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LIBRARY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

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CHOICE
LIBRARY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.



TALES FOR YOUTH.

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LIBRARY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.



GARRY OWEN; OR, THE SNOW-WOMAN.

BY MISS EDGEWORTH.



"A fine morning for snipe-shooting this, Master Gerald!" said Patrick Carroll, an Irish gamekeeper, to his young companion, his master's son, who was manfully stepping along beside him on the frozen surface of a deep snow.

"A fine morning certainly, Carroll; but I have not seen a single snipe yet," said Master Gerald.

"But if we have any luck, we won't be long so," replied the gamekeeper, "barring the long snow might have starved off the birds entirely. But if there's one left in it any way, we'll have him, dear, as sure as life."

"There's one!" cried Gerald.

Pop—and—miss.

"Hush't now!—whist! 'Twas the talking—Not a word now—or ye give the birds warning."

They walked on for some time without speaking. Gerald

"Gazed idly on the silence of the snows.
——One idiot face of white
Is over all."

Not another snipe was to be seen; and the gamekeeper, thinking that his young master was fretting inwardly, began to comfort him with a little flattery.

"Then, Master Gerald, my dear, when you come to carry the gun your own self, it's a fine shot you'll be, I'll engage—as fine a shot as any in the three counties, as his honour your father (blessings on him!) was afore you. Just such another as yourself, then, I remember him, the first season's shooting ever he got—I saw his first shot sure!"

"He was older at that time than I am now, was not he?" said Gerald.

"Not to look at; and I'm certain clear he was not over fourteen years any way."

"I shall be fourteen next birthday; and I hope my mother will then have no objection to my carrying the gun myself."

"Objections! Why would she?—Tut—The next bird we meet, good or bad, you shall have a shot at him yourself, master."

A ray of joy came across Gerald's face, but it passed away. "No," said he, "I promised mamma I would not take the gun in my own hands."

"Then it's I must lay it over your shoulder, and hold it for you while you pop."

A bird was seen. The gamekeeper placed the gun against Gerald's shoulder, and pointed to where he should aim. It was a great temptation—but Gerald had given a promise. He stepped aside, drawing his shoulder from under the gun.

"No, Carroll," repeated he firmly, and it was as much as he could say. "I will not fire, for I yesterday promised my mother I would not."

"Then you are a noble young gentleman to be true to your mother any way; and I'm sure, by the same token, you'll not tell on me, that was only wanting to please you, and did not understand rightly, or I'd sooner have cut my head off than have gone again any thing the mistress would say—in regard to you more than all. It would be as much as my life's worth if you were to tell on me, Master Gerald; but I know you are too good."

"Never fear," said Gerald, "I am no tell-tale. But I'm getting terribly hungry. Turn down to that cottage, and may be we shall find a hot potato."

"True for you. It is time they should be boiling or boiled—and no doubt it is here we shall find 'em ready and welcome, for it is Mistress Crofton's place, and a very snug place it is, and right good people they are. The mother nursed some of the big house formerly; that is kind-hearted old Mistress Molly I mean."

Their steps being noiseless on the snow, they reached the cottage without being heard by any one within. Peeping in at the house door, Gerald saw that there was only kind-hearted Molly herself in the kitchen. Her back was towards them, and she was stooping down, covering up a dish that was on the hearth before a clear turf fire. Gerald, putting his finger on his lips, and making a sign to the gamekeeper to remain still at the door, went in on tiptoe softly, and snatching up from the dresser her silk handkerchief, he went close behind her without her perceiving him, quickly threw the handkerchief over her eyes, and, in a feigned gruff brogue, asked her to tell who he was?

"Ah hushlamacree! you darling rogue, I know who ye are well enough—and glad myself is you're come—long I've been looking for you."

She pulled off the bandage as she spoke.

"Oh! Master Gerald dear! and is it you?—I ask your pardon then. Sure I'm glad to see you, Master Gerald."

It was plain, nevertheless, that he was not the person she expected to see. "But who was your darling rogue that you were looking for, Molly?"

"Oh! not your honour dear any way—sure—I could not make so free—but Georgy the gran' child—the unlucky boy that did not get his breakfast yet—that's what I was covering up for him."

"And suppose I was to beg one of his hot potatoes?"

"Welcome as life, dear!" said she, uncovering them; "and shame take me that didn't think of offering them. But my ould stupid head was just astray. Sit ye down, Master Gerald, by the fire this raw morning, till I fetch you the salt, and a bit o' butter, and a drop of the new milk.—And who would that be?—Somebody at the door without?—Oh! Mr. Carroll, the gamekeeper, it is you!—But won't you step in, and get an air of the fire, and take something too? I should have a bottle somewhere."

In Molly's hospitality there was a degree of hurry and confusion, and not her usual hearty gladness to see her friends. Gerald asked what was the matter, and why her head was astray?

"It's after the boy George my head is," she answered; "that unlucky slip of a boy—though it's no fault of his—but of them that left the stable door open after he had shut it last night. I don't know who it was, but, weary on them! for this morning George missed one of them sheep of his father's that he got in charge, and was at my bedside by peep o' day, telling me about it afore I was right awake. In great fear he was that this sheep, straying out in the deep snow, might be lost, and that his father, when he'd find it out, would be mad with him. Then don't be bothering me, child! said I, and I dreaming. Take yourself out, and look for the sheep, can't ye?—Bad luck to myself that said that cross word out o' my sleep, for straight the boy went out in the first grey light o' the morning, and never has been in since, good or bad. There's the two bowls of stirabout I made for him got as hard and colder than the stones; I was fain to throw them out to the chickens both. And now I have boiled these potatoes for him. But what I'm in dread of," continued Molly, after a pause, and as if afraid to speak her whole thoughts, "what I am most in dread of is them snow drifts there below, in case George might have come across one of them.—You mind, Master Gerald, the boy that once was lost entirely—and the snow so deep on the ground now"—She sighed—

Gerald swallowed hastily the bit of hot potato he had in his mouth, and asked which road the boy had taken?

