieved by the deep affliction of his wife, he endeavored to console her by the most comforting expressions; but Wilhelmine, overcome by anguish, would listen to nothing he could say. She sunk at length into a state of torpor, from which she could scarcely be aroused, even by her desire to attend on the invalid.

“God is merciful!” at last said M. de Breuil to her, “he will sustain you in your misfortune, he will enable you once more to find charms in existence. You are young; the future proffers you bright days; the prospect of life before you is calm and smiling. Alas! I fondly hoped we might have trodden its pathway together; but Heaven has ordained otherwise. Perhaps another—”

“Never!” exclaimed Wilhelmine, “never! *I love another after loving you! I unite my lot with another’s! I forget you! Ah! rather would I die a thousand times!*”

“Wilhelmine! Wilhelmine! grief at this time distracts you, but remember, nothing here is eternal, not even an affection as pure is ours. Believe a man who has had much experience; your heart will feel the ‘strong necessity of loving.’ Happy will he be who fulfills that want! May he be worthy of that enjoyment!”

Wilhelmine covered her husband’s hands with kisses; she seemed almost indignant at being thus misunderstood, thus illy judged; she repulsed these mournful predictions; but the dying one drew her gently toward him, “My love, life departs, the last moment approaches. Here, take back this ring, I release thee from all thy promises!”

“Ah! have pity on me! retain this ring, and if ever your fatal prophecies should be realised; if ever I bestow on another the affection you should bear with you, unbroken in the tomb, it is from yourself I will demand the right; it is in your grave I will seek this ring; it is from your finger I will dare to take it! *Most solemnly I swear it!*”

“Wilhelmine! no impious words—no rash oaths!” The baron pronounced these words with difficulty—and they were his last. He revived only to fall into renewed paroxysms, and after a few hours, expired in the arms of his despairing wife.

Wilhelmine sincerely mourned for the man who had acquired so many claims on her gratitude. During a long period the young widow remained shut up in her château, surrounding herself with all objects calculated to recall her past felicity, and seeming to revel in her sorrow, by refusing every means by which it might have been alleviated.

At the end of three years, an event obliged her to leave this solitude. Madame de Cernan fell dangerously ill. Wilhelmine, terrified by the peril of her mother, forgot her grief, and made preparations for immediate departure. A celebrated physician resided at Brussels, and it was decided they should travel to that city. The tenderness of a daughter is sometimes as inexhaustible as that of a mother; and only those who have seen their parents on the brink of the grave, who have experienced the agony of their loss, can comprehend the profundity of filial love. Wilhelmine dreaded the moment when she might read in the physician's eyes, the sentence of life or death for her mother; and at length that moment, so feared while it was desired, arrived. The doctor reassured her concerning the illness of Madame de Cernan; but her convalescence, he said, must be tedious, and they must not think of removing their residence for several months.

Wilhelmine was for some time faithful to her preconceived plan of living alone with her mother. She could not, however, refuse forming a few acquaintances. Madame de Cernan had met with one of her early friends; and the *sauvagerie* of the young widow was not proof against the pressing solicitations of this lady. She consented at first to see her unceremoniously, then accepted invitations to her *soirées*, and finally avowed she found them exceedingly entertaining. In truth, the very best society was to be found in the saloons of the Comtesse D'A——, for they united all that Belgium contained of the lovely and the intellectual. Among the gentlemen, the nephew of Madame D'A——, Edmond de Gaser, was distinguished by the beauty of his person, the original tone of his mind, and the uncommon variety of his acquirements. Among the ladies, Wilhelmine soon occupied a prominent station; and her gentleness and reserve prevented the jealousy her loveliness and talent were calculated to awaken.

There was a continual contest as to who could most surround her with homage, who bestow the most flattering tokens of friendship.

Edmond de Gaser speedily became very devoted to Madame de Breuil, and, indeed, this conquest could not have failed to gratify the vanity of any woman less destitute of *coquetterie*—for Edmond had been reared with strict principles; his few years of life had already been shadowed by trouble, and he had acquired by severe and philosophic studies a judgment of rare solidity. Edmond combined with the advantages of rank and fortune, those qualities of mind which, in all social communities, elevate a man above those otherwise his equals.

Wilhelmine never dreamed of incurring danger in encouraging the sentiments of benevolence and interest inspired by M. de Gaser. Knowing nothing of what is commonly called love, except through the medium of a few novels, she imagined

the dawning of passion were attended by the violent and peculiar emotions of which she had read such false portraitures; and she calculated on defence from these in the purity of her own heart. This dangerous security proved fatal to her peace.