"Across the Curragh path, she believed, and down by the *boreen*" (the lane).

Gerald, beckoning to the gamekeeper, ran out immediately, bidding Molly keep up her spirits, and keep the potatoes hot for her boy, whom he hoped soon to bring back to her, with, perhaps, the lost sheep into the bargain.

Thousands of blessings she poured upon Gerald and Mr. Carroll, and from her door she shouted after them to beg they would "bid George never to mind the sheep, but come home only with himself. Tell him I'll make it up out o' my calves to the father. I'd sell the cow—I'd sell the dresser—any thing—all, tell him, if he'll but come home to me safe again—*acushla!*"

Gerald and the gamekeeper, no longer thinking of snipes, took the way over the curragh as well as they could make it out, for path there was none on that unbeaten snow. The surface was still hard enough in many places; but, during the last hour, it had begun to thaw, and some of the drifts were softened. They looked for the boy's footsteps, and saw traces for some distance, but then lost sight of them when they came to a lane leading to the village. In this lane horses, and cars, and many footsteps had been. They stood still and listened, for the sportsman thought he heard a shout. Gerald had the sense to think of firing off the gun, which the gamekeeper, by his order, immediately did, to give notice of where they were. Afterwards they heard the voice certainly, they thought, and followed the direction of the sound. Presently they saw a black spot on the snow at a distance; it was, as they guessed, a boy's hat, and, making up towards it, they saw the boy running to meet them, barefooted, barelegged, barebreasted, coat and waistcoat off, as little as could be on, and that little as wet as possible, his face and head as red as fire, perspiring all over. He gasped, and could not speak; but, catching hold of Gerald's arm, and pointing in the direction from whence he came, pulled him on.

"Your sheep, I suppose?" said Gerald.

"Ay, in the snow," said the gamekeeper, "that can't get out. Is that it, Georgy? Speak now."

"My sheep—och!" said the boy, "an' I wish to my life it was only that same."

"What, then, can't you speak, you born natural?" said the impatient gamekeeper.

"Come on, come on! I can't be staying to tell you," said the boy, trotting on before them, in one even fast trot, with which Gerald's run and Carroll's strides could scarcely keep pace.

"Manners then, you running dripping-pan!" cried Carroll; "can't you stop and turn, and tell Master Gerald about it—Oh! if I could reach you!"—

Gerald, without questioning more, ran on, till the boy stopped and spoke—

"See here, master," said he, pointing to a place where he had been digging in the snow, "below here is a cabin of some kind, and a living cratur in it—I heard the cry. Stoop down yourselves here at the top of the bank, and through the hole here you may catch the sound of the moaning. I was walking on the hard snow, sir, on the top of the ditch here, as I know by the trees on the hedge, thinking of nothing at all but my sheep, and prodding about with my shovel, which by great luck I had with me on account of the sheep; when I started to see smoke coming up a yard from me, and when I went up close to the hole, that proved a chimney, and darkening it over, I suppose, by looking down to see whether I could see any thing that was in it, whoever was within knew by the stopping of the light that I was there above, for there was a great cry raised to me, 'for God's sake to help!' So I gave up all thought of my sheep, and fell to work to get out the poor cratur, and I have been at it ever since; but, see, the door can't be got open yet, nor won't for a long while; see, sir, how it is."

Where the boy had been digging in the snow, part of a thatched roof was visible. It seemed to belong to a hut or shed made in a deep ditch, or quarry hole, by the side of a hill. Gerald called loudly, as he leaned over the opening at top, and was answered by a feeble voice, which he thought was that of a woman. He stood still to consider what should be done first. The gamekeeper, unable to think, went on talking and wondering who the woman could be. Gerald saw that, as there was but one shovel, but one person could work at a time in clearing away the snow; and, as the man was the strongest, he yielded the shovel to him, but directed him not to go on where the boy had been working, because he saw that it would take a long time to clear away the snow to the bottom, and to open space enough in the hard snow-drift, so that the house door could be got open, and that it would be easier and quicker to clear the snow from part of the roof, and pull off the thatch. He bid Carroll shovel away as fast as he could, while he considered what he should do with the woman if he got her out. He must have some means of carrying her out of the cold directly, to where she could have assistance and food. The nearest house which was within reach was Mrs. Crofton's. He bid George go home to his grandmother, and send his father, or any man he could find about the house, with a hand-barrow, and dry straw, and a blanket. If the hand-barrow could not be had directly, the men should bring a door, which George knew could be readily taken off its hinges.—The sending George home he saw too was necessary for him, for he was almost exhausted; he could walk, but could scarcely have used his arms any more. George was very unwilling to quit, but Gerald told him that, by so doing, he would do the best for the poor people he had worked so hard to save—the only chance it would give of saving them. The boy gave up to their reason, and Gerald wrote with a pencil on the back of a letter a few lines to his mother, to tell what had happened, and to beg she would send directions and assistance (the good housekeeper herself if she could) to Mrs. Crofton's cottage, to be ready, and wait till he should come. Off went George, putting the

pencil note in the crown of his hat, the only dry spot about him.

The corner of the roof being soon cleared of snow, Gerald helped to tear away the thatch, and soon got open a hole in the roof, through which they could see down into the house. Gerald saw the haggard face and skeleton figure of the woman. She was kneeling just under them, looking up, her hands uplifted towards them—something in her arms pressed close to her—it was her infant, but it made no cry—nor did she speak, or utter any sound. Her other children were on the ground before her—one stretched out face downwards, motionless—the other, with its arms clasped round its mother as she knelt, its head leaning against her—it never looked up. Gerald tore the hole open larger; and, bidding Carroll tell him the moment any one from Crofton's was in sight, jumped down into this den of misery—of famine. The woman's eyes turned to the child on the floor—a boy—her eldest—who was dead. The girl, kneeling, never moved till her mother lifted up her head, and Gerald saw her starved face. Her eyes blinked and closed from the light. She showed no emotion at sight of Gerald; but in the woman's wild stare at him there was a sort of agony of hope. He recollected what he had till this moment forgotten, that he had had the day before, when he went out, a biscuit in his pocket. He felt, and found some fragments; he moistened a bit in his mouth, and then put the least morsel possible into the mouth of the girl, and then gave a bit to the woman, who instantly put a crumb of it between the infant's lips, and then she looked ravenously for more. Luckily he had very little more left. Gerald had heard that famished persons must be allowed food only with great caution; but he did not know how very small a quantity the stomach can bear, and how extremely dangerous it is to yield to the cravings of the appetite. When he saw the magical revival produced by this little, he regretted that he had not more, especially when the mother looked upon him with ravenous eagerness. He emptied his pockets, and she snatched the least crumb, and crammed it into her baby's mouth. Well for her and her children it was that he had no more. Some of the snow from the roof hung down; she stretched out her hand for it with anxiety, and when he reached it for her, swallowed as much as he would let her, but he was afraid, and stopped her. She submitted without speaking.

Carroll gave the signal agreed upon, that he saw somebody coming. Gerald had bid Carroll not call loudly to him, lest the suddenness of the certainty of her deliverance might be too much for her all at once. When he moved from her, though only a pace or two, to hear what was said from the opening in the roof, she caught hold of his coat, and held it clenched fast, as if in dread of his leaving her. He assured her that he would not desert her; that he was only going to see how best to get her out of this horrible place. His words seemed scarcely to reach her understanding; but she loosened her grasp, as if resigned. He stood upon the only piece of furniture in the house, an old stool, and could then hear Carroll tell him, in a low voice, that two men were coming across the field from the road, either with a hand-barrow or something of the kind. It proved to be the very door which Gerald had desired should be sent if nothing else was at hand. "And a good thought it was," said the men, "for the hand-barrow had been lent to some person, and could not have been had unless we were to have waited an hour." There was plenty of straw, and a blanket, moreover a bed, a chaff bed; all he required good Molly had sent, with her blessing for the sending home her boy, and a bed should be ready and warm for the poor woman, whoever she was. She would not let George come back with the men, which he wanted to do.

While all this was saying, Gerald had lifted the kneeling girl from the floor. She was as helpless and cumbersome to lift as a child asleep. He purposed to stand upon the stool, to give her out of his arms to Carroll, who was waiting to take her, but as he sprang up on the stool, one of the legs gave way, and down he came with the child. An exclamation, the first she had uttered, burst from the mother, and she sprang forward. Gerald fell back against the wall, and held the child safe; it was a mercy that he did not fall upon it. He next took off the silk handkerchief that was round his neck; and, having tied it to his pocket handkerchief, he passed them under the arms of the child. Then calling to Carroll, he bid him let down to him one end of his leathern belt, and to hold fast the other. After fastening the end of the belt to the handkerchiefs, he called to Carroll again to draw up gently; and, guiding the child's body up as high as he could reach, it was thus drawn out safely. The woman had a tattered blanket hanging over part of her, but she could not be wrapped in it; it was all rags, and would not hold. Gerald had the blanket old Molly had sent put down to him, and wrapping the woman in it with Carroll's help, he having now jumped down into the hut, fastened the belt round her, and one of the men above drew her up with her infant in her arms. They laid her upon the bed, and found she had fainted. She looked so ghastly that Gerald thought she was dead. He took her infant from her powerless arm, and thought it was gone too. It seemed to have no weight; but the fresh air made it utter a sort of cry, and the mother opened her eyes, and came back from her fainting fit. Gerald laid her infant in her arms again, and she felt that he placed her girl beside her, and she gave him a look which he could never forget. But the expression of feeling and sense was gone in a moment. He wrapped the blanket round her and the children, and she lay motionless in a sort of stupor, as they lifted the board from the ground and moved on. He had little hope that she or the children could live till they reached the cottage. He had never seen any thing like such a sight before; but Carroll had, and he kept up his hopes with the prophecy, often repeated as they went along,

that the woman would, as he'd see, do very well, and the childer would *come to*, all but the poor boy, who was gone quite. It lay at her feet, wrapped in the poor mother's rag of a blanket, so as to be concealed from sight. Gerald had been unwilling to remove the corpse at first, thinking it might shock the mother fatally to see it when she returned to sense. But the men would not let him leave it, telling him that when she came to her sense, it would be the first thing she would ask for, and that it would shock her most that it should *not be waked* properly.