When she at length perceived the nature of her sentiments, it was too late to subdue them—for she loved M. de Gaser with all the devotedness of an ardent nature, and a vivid imagination; remorse even added depth to her affection. Since the moment she had comprehended that her feeling for Edmond was neither esteem nor friendship, but a more absorbing attachment, the recollection of her husband arose in her heart with all the impetuosity of an appealing conscience. She would have taken refuge in flight, but winter was at its height, and she dared not cause her mother to undertake at that time, a journey whose consequences would have been fatal to her health. Every thing was in opposition to poor Wilhelmine; the representations of her mother, who treated the griefs which engrossed her as mere idle scruples; the opinion of the world, which might have served to authorise in her own eyes a second marriage; and, more than all, the constant presence of Edmond—for had she ceased to see him, it would have seemed a tacit confession of weakness. The tears she almost continually shed, destroyed her health; and when, on the arrival of spring, they prepared to leave Brussels, it was not for Madame de Cernan, but for Wilhelmine, the journey offered dangers, so completely had she been, in a short time, exhausted by grief.

Nevertheless, the day for their departure was fixed. Wishing to avoid a final interview with M. de Gaser, she denied herself to visitors; but Edmond, charmed at the thought of Wilhelmine's no longer suffering, entered by a different door, and penetrated into the garden of the hotel. He stood fixedly regarding the windows which he supposed were those of Madame de Breuil's apartment, when suddenly, in a turn of the path, he perceived her walking slowly, her eyes bent on the ground, like a person giving way to most profound abstraction. The exclamation uttered by Edmond on recognising her, aroused her from her reverie. Wilhelmine being no longer able to control her emotion, Edmond realised that he was beloved; and this belief lent him courage to declare a tenderness which had until now been only told by his looks. Troubled and irresolute, Wilhelmine seemed not to hear him, but, nevertheless, every word re-echoed through her heart. At last, with that impetuosity of determination which sometimes succeeds to prolonged uncertainty, she answered, "In six months I will be your wife!" and then hastily quitted him, leaving M. de Gaser intoxicated with happiness.

The next day Madame de Cernan and her daughter were on their homeward way. The nearer Wilhelmine approached the places she had frequented with M. de Breuil, the sadder became her thoughts. When the sombre turrets of the castle became visible, enveloped in the morning clouds, a torrent of tears flowed from Wilhelmine's eyes. "Never! never!" she passionately exclaimed, and threw herself in the arms of her mother. Madame de Cernan did not endeavor to repress the emotions which the aspect of these places was calculated to call forth in the refined

mind of her daughter; she waited patiently until time should familiarize her to these memories; but the time which calmed the paroxysms of sorrow, also restored all her uncertainties. No longer to love Edmond, seemed a sacrifice beyond her strength; and would he not, then, have the right to reproach her with the loss of the happiness she had promised him? Unfortunate woman! she should have concealed her love; then, at least, she would have suffered alone. There were even moments when Wilhelmine wished to go and reclaim her marriage-ring; when she would revel in all the horror inspired by the thought, and encourage it in a spirit of penitence; again, she would repel it with fright and indignation; but, nevertheless, this idea pursued her incessantly, and even in her sleep she heard a voice murmur to her, "Go, seek thy ring in the tomb!"

Madame de Breuil consulted the venerable priest who had always instructed and guided her. Under the sacred seal of confession she implored his counsel; prostrate at his feet, she entreated him to decide her destiny. Never had the confessor directed a penitent in a case so difficult; he paused for many moments, and seemed unwilling to pronounce—but the young widow insisted.

"My daughter," at last said the minister of truth, "it has been said, 'Thou shalt not swear!' and you have failed to follow this command; you have disobeyed God—you ought to submit to the consequence of your fault. It has been before Heaven; beside a dying bed you have pronounced a terrible vow—this vow you must fulfill."

"O, mercy! mercy!" cried the penitent

"Yes, my daughter, I but repeat the words spoken to you by the voice of conscience; I only say to you what you say each day to yourself. Either renounce Edmond, or demand from the dead your marriage-ring."

"My father!" replied Wilhelmine, trembling and overwhelmed, "my father, to renounce Edmond is impossible, I love him a thousand times more than myself; he is dearer even than M. de Breuil, whom I loved so well. In mercy, curse me not! for all will be expiated to-day. You decree that I should descend into our family vault. I will go. You tell me to touch the hand of a skeleton. I will touch it. You order me to ask from the dead the ring which alone can unite me to Edmond. Well, I will ask it, even if I must die in the sad place I go to sully with my presence!"

The worthy confessor, alarmed by this tone of excitement, sought to calm her, and recommended the deferring until a future period an undertaking so solemn.

"Father! it is this very hour I must perform the deed; but my mother knows nothing of it. My poor mother! she would never consent to her child's passing through such an ordeal. One person only must accompany me in this mournful visit, and he is the man who knew the secret, the man who advised it—yourself! Will you consent to follow me?"

The venerable priest, surprised by a resolution so sudden, surprised, above all, by the change which had come over the mind and language of Wilhelmine, could not resist the impetuosity of his penitent, and yielded, in opposition to his better

judgment, to the ascendancy of a strong and overbearing will.

“I will follow you!” was his reply. He silently selected the key of the vault, where lay the remains of the members of the family of Breuil, he lighted a torch, and advanced toward the chapel, beneath which the tomb was situated.