They reached the cottage, where, to Gerald's great joy, he found that his mother had sent the housekeeper, and all that could be wanted. Molly, dear good Molly, had the bed ready warm to put *her* into, and hot flannels for the *childer*, and warm drink, but to be given only in tea-spoonfuls. "Mind," as the housekeeper said, "mind that for your life! And now, Master Gerald, my heart's life," continued she, "rest yourself. Oh dear! oh dear! what a way he is in! my *own* child—Oh dear! oh dear! he ought to be in his own bed—and has not eat one bit the day, barring the potatoes here."

Molly followed Gerald about, while he helped in all the arrangements that were making in bringing in his charge, and carrying them to the inner room; and whenever she could find an opportunity, popped a bit of something into his mouth, which, to oblige her, he swallowed, though he did not well know what it was. All being now done by him in which he could be useful, he prepared to go home, the housekeeper and Molly urging that his own family must be anxious to see him. Away he went, but not before he had asked for George, to rejoice with him in their success. George was in his bed fast asleep; it would be a sin, his grandmother said, to waken him, and it would do better next morning, for he was tired out of his sense, stupid-tired. "He is never very 'cute, my poor Georgy, but as kind a heart as can be, asleep or awake."

It was dusk in the evening before Gerald reached home. Candles were lighted at Castle Gerald, as he saw through the windows. As he approached, the lights flitted from the drawing-room windows along the corridor, as he went up the avenue, and the hall-door opened before he reached it. Cecilia, his dear little sister, ran down the steps to meet him, and his father and mother were in the hall. The comfortable happy appearance of every thing at home, being in sudden contrast with all he had just seen and felt, struck him forcibly. The common dinner seemed to him uncommonly good; every thing a luxury. Cecilia could not help laughing; he seemed to wonder, as if he was in a dream—and so, in truth, he felt. They wisely let him eat and rest before they asked him any questions. Even Cecilia refrained, though her eyes, as plainly as they could speak, and very plainly that was, spoke her curiosity, or rather her sympathy. His after-dinner story, however, was provokingly short—quite an unvarnished tale, and not unfolded regularly, but opened in the middle, and finished abruptly with "That's all." Whether it was that he did not like to make much of what he had done himself, to make little *i* the hero of his tale, or whether he was, as old Molly said of George, *stupid-tired*, he certainly was in an unusual hurry to take his mother's advice that night, and go to bed early. After thanking God that the woman was saved, he threw himself into his bed, thinking that he *would* be asleep the very instant his head should be on the pillow. But in vain he snuggled himself up; he found that the going to sleep did not depend on his will. Whenever he closed his eyes, the images of the starved woman and her dead and living child were before him, the whole scene going on over and over again, but more and more confusedly, till at last, after the hundredth turning to the other side, he lay still, and by the time his mother came to look at him, before she went to bed, he was sound asleep—so fast that the light of her lamp, even when she no longer shaded it by her hand, never made eyelid shrink or eyelash twinkle.

The next morning, he wakened as fresh and lively as ever, and jumped up to see what sort of a day it was. Pouring rain!—all the snow gone, or going—impossible to reach the cottage before breakfast. But the housekeeper had brought word late last night, after he was asleep, that the woman and her children were likely to do well. The gamekeeper (bless his old bones for it!) was up, and at Mrs. Crofton's by the flight of night, and his report at breakfast time said that "the woman was wonderful—for so great a skeleton—a perfect 'atomy—a very shadow of a creatur—such as never was seen afore alive on God's earth. The childer too! no weight, if you'd take 'em in your arms, it would frighten you to hold them—so unnatural-like as if they had been changed by the fairies. Howsome-ever the housekeeper says they'll come to, and get weighty enough in time, ma'am, and that all will live, no doubt, if they don't get food too plenty; I mean if old Molly (Mrs. Crofton, I ax her pardon) wouldn't be in too great a hurry to feed 'em up—and if the mother, who is cautious enough not to infringe against the orders she got, as far as her own fasting is concerned, would not, as I dread, be too tender in regard to the childer—the baby, more especially."

Gerald's report in the middle of the day was good. He could not, however, see the poor woman, she and her children being in bed. It was settled that they should all walk to the cottage next morning; but the next morning and the next day, rain—rain—rain. How provoking! Yet such things will be in Ireland. Little Cecilia stood at the window, saying, "Rain, rain, go to Spain;" yet not till the fourth day did it go, and then the ground was so wet; even on the gravel walks before the window there were such puddles of yellow water, that it was vain for Cecilia to hope she could reach the cottage.

But the next day was dry; a frost came, not a bitter frost, but a fine sunshiny day; and before the ground was softened by the sun, they accomplished their walk.

Every thing is for the best—that's certain—even the rain. These three days' delay had given time for much to pass which it was well should be over. The dead child was buried; the living had now some appearance of life; the horrible ghastliness was gone; the livid purple was now only deadly pale. Cecilia thought it very shocking still, but nothing to what it was, Gerald said. He was quite astonished at the difference; he should not have known the woman to be the same, except by her skeleton hands and arms. But she was now clean, decently clothed, a great handkerchief of Molly's pinned so as to cover her wasted form, and a smile on those lips that he thought never could smile again—but they smiled on him, and then she burst into tears—the first she had shed—and a great relief they were to her, for she could not cry when the boy was buried—not a tear. Gerald looked about for the other child—the girl—she was behind him. Though she had been quite insensible, as he thought, to all that had happened, she now seemed perfectly to recognise him. When her mother drew her forward, she remained willingly fixed close beside him, and stood staring up with grateful loving eyes. She smelled his coat; the mother reproved her, but Cecilia said, "Let her alone;" and the child, heeding neither of them, proceeded to smell his hand, took it, and kissed it again and again. Then, turning to the mother, said, "Mammy! that's the hand—the good hand."

Then she pointed to a bit of biscuit which lay upon the table, and her mother said, "The child recollects, sir, the bit you put into her mouth. She could eat that biscuit all day long, I believe, if we would let her."

"And it is hard to deny her," said Molly, putting a piece within her reach. She devoured it eagerly, yet seemed as if she had half a mind to take the last bit from her mouth, and put it into Gerald's.

He turned to shake hands with George, who now came in; and inquired if he had heard any news of his lost sheep?

"Answer, George, dear," said Molly to the boy, who was a little bashful, or, as she expressed it, "a little daunted before the ladies. But speak out, Georgy, love, can't ye, so as to be heard, and not with that voice of a mouse. You can speak out well enough when you please."

The snow-woman observed that she knew better than any body how well he could speak out. "I never in my born days heard a voice so pleasant as his'n sounded to me the first time I heard it, when he answered to my call for help."

George smiled through his blush; and then answering Master Gerald, thanked him kindly, and said that he had heard of his sheep—he had got him—and he was dead—frozen dead under the snow—standing—not half a perch from where they had been shovelling. When the thaw came, there he was found quite ready; so he brought him home and skinned him. There was his skin hanging up to the fore on the stable wall. And his father was very good too, and was not mad with him at all at all, but quite considerate, and did not give him a stroke nor a word; and so he (George) had promised to make up the *differ*, by not rising out of his father's hands the price of the new *shuit* which he was to get at Easter for herding the other sheep and cattle through the winter. "There's the bargain I made with him, and all's well as afore."

Cecilia, who was listening, did not at first understand this bargain; but when the *new shuit* was explained to mean a new suit of clothes, and making up *the differ*, making up the difference to the father between the value of the lost live sheep and his remaining skin, Cecilia thought it was rather a hard bargain for George, but he was quite satisfied.

Molly whispered, "Never heed, miss; the father will not be as hard upon him as he thinks. But," added she aloud, "why should not he, miss, be at the loss of his own carelessness?—Not but what, barring the giddiness, he's as good a natured lad as ever lived—only not over-burthened with sense.—Kind gran'mother for him!" concluded she, half laughing at herself, half at him.

Then, drawing Gerald aside, she changed her tone, and with a serious look, in a mysterious whisper, said, "You were right, dear, from first to last, concerning the poor cratur's dead child; she did not want to have it *waked* at all, for she is not that way—not an Irishwoman at all—an Englishwoman all over, as I knew by her speech the first word ever I heard her speak in her own nat'ral tongue when she came to her voice. But hush't! there she is telling her own story to the master and mistress."

"Yes, madam, I bees an Englishwoman, though so low now and untidy like—it's a shame to think of it—a Manchester woman, ma'am—and my people was once in a bettermost sort of way—but sore pinched latterly." She sighed, and paused.

"I married an Irishman, madam," continued she, and sighed again.

"I hope he gave you no reason to sigh," said Gerald's father.

"Ah! no, sir, never!" answered the Englishwoman, with a faint sweet smile: "Brian Dermody is a good man, and was always a kind husband to me, as far and as long as ever he could, I will say that—but my friends disliked him—no help for it. He is a soldier, sir,—of the forty-fifth. So I followed my husband's fortunes, as natural, through the world, till he was ordered to Ireland. Then he brought the children over, and settled us down there at Bogafin in a little shop with his mother—a widow. She was very kind too. But no need to tire you with telling all. She married again, ma'am, a man young enough to be her son—a nice man he was to look at too—a gentleman's servant he had been. Then they set up in a public-house. Then the whiskey, ma'am, that they be so fond of—he took to drinking it in the morning even, ma'am—and that was bad to my thinking."

"Ay, indeed!" said Molly, with a groan of sympathy; "Oh the whiskey! if men could keep from it!"

"And if women could!" said Mr. Crofton in a low voice.

The Englishwoman looked up at him, and then looked down, refraining from assent to his smile.

"My mother-in-law," continued she, "was very kind to me all along, as far as she could. But one thing she could not do; that was, to pay me back the money of husband's and mine that I lent her. I thought this odd of her—and hard. But then I did not know the ways of the country in regard to never paying debts."

"Sure it's not the ways of all Ireland, my dear," said Molly; "and it's only them that has not that can't pay—how can they?"

"I don't know—it is not for me to say," said the Englishwoman, reservedly; "I am a stranger. But I thought if they could not pay me, they need not have kept a jaunting-car."

"Is it a jaunting-car?" cried Molly. She pushed from her the chair on which she was leaning—"Jaunting-car bodies! and not to pay you!—I give them up entirely. Ill used you were, my poor Mrs. Dermody—and a shame! and you a stranger!—But them were Connaught people. I ask your pardon—finish your story."