“Madame!” he said impressively to Wilhelmine, “this is the moment to have courage. The action you are about to commit is a solemn one, but it should not dismay you. You are fulfilling a sacred promise, you are acquitting yourself of a painful duty. God approves it, you have nothing to fear;” and taking her hand, they descended together the stairs that no step had trodden since the death of the baron. They entered the vault. Wilhelmine concentrated all her energy; she advanced, still guided by the priest. He lifted the stone which covered the tomb, and removed every obstacle. Wilhelmine, with averted eyes, put forth her hand; she wished to accomplish her vow without contemplating the hideous spectacle before her—but the ring must be grasped. She looks, and a cry of astonishment burst from her lips. She had expected to behold remains disfigured, and perhaps not recognizable; but she sees her husband, such as he ever was during the happy days they passed together; his countenance still retained its expression of goodness and tenderness. It was still M. de Breuil, the husband so well-beloved; doubtless he reposed, he only slept. Alas! soon he may awaken, to ask an account of the fidelity which should have been eternal; he may speak to her in threatening words; he may crush her with scorn, on learning the cause of this, her first visit. Such were the thoughts that startled the young widow, as she gazed on her husband’s form. She had not strength to bear such a scene, and striving to support herself on her companion’s arm, she faltered, tottered, and fell lifeless. The priest, fearing this pure spirit had departed to rejoin that of the dead, carried the young widow to her apartment, and informed her mother of the cause of this terrible shock.

Wilhelmine recovered her consciousness, only to sink into the most alarming delirium. A burning fever attacked her, and during several days her death was momentarily expected. But at last her youth triumphed over this crisis, she recovered her health, and at the end of two months had regained sufficient strength to walk a few steps in her chamber. She passed before a mirror, and accidentally glanced at its image of herself; what was her amazement at beholding a face whiter than alabaster itself. She tried to close her eyes, but could not cease regarding it. It was herself, these were indeed her features, but could illness have produced a change so sudden and mysterious? Alas! this paleness never departed more!

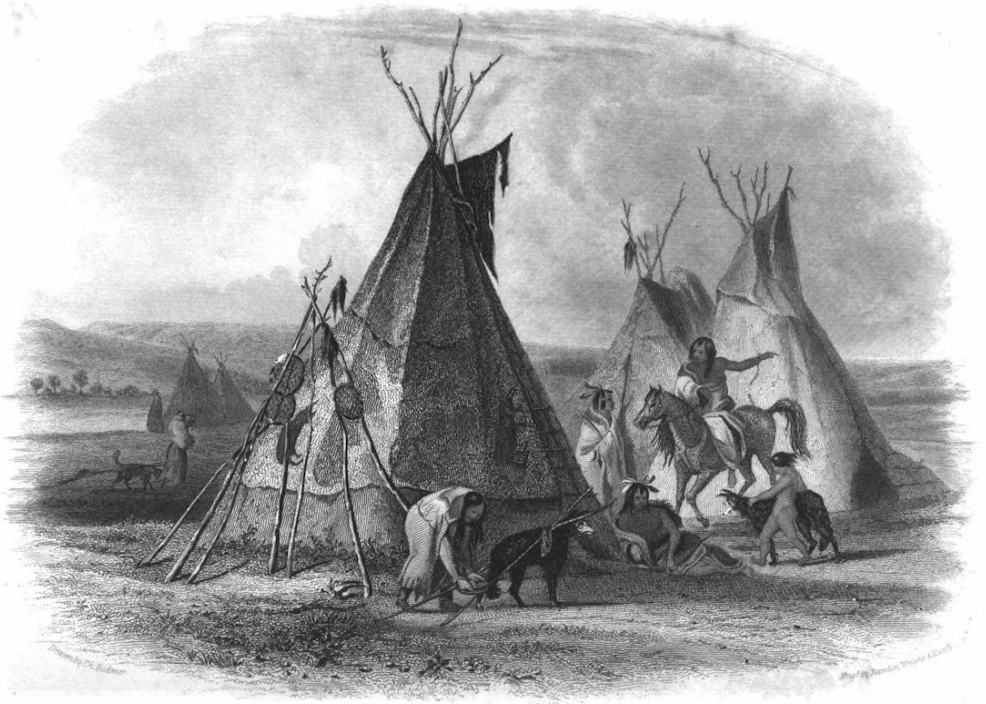
Her former intentions were irrevocably arrested, she resolved not to see Edmond again, and the prayers of her lover and her mother were equally unavailing. She consecrated herself solely to good works, and to those exercises of piety and benevolence which her too exclusive affection for M. de Gaser had for a time interrupted. She lived the life of a saint, shedding blessings around her, and endeavoring to procure for others the happiness she could no longer obtain for herself.