"It is finished, ma'am. They were ruined, and all sold; and I could not stay with my children to be a burthen. I wrote to husband, and he wrote me word to make my way to Dublin, if I could, to a cousin of his in Pill Lane—here's the direction—and that if he can get leave from his colonel, who is a good gentleman, he will be over to settle me somewhere, to get my bread honest in a little shop, or some way. I am used to work and hardship; so I don't mind. Brian was very kind in his letter, and sent me all he had—a pound, ma'am—and I set out on my journey on foot, with the three children. The people on the road were very kind and hospitable indeed; I have nothing to say against the Irish for that; they are more hospitable a deal than in England, though not always so honest. Stranger as I was, I got on very well till I came to the little village here hard by, where my poor boy that is gone first fell sick of the measles. His sickness, and the 'pot'eary' stuff and all, and the lodging and living, ran me very low. But I paid all, every farthing; and let none know how poor I was, for I was ashamed, you know, ma'am, or I am sure they would have helped me, for they are a kind people, I will say that for them, and ought so to do, I am sure. Well, I pawned some of my things, my cloak even, and my silk bonnet, to pay honest; and as I could not do no otherwise, I left them in pawn, and, with the little money I raised, I set out forwards on my road to Dublin again, so soon as I thought my boy was able to travel. I reckoned too much upon his strength. We had got but a few miles from the village when he drooped, and could not get on; and I was unwilling and ashamed to turn back, having so little to pay for lodgings. I saw a kind of hut, or shed, by the side of a hill. There was nobody in it. It was empty of every thing but some straw, and a few turf, the remains of a fire. I thought there would be no harm in taking shelter in it for my children and myself for the night. The people never came back to whom it belonged, and the next day my poor boy was worse; he had a fever this time. Then the snow came on. We had some little store of provisions that had been made up for us for the journey to Dublin, else we must have perished when we were snowed up. I am sure the people in the village never know'd that we were in that hut, or they would have come to help us, for they be very kind people. There must have been a day and a night that passed, I think, of which I know nothing. It was all a dream. When I got up from my illness, I found my boy dead—and the others with famished looks. Then I had to see them faint with hunger."

The poor woman had told her story without any attempt to make it pathetic, and thus far without apparent emotion or

change of voice: but when she came to this part, and spoke of her children, her voice changed and failed, she could only add, looking at Gerald, "You know the rest, master; Heaven bless you!"

All she had told was true, as was proved upon inquiry in Gerald's town of the people at whose house she had lodged, and those to whom she had paid bills, and with whom she had pawned her clothes. Her friends at Manchester were written to by Gerald's father; their answer confirmed her account of herself and of her husband.

Gerald and Cecilia rejoiced in having her exactness in truth thus proved; not that they had ever doubted it, but the housekeeper had been imposed upon by some travelling people lately, and they were glad that she saw that their *Snow-woman* was not a beggar or impostor. Impostor, indeed, she could not be, poor creature, as to the main parts of her story, her being buried alive in the snow, and nearly famished. Every thing they saw of her during the time she staid at Crofton's cottage increased the interest they felt for her—she was so grateful—so little encroaching—so industrious; as soon as ever she was able, in fact, before she was well able, she set about doing needlework for Mrs. Crofton. But Molly, as she told Gerald, would not take her work from her without payment; "I only shammed taking the work from her for nothing, dear, not to vex her, but I counted up what she earned unknown't to her, and see what I did (opening a chest), I got all her little *duds* back out of pawn—the black silk bonnet and all, which (added Molly, laughing), to the best of my opinion, is next to her children and husband, perhaps, what she is the fondest of in this life. Well, and even so, so much the greater the creatur's honesty, you know, that did not begrudge to give it off her head to pay her dues to the last farthing. By the same token she is as welcome as light to stay here with us till she's quite stout, and as long as she pleases, her and hers—if it were a twelvemonth."

This permission was no trifling kindness, for the house was so small that Mrs. Crofton, who loved to have it neat too, was much inconvenienced by her guests; she gave up her own bed and room to them, and slept in the kitchen. Molly was a true Irish hospitable soul, who would never count up or tell or hear tell of what she gave or lost. She would not accept of any payment for her lodgers from Gerald's father or mother, or remuneration in any form. Whatever was sent from the Castle was scrupulously set apart for the use of the *Snow-woman* and her children, or kept for them till it spoiled. Many times the woman, afraid of being a burthen, said she was well enough, quite well enough, to be stirring.

One day, after they had heard the poor woman declare that she was well able to go, Cecilia, as she was walking home, said to her brother, "Gerald, how very sorry that poor woman must be to get quite well; I remember I was very sorry to get *quite* well after my measles, because I knew that I should not have mamma and every body waiting upon me, and caring for me so very, very much. But then how dreadfully more your snow-woman must feel this—when all the wonder of her being buried alive is over, when we have no more questions to ask, and no more walking every day to see her, and no more pitying, and no more biscuits and broth and tea, and all manner of good things; and she must leave her warm bed, and Molly's comfortable house, and be turned out, as Molly says, into the cold wide world—and her children, one of them to be carried all the way, and the other to go barefoot. Gerald, at least I may give her a pair of my old shoes."

"But that will do little good," said Gerald, sighing, and he seldom sighed.

"I wish I could do more," said Cecilia, "but I have nothing. Oh! how I wish I could do something, mamma."

"You can make some warm clothes for the children, as you proposed yesterday, and I will give you flannel and whatever you want, Cecilia."

"Thank you, mamma; and you will cut them out, and I will work all day without stirring, mamma, or ever looking up till I have done. But even then it will be so very little compared with all she wants."

Cecilia now sighed more deeply than Gerald had sighed before.

"Gerald," she resumed, "I wish I was a fairy, even for one day, a good fairy, I mean."

"Good, of course; you could not be bad, Cecilia. Well, what would you do in that one day? I am curious to know whether it is the same thing that I am thinking of."

"No," said Cecilia, "it cannot be, because I am thinking, my dear, of so many different things. But, in the first place, I would wave my wand and in a minute have a nice house raised, like Molly's, for the snow-woman."

"The very thing! I knew it," cried Gerald. "Oh, Cecilia, if it could be!"

"There are no fairies left now in the world," said Cecilia mournfully, "that's all nonsense indeed."

"But I can tell you, Cecilia, there is still in the world what can do almost all that the fairies could do formerly, at least as to building houses, only not so quick quite—money."

"I guessed it before you came to the word, Cecilia; but what signifies that; I have no money—have you?"

"Some, but very little," said Gerald, feeling in his pocket, "too little, only pocket money. Oh, I wish, how I wish, Cecilia, I had as much money as papa has, or mamma," added he, stopping till they, who were walking behind them, came within hearing, and repeating his wish, added, "then I could do so much good."

"And if you had as much money as we have," said his mother, smiling, "you would want more to be able to do all the good you desire."

His father asked him to tell him what good in particular he thought he could do, and as they walked on Gerald stated, that in particular he would build, or buy a house ready built, "for the snow-woman."

"And furnished," interposed Cecilia.

"No, leave out the furniture for the present," said Gerald; "we cannot do every thing, I know, papa, at once. But seriously, papa, you have built houses for many of the tenants, and you have houses, cottages, one cottage at least, even now, to give to whoever you please, or whoever pleases you."

"Not exactly to whoever I please, or to whoever pleases me, but to those whom I think most deserving, and to those whom justice calls upon me to prefer. I have claims upon me from good old tenants, or their families, for every house I have to give or to let. How then can I give to a stranger, who has no claims upon me, merely to please myself or you."

"But she has the claim of being very wretched," said Gerald.

"And she has been buried in the snow," said Cecilia.

"And has been recovered," said her father.

"There's the worst of it," said Cecilia, "for now she is recovered she must go. We cannot help it, if we were to talk about it ever so much. But, mamma, though papa says people have never money enough to do all the good they wish, I think you have, for I remember about that cottage you built last year, you said, I recollect perfectly hearing you say the words, 'I know the way I can manage to have money enough to do it.' What did you mean, mamma, as you were not a fairy, how did you manage?"

Her mother smiled, but did not answer.

"I will tell you," said her father, "the way in which she managed, and the only way in which people, let them have ever such large fortunes, can manage to be sure of having money enough to do what they wish most—she denied herself something that she would have liked to buy, but that she could do without—she very much wished at the time you speak of, Cecilia, to have bought a harp, on which she knew that I should have liked to hear her play."

"I remember that too," cried Cecilia. "I remember the harp was brought for her to look at, and she liked it exceedingly; and then, after all, she sent it away and would not buy it, and I wondered."

"She could not have bought the harp and have built the cottage; so she denied herself the harp that year, and she made her old woman, as you call her, happy for life."

"How very good!" said Cecilia.

Gerald fell into a profound silence, which lasted all the remainder of their walk home, till they reached the lodge at the entrance, when, opening the gate, he let his mother and sister pass, but arrested his father in his passage:—"Father! I have something to say to you, will you *walk behind*?"

"Son, I am ready to listen to you, and I will do any thing in my power to oblige you, but you must explain to me how I am to walk behind."

"Oh, papa, you know what I mean; let mamma and Cecilia walk on, so as to be out of hearing, and we can follow behind. What I am thinking of, papa, is Garry Owen; you were so kind as to promise to buy him for me."

"Yes, as a reward which you deserved for your perseverance last year."

"Thank you, papa; but suppose, instead of Garry Owen—in short, suppose, papa, I were to give up Garry Owen."

"To give up Garry Owen!" exclaimed his father, starting back with surprise.

"I am not sure, papa, that I can bring myself to do it yet, I am only considering; therefore, pray, do not tell Cecilia or mamma. I want first to settle my own mind. If I were to give up Garry Owen, would you allow me to have the money which you would have paid for him, and let me do what I please with it?"

"Undoubtedly. But since you consult me, I strongly recommend it to you not to give up Garry Owen for any other horse or pony."

"For any other horse, certainly not, for I like him better than any other that I ever saw or heard of—the beautiful creature!" cried Gerald enthusiastically. "But if I could give him up, father, as mamma gave up the harp, would the price of him build a cottage for the snow-woman? And would you do it for me?"

His father's countenance brightened delightfully as Gerald spoke. "Would I do it for you, my son!" said he; but checking himself, he added, in a composed voice, "I would, Gerald. But are you sure that you would wish this to be done, that is the first point to be settled. Remember, that for this year to come I certainly shall not buy for you any other horse if you give up Garry Owen for this purpose: you must understand this clearly, and be prepared to abide by all the consequences of your own determination."

"Oh certainly, sir, I understand all that perfectly; I know it must be Garry Owen or the snow-woman, I never thought of any thing else; it would be cheating you or cheating myself. But I have not come to my determination yet; remember that, father, and do not say that I go back—you understand."

"I understand you, Gerald, as well as you understand me; so we need say no more about it till you have settled your mind."

Which he was called upon to do sooner than he expected. Before he had considered all the pros and cons, before he had screwed his courage to the sticking place, he was summoned to the fight; and well might his father fear that he would not come off victor of himself.