Wilhelmine's appearance continued as she had seen it the first day of her convalescence. She had now forsaken the world, and the world speedily forgot her; but a small number of friends ceased not to offer her pity and consolation. While still young, she was attacked by a disease of languor, which left no room for hope, and ere long Wilhelmine had reached her last hour. A few moments before her death she bade a touching farewell to all her friends, and turning to Madame de Cernan, she said—

“My mother, relate to them the particulars of my history; tell them to beware of making rash vows; it is a vow which has killed me!”

My aunt shed tears as she concluded this recital, and I wept bitterly over the mournful destiny of the pale lady. After the day I learned this mournful chronicle, I evinced as much solicitude to avoid finding myself in the vicinity of the portrait gallery as I had hitherto displayed anxiety to visit its attractions. I could not pass before her picture without my heart beating quicker at the remembrance of the sorrows of Wilhelmine. It seemed to me as if I heard her speak her last words, and I would repeat to myself as I glided in terror before her—“O! beware of rash vows, for it is a vow which has killed me!”





Drawn by C. H. Bodmer.

Eng<sup>d</sup>. by Rawdon, Wright & Hatch.

*A Skin Lodge of an Assiniboin Chief.*

Engraved Expressly for Graham's Magazine.

## AN ASSINIBOIN LODGE.

THE travels of Prince Maximilian, of Wied, in the interior of North America, give us an interesting account of the Assiniboin tribe of Indians in the far west.

“All on a sudden,” he says, describing their visit, “we heard some musket-shot, which announced a very interesting scene. The whole prairie was covered with scattered Indians, whose numerous dogs drew their sledges with the baggage; a close body of warriors, about 250 in number, had formed themselves in the centre, in the manner of two bodies of infantry, and advanced in quick time toward the fort. The whole troop commenced a song consisting of many broken, abrupt tones, like those of the war-whoop, and resembling the song which we heard in 1814 from the Russian soldiers. Many of these warriors had their faces painted all over with vermilion, others quite black. In their heads they wore feathers of eagles, or other birds of prey; some had wolf-skin caps; others had fastened green leaves around their heads; and long wolves’ tails were hanging down to their heels, as marks of honor for enemies they had slain.”

We continue the extract to afford our readers a description of the manner in which the Assiniboins erect their rude dwellings. “At noon a band of Indians had arrived, and twenty-five tents were set up near the fort. The women, their faces painted red, soon finished this work, and dug up with their instruments the clods of turf which lay around the lower part of the hut. One of these huts, (see the plate in the present number of “Graham,”) the dwelling of a chief, was distinguished from the rest. It was painted of the color of yellow ochre, had a broad, reddish-brown border below, and on its sides a large black bear was painted, (something of a caricature, it must be confessed,) to the head of which, just above the nose, a piece of red cloth, that fluttered in the wind, was fastened; doubtless a medicine. We now saw the women returning in all directions from the forest, panting under the weight of large bundles of wood, which were fastened to their backs.” The scene, brief as it is, affords a characteristic view of the life of the children of the prairie.

# THE AUTUMN WIND.

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BY MRS. JANE C. CAMPBELL.

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THE Autumn wind is rushing by,  
And in its wild career  
It beareth on its mighty wings  
The beauty of the year;  
And mournfully its deep dirge rings  
Upon the spirit's ear.

How drear the sound that sweeps along  
The forest and the vale,  
Those solemn tones, they chill the heart,  
Like plaintive funeral wail.  
I'll sit me down on these dead leaves,  
And question of its tale.

“What tidings hast thou—where hast been  
Since last thy voice I heard,  
Since last the quivering of thy wings  
The leafless branches stirred,  
And frighted from its moss-clad home  
Each gentle nestling bird?

“Ah, wherefore didst thou swell the storm  
When good ships went to sea;  
And why was bent the tall, stout mast—  
The cordage rent by thee;  
And why, when shattered bark went down,  
Thy shout of victory?

“Oh! bring back tidings of the lost  
To many an anxious ear;  
Bear to the mourner, mighty wind,  
The last words thou didst hear;  
One token give—some simple things  
From those who were so dear.

“And tell us—” “Mortal, why dost ask  
These tidings of the wind—  
Dost think that of the unfathomed deep  
The secrets thou shall find?  
As well might hope, with filmy thread,  
The storm’s wild rage to bind.

“If o’er the ocean I have swept,  
And lashed its waves to heaven,  
While high before me on the surge  
The hapless bark was driven,  
And loud and fearful rose the cry  
Of men from warm life riven.

“Or if I kissed the pale, calm brow  
Of some fair bride of death,  
And colder made the cold pure snow  
Where froze her heart aneath,  
And mingled with mine own low moan,  
Her last faint flitting breath.

“If I have stilled the infant’s sob  
Upon its mother’s breast,  
While closer, closer in her arms  
Her treasured one was pressed,  
Until my wailing lullaby  
Had hushed the babe to rest.

“I did His bidding who doth hold  
In his all-powerful hand  
The whirlwind that hath swept in might  
O’er ocean-wave and land;  
I questioned not why such things were—  
Can mortal understand?

“Enough, that thou hast wept the dead,  
Since last was heard my tone;  
Enough, that thy poor human heart  
Has sorrowed not alone;  
Enough, that when thou hearest now,  
I tell of treasures gone.

“There has been beauty in my path,  
And I have whispered low  
To rose-buds till their cheek has flushed;  
Have fanned eve’s crimson glow,  
And dimpled founts, where sunbeams danced,  
And mingled with their flow.

“Many a shout from a merry troop  
Of children at their play,  
And gladsome tone of mirth and joy  
Have I borne in my flight away;  
And odors of heaven my wings have caught  
Where the holy knelt to pray.

“Do thou His bidding—question not,  
Nor cower like frightened dove,  
There’s a home where the storm-winds never sweep,  
In the heaven of heavens above.  
Thy jewels are garnered in that bright land  
With their God—and GOD IS LOVE.”

## STANZAS FOR MUSIC.

IN golden dreams the night goes by,  
And sweet the world of sleep to me;  
For, moon-like 'mid her starry sky,  
My brightest dream is still of thee.

As swells the sea beneath the glance  
Of moonbeams in their midnight play,  
So 'neath thine eyes my bosom pants,  
My heart's deep midnight wakes in day.

A.

## REVIEW OF NEW BOOKS.

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*Evangeline, a Tale of Acadie. By Henry Wordsworth Longfellow. Boston: Wm. D. Ticknor & Co. 1 vol. 12mo.*

We are glad that Professor Longfellow has, in this volume, produced a poem which, while it indicates his capacity as a writer, is practically a triumphant answer to various depreciating criticisms on his writings. It has been said that his strength lay in small lyrics and didactics; that he had not sufficient force of feeling and imagination to create a poem. Here is a long and elaborate effort, extending to some hundred and sixty pages, where the strictest unity of effect is combined with great variety of character, incident, scenery, sentiment, and description. It has been said that his love of thought, if not his imagery and ideas, were borrowed from foreign sources, and that he rather polished than created. Here is a poem almost entirely American, blooming with flowers, and fragrant with odors peculiar to his own continent, and reflecting in its beautiful verse the streams, valleys, and mountains of his native land. It has been said that a certain foppery and effeminate elegance characterized his fancy; and that he dared not trust himself in the delineation of actual homely objects, where the poetic effect could not be produced by cunning combinations of words, but must result from the exercise of a pure and bright imagination. Here is a poem, in which whole pages are devoted to the delineation of humble, hearty farmers and mechanics, evincing an almost Chaucerian trust in things as opposed to words, giving clear pictures of objects and characters, replete with a sweet, humane humor, and producing poetry of effect by intensity and clearness of imaginative conception. Basil, the blacksmith, and Benedict, are as vivid and true as the delineations of Crabbe. Any farmer or smith would instantly recognize them as genuine. Yet the poet, by his subtil power of discerning the spirit beneath the rough external appearance, has given them an intrinsic beauty and dignity which would entitle them to rank with kings. He has, with a severe simplicity, fixed his gaze steadily on the human heart and soul, and we recognize in his delineations, humanity as well as the externals of rural life.

If Mr. Longfellow has in this poem thus practically illustrated his possession of rare powers, for which a few critics have not given him credit, he has also done something which, from the time of Sidney, has been pronounced impossible by English criticism—he has written a long narrative poem in hexameter verse, and managed it so admirably, that it seems the best he could have chosen for his purpose. We cannot conceive of the poem as being recast in heroics, octosyllabics, blank verse, or the Spenserian stanza, without essential injury to its effect, and a

limitation of its range of character and description. In this Mr. Longfellow has clearly performed “the impossible;” and it should be a source of gratification to every American, that one of his own countrymen has achieved what no English poet has been able to perform, and what few have dared to attempt. The composition of a poem in hexameter verse, which can be read with as much ease and delight as “Gertrude of Wyoming,” we conceive to be the most original peculiarity of this original work.

The character of Evangeline is, perhaps, Mr. Longfellow’s most beautiful creation. It is both conceived and sustained with wonderful force and truth. The sweetness, purity, energy, holiness, and naturalness of the character, as displayed in her life-long wanderings, the unforced religious elevation which envelopes her, and through her the whole poem;

—“The hope, and the fear, and the sorrow,  
All the aching of heart, the restless, unsatisfied longing,  
All the dull, deep pain, and constant anguish of patience,”

which she endures from her early youth to that period when, old and worn with constant endeavor, she presses the lifeless head of her long-sought betrothed to her bosom, and “meekly bows her own, and murmurs, ‘Father, I thank thee,’” all combine to consecrate her to the heart and imagination as one of those pure conceptions of humanity, which none who once cherishes will willingly let die. The author has well addressed the class of readers who will appreciate the deep seriousness of his purpose, in a few of the opening lines:

“Ye who believe in affection that hopes, and endures, and is patient;  
Ye who believe in the beauty and strength of woman’s devotion;  
List to the mournful tradition still sung by the pines of the forest;  
List to a Tale of Love in Acadie, home of the happy.”

We cannot refrain from making a few extracts from this poem, although we must warn our readers that they can obtain no clear idea of its merits, and the artistical relation, of the characters to each other, and the scenery to the characters, without reading the whole. We will guarantee that it possesses sufficient interest to be read at one sitting.

We will first give a few lines partially indicating some of the characters. Benedict, Evangeline’s father, is thus described:

“Stalworth and stately in form was the man of seventy winters;  
Hearty and hale was he, an oak that is covered with snow-flakes;  
White as the snow were his locks, and his cheeks as brown as the oak-leaves.”  
• • • • •

“In-door, warm by the wide-mouth fire-place, idly the farmer  
Sat in his elbow-chair, and watched how the flames and the smoke-wreaths  
Struggled together like foes in a burning city.  
Faces clumsily carved in oak on the back of his arm-chair



Laughed in the flickering light, and the pewter plates on the dresser  
Caught and reflected the flame, as shields of armies the sunshine.  
Fragments of song the old man sang, and carols of Christmas,  
Such as at home, in the olden time, his fathers before him  
Sang in their Norman orchards and bright Burgundian vineyards.”

The following is a picture of the good notary:

“Bent like a laboring oar, that toils in the surf of the ocean,  
Bent, but not broken, by age, was the form of the notary public;  
Shocks of yellow hair, like the silken floss of the maize, hung  
Over his shoulders; his forehead was high; and glasses with horn bows  
Sat astride on his nose, with a look of wisdom supernal.  
Father of twenty children was he, and more than a hundred  
Children’s children rode on his knee, and heard his great watch tick.”

The blacksmith, the very impersonation of strength, is well delineated; but we have only space for a few lines:

“Silenced but not convinced, when the story was ended, the blacksmith  
Stood like a man who fain would speak, but findeth no language;  
And all his thoughts congealed into lines on his face, as the vapors  
Freeze in fantastic shapes on the window-panes in the winter.”

The following view of the little maiden on a Sunday morn, is very beautiful:

“But a celestial brightness—a more ethereal beauty—  
Shone on her face and encircled her form, when after confession,  
Homeward serenely she walked with God’s benediction upon her.  
When she had passed it seemed like the ceasing of exquisite music.”

The descriptions of rural life in Acadie, of the scenery of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers, of the wilds of Oregon, are replete with force, beauty, and finely chosen details. They are all too long for short extracts to give an adequate impression of their excellence; and besides, the author has connected the scenery which surrounds the heroine with her feelings on the occasion of viewing it. The description of the burning village is grand, but we have space only for a few lines:

“Columns of shining smoke uprose, and flashes of flame were  
Thrust through their folds and withdrawn, *like the quivering hands of a martyr*.  
Then as the winds seized the gleeds and the burning thatch, and, uplifting,  
Whirled them aloft through the air, at once from a hundred house-tops  
Started the sheeted smoke with flashes of flame intermingled.”

The following exquisite passage, on the mocking-bird in the far west, is, perhaps, the finest and most life-like description in the poem:

“Then from a neighboring thicket, the mocking-bird, wildest of singers,

Swinging aloft on a willow spray that hung o'er the water,  
Shook from his little throat such floods of delicious music,  
That the whole air, and the woods, and the waves, seemed silent to listen.  
Plaintive at first were the tones and sad, then soaring to madness  
Seemed they to follow or guide the revel of frenzied Bacchantes.  
Then single notes were heard, in sorrowful low lamentation,  
Till, having gathered them all, he flung them abroad in derision,  
As when, after a storm, a gust of wind through the tree-tops  
Shakes down the rattling rain in a crystal shower on the branches."

Here we have a view of our own city, for which we are reasonably grateful to the poet:

"In that delightful land which is washed by the Delaware's waters,  
Guarding in sylvan shades the name of Penn the apostle,  
Stands on the banks of its beautiful stream the city he founded.  
There all the air is balm, and the peach is the emblem of beauty,  
And the streets still re-echo the names of the trees of the forest,  
As if they fain would appease the Dryads whose haunts they molested."

Mr. Longfellow shows in this poem, together with much that is new, his usual felicity and breadth of imagery and comparison. We cannot take leave of his book more pleasantly than in quoting a few of his separate excellencies of thought or language:

"And as she gazed from the window she saw serenely the moon pass  
Forth from the folds of a cloud, and one star follow her footsteps,  
As out of Abraham's tent young Ishmael wandered with Hagar."

• • • • •  
"Life had been long astir in the village, and clamorous labor  
Knocked with its hundred hands at the golden gates of the morning."

• • • • •  
"Sadly echoed her step on the stair and the chamber.  
In the dead of the night she heard the whispering rain fall  
Loud on the withered leaves of the sycamore tree by the window.  
Keenly the lightning flashed, and the voice of the neighboring thunder  
Told her that God was in heaven, and governed the world he created."

• • • • •  
"Sometimes a rumor, a hearsay, an inarticulate whisper,  
Came with its airy hand to point and beckon her forward."

• • • • •  
"Whither my heart has gone, there follows my hand, and not elsewhere;  
For when the heart goes before, like a lamp, and illumines the pathway,  
Many things are made clear, that else lie hidden in darkness."

• • • • •  
"Nearer and round about her, the manifold flowers of the garden  
Poured out their souls in odors, that were their prayers and confessions  
Unto the night, as it went its way, like a silent Carthusian."

• • • • •  
"Bright rose the sun the next day; and all the flowers of the garden  
Bathed his shining feet with their tears, and anointed his tresses  
With the delicious balm that they bore in their vases of crystal."

The pathos of *Evangeline* it is impossible to develop in our limited space. The chief beauty of the poem is its unity of interest and feeling. The reader soon comes to admire the unaccustomed movement of the verse, and he is carried onward with its majestic sweep to the conclusion, without any faltering of attention. We end our notice with a portion of the concluding lines, which fitly close the sweet and mournful story of the lovers:

“Still stands the forest primeval; but far away from its shadow,  
Side by side in their nameless graves the lovers are sleeping.  
Under the humble walls of the little Catholic church-yard,  
In the heart of the city, they lie, unknown and unnoticed,  
Daily the tides of life go ebbing and flowing beside them,  
Thousands of throbbing hearts, where theirs are at rest and for ever;  
Thousands of aching brains, where theirs no longer are busy;  
Thousands of toiling hands, where theirs have ceased from their labors;  
Thousands of weary feet, where theirs have completed their journey.”

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*Tam's Fortnight Ramble, and other Poems.* By Thomas Mackellar. Phila.:  
Carey & Hart. 1 vol. 12mo.

The modest preface of this elegantly printed volume is enough to smooth the wrinkled front of criticism. The writer is, we believe, an intelligent printer, who has made verse the solace, not the occupation of his life. It would be hard to try his volume by any severe requisitions of criticism. It is hearty, earnest and genuine, and fairly expresses what is in the man. The little poem entitled, “The Editor sat in his Sanctum,” has been very popular. The principal fault of the author is his habit of disturbing the train of serious feeling which he often awakens, by some expressions which trail along with them ludicrous suggestions.

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*Appleton's Railroad and Steamboat Companion, being a Traveler's Guide through New England and the Middle States.* By W. Williams. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1 vol. 12mo.

We allude to this book, not so much because it is the best and most complete traveler's guide ever published in the United States, as for the information it contains respecting the cost and fares of railroads, and the sketches of every town and village they pass through. It is not until we see them all set down together in one book, that we appreciate the money expended, and the obstacles overcome in building them, and the vast impetus they have given to the productive energies of the country, and to civilization.

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*Washington and the Generals of the American Revolution. With Sixteen Portraits on Steel, from Original Pictures. Philadelphia: Carey & Hart. 2 vols. 12mo.*

These volumes contain upward of ninety biographies, varying in extent, according to the importance of the subjects and the means of obtaining accurate information regarding them. As a whole they are interesting, well written, and reliable. A book on so important a subject cannot fail of success.

The best biography in the volume is that of Washington. From the small space in which the events are crowded, the writer had not an opportunity to do justice to his artistical powers, but the view taken of Washington's mind is the truest and most original we have ever seen. Every American who has been accustomed to consider the Father of his Country, and one of the leaders of his race, as being a man of great virtues but of moderate talents—a view which seems to obtain among the warmest eulogists of Washington—should read the searching and profound remarks with which the writer precedes his narrative. There is one slip of the pen, however, which it may be as well to note. After showing that Washington possessed the most eminent qualities of mind and feeling, he says, toward the end, that Hamilton's "talents took the form of genius, which Washington's did not." The writer should have recollected that he had been describing a high though not obvious genius throughout his eloquent and profound statement; and that he was using the term genius, not in its primal, but in one of its secondary applications.

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*Scenes in the Lives of the Patriarchs and Prophets.*

Two years ago Messrs. Lindsay & Blackiston issued a beautiful volume, under the title of "*Scenes in the Life of the Saviour,*" and last year succeeded it with "*Scenes in the Lives of the Apostles.*" The last of these works, was prepared under the supervision of the Rev. H. HASTINGS WELD, a gentleman whose name is familiar to our readers, and who possesses all the qualifications to fit him for the editorship of works of this character. The volumes referred to met with great favor in the literary world; and they are now followed by a third, prepared under the same auspices, entitled, "*Scenes in the Lives of the Patriarchs and Prophets.*" We do but simple justice when we declare that it has seldom fallen to our lot to notice a book which possesses so many and such varied attractions. Mr. Weld has gathered from the best writers the most beautiful of their works, in illustration of his theme, and prepared for the reader a rich literary repast. We are assured that the volume before us will, like those which preceded it, come acceptably before the public, and be a favorite offering during the approaching holyday season.

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*Oregon Missions and Travels over the Rocky Mountains in 1845-6.*

Mr. W. J. Cunningham has laid upon our table a handsome volume, bearing this title, published by Mr. Dunigan, of New York. It is from the pen of Father P. J. De Smet, of the Society of Jesus, and embodies an interesting view of the manners and customs, traditions, superstitions, &c., of the Indian tribes of the Rocky Mountains, as gathered by the Reverend Father during an extended missionary tour amongst them. The book will be read with interest, and numerous lithographic illustrations of the text add to the attractiveness of its pages.

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*The Mirror of Life* is the title of a magnificent volume which Messrs. Lindsay & Blackiston have published, the matter of which is entirely original. It is ornamented with a number of plates, beautifully and expressly prepared by American artists, and the letter-press is really superb. Mrs. L. C. Tuthill, who edits the work, has acquitted herself admirably, and has gathered together many choice literary gems.

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*The Crater, or Vulcan's Peak, by J. Fenimore Cooper, Author of "Miles Wallingford," "The Pathfinder" &c.*

Mr. Cooper is so great a favorite with the American public that any thing coming from his pen will be sought for with avidity. We do not regard "The Crater" as one of the best of his works, but coming from almost any other living writer it would be regarded as extraordinary. The invention of Mr. Cooper seems to be inexhaustible; age cannot stale nor custom wither his infinite variety; and we have in "The Crater," and especially in the scenes descriptive of the working of the "Old Rancocus" among the breakers, evidence that the genius which has won the admiration of all civilized communities, still holds its wand with an unrelaxed grasp, and possesses spells powerful as at the first. His sea-stories surpass those of Smollet even in power and verisimilitude, while they bear no taint of his grossness. The best of these, the ocean tale, "Rose Budd," now in the course of publication in this Magazine, has been pronounced, by all who have read it, one of the most fascinating and valuable contributions to American literature.

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*The Arabian Nights.*

A beautiful and cheap edition of this universal favorite among the young, has been issued, and a copy has been laid upon our desk by Messrs. Zieber & Co. To

speak of the work would be supererogatory, but we may remark that all which typographical skill and enterprise could do to add attraction to it, has been done by the publishers.

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*The Christiad.*

A volume of poems on various subjects, of which the principal one is entitled *The Christiad*, has been published by the author, *William Alexander, Esq., A. M.* The work is brought out in handsome style, and a cursory examination induces us to believe that it contains many passages of merit.

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DESCRIPTION OF THE FASHION PLATE.

TOILETTE DE VILLE.—Dress of violet colored satin, *à la Reine*; skirt plain; corsage high, *à la Puritan*; hat of shaded yellow satin, and ornamented with a shaded feather, or with shaded garnets velvet; sleeves large, slit half way up the arm, and falling back upon the sides.

TOILETTE DE BAL.—Dress of white muslin; skirt ornamented with three rows of embroidery, in festoons, or scollops, with large spaces, and surmounted right and left by a bouquet, composed of three daisies, with foliage. The same trimming of embroidery and flowers on the corsage, which is very low, with the point somewhat rounded, and without sleeves. The head-dress, in perfect keeping with the toilette, is composed of a (*franche*) crown of daisies, those of the front part of the head very small, and those of the sides and back much larger.

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The sketch by FANNY FORESTER published in our last was sent originally to the publisher of *Graham's Magazine*, and was set up from the manuscript for our last number. We mention this to correct a misapprehension of the newspaper press, and to relieve the author from any imputation. The fault was our own, in leaving the article so long unpublished.



## LE FOLLET

Boulevard S<sup>t</sup>. Martin, 61.

*Chapeaux de M<sup>me</sup>. Baudry, r. Richlieu, 87—Robes de M<sup>me</sup>. Mercier, r. N<sup>ve</sup>. des  
Petits Champs, 82;*

*Fleurs et plumes de Chagot—Pardessus et fourrures du Cardinal, boul.  
Poissonnière, 41;*

*Mouchoir de L. Chapron & Dubois, r. de la Paix, 7—Gants de Aveline, r. de la  
Paix, 18 et 20;*

*Passementeries de Richenet Bayard, r. S<sup>t</sup>. Denis, 400, et r. de la Paix, 24.  
Graham's Magazine.*

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## Transcriber's Notes:

Table of Contents has been added for reader convenience. Archaic spellings and hyphenation have been retained. Obvious typesetting and punctuation errors have been corrected without note. Other errors have been corrected as noted below. For illustrations, some caption text may be missing or incomplete due to condition of the originals available for preparation of the eBook.

page 295, *perfume* I might loose. ==> *perfume* I might [lose](#).

page 297, he replied. "Her's ==> he replied. "[Hers](#)

page 315, for the childrens' ==> for the [children's](#)

page 322, in each others ==> in each [other's](#)

page 328, days they past ==> days they [passed](#)

page 328, long wolve's tails ==> long [wolves'](#) tails

page 331, life in Arcadie, of ==> life in [Acadie](#), of

[The end of *Graham's Magazine*, Vol. XXXI, No. 6 (December 1847) edited by George R. Graham]