"Oh, Gerald!" cried Cecilia, running back to meet him, "Garry Owen is come! Garry Owen is come! that horse-dealer man has brought him for you—yes, Garry Owen, I assure you I saw him in the back lawn: they are all looking at him, mamma too! Come, come! Run, run!"

In the back lawn was a group of people, the groom, the helper, the gossoon, the coachman, and, distinguished above the rest, the saddler, with a new saddle on his back, and a side-saddle and bridle and bits glittering and hanging about him in most admired disorder. The group opened on Gerald's approach, and full in the midst, on a rising ground, with the light of the setting sun upon him, stood Garry Owen, his present master the horse-dealer beside him, holding his bridle as he curved his neck proudly. Garry Owen was of a dark iron grey, with black mane, tail, and legs.

"Such a pretty colour," said Cecilia, "and such a fine flowing tail—oh, what a whisk he gave it!"

"A remarkably pretty head," said Gerald; "is not it, father?"

"And how gently he puts it down to let mamma stroke it," said Cecilia; "dear nice little creature, I may pat him, may not I?"

"You may, miss; he is as gentle as the lamb, see, and as powerful as the lion," said the horse-dealer; "but it's the spirit that's in him will please Master Gerald above all."

"Yes, I do like a horse that has some spirit," cried Gerald, vaulting upon his back.

"Then there it is! just suited! for it's he that has spirit enough for you, and you that has the spirit for him, Master Gerald."

—See how he sits him!"

"Without a saddle or a ha'porth!" said the saddler.

"What need, with such a seat on a horse as Master Gerald has got, and such command?"

"Let him go," said Gerald.

"Take care," said Cecilia.

"Never fear, miss," said the horse-dealer; and off Gerald went in a fine canter.

"No fear of Master Gerald. See, see, see! See there now!" continued the master of the horse triumphantly, as Gerald, who really rode extremely well for a boy of his age, cantered, trotted, walked alternately, and showed all Garry Owen's paces to the best advantage. Suddenly a halloo was heard, huntsmen in red jackets appeared galloping across the adjoining field, returning from the hunt; Garry Owen and Gerald leaped the ditch instantly.

"Oh! oh!" cried Cecilia, "is the horse running away with him?"

"Not at all, miss—no fear—for Master Gerald has none. See there, how he goes. Oh prince o' ponies! Oh king of glory! See, up he is now with the red jackets—dash at all—over he goes—the finest leaper in the three counties—clears all before him, see!—there's a leap! and now, miss, see how he is bringing him back now to us, fair and *asy* see! trotting him up as if nothing at all; then I declare it's a sight to see!"

Gerald came up and sat, as Garry Owen stood still in the midst of them, patting the pony, delighted with him much, and with himself not more, but certainly not a little.

"Then he's the finest rider ever I see of his years," cried the horse-dealer in an ecstasy.

"The finest young gentleman rider that ever I see in all Ireland, without comparison, I say," pronounced the saddler, shutting one eye and looking up at him with the other, with an indescribably odd doubtful smile. In this man's countenance there was a mixed or quickly varying expression—demure, jocose, sarcastic, openly flattering, covertly laughing at the flattery, if not at the flattered; his face was one instant for the person he spoke to, the next for the bystanders. Aware at this moment who were standing by, he kept it as steady as he could. The horse-dealer, in eager earnest intent on his object, continued in his ecstatic tone.

"By the laws, then, I'd sooner bestow Garry Owen on Master Gerald than sell him at any price to any other."

As Master Gerald's father smiled somewhat incredulous, perhaps a little scornfully, the horse-dealer instantly softened his assertion, by adding:—"I should not say bestow, a poor man like me could not go to bestow, but I'd sooner sell him any price to Master Gerald, so I at would, and not a word of lie, than to any mortal living in the three counties, or three kingdoms entirely—and rason, for it's Master Gerald that would do Garry Owen most justice, and would show him off best; the fine horse should get the fine rider, and 'tis undeniable the young gentleman is that same any how."

"Kind father for him," said the gamekeeper; "and the very moral of the master, Master Gerald is. The very sit of the father when first I seen him on a horse. Then may he be like him in all."

"And 'specially in having a good horse always under him," said the horse-dealer. "Who would have a right to the *raal* good horse but the raal good gentleman born?"

"Which the family is, and was from father to son time out of mind, as all the world knows and says as well as myself," added the saddler; "Father and son seldom comes a better."

Gerald's father, who had been for some time pacing up and down impatiently during this flow of flattery, had been more than once tempted to interrupt it. Disgusted and vexed as he was, and afraid that his son would be duped and swayed from his good purpose, he could hardly refrain from interference. But he said to himself, "My son must meet with flatterers, he should learn early to detect and resist flattery. I will leave him to himself."

"Father, are you gone? are you going?" cried Gerald, "I want to consult you. Will you not help me with your judgment?"

"You know my opinion of the horse, my dear Gerald," said his father; "as to the rest, I must leave you to yourself.—The

money is ready for you."

As he spoke he took Cecilia by the hand to lead her away, but she looked as if she had a great mind to see more of Garry Owen.

"Pray, papa, let me stay," said Cecilia, "with mamma; mamma will walk up and down."

Her father let go her hand and walked away.

"May be Miss Cecilia could ride this pony too?" said the groom respectfully to Gerald.

"To be sure," said the horse-dealer; "put her up, and you'll see how considerate Garry Owen will walk with the young lady."

Cecilia, mounted on Garry Owen, was led twice round the back lawn, Gerald delighting in her delight.

"And the young lady is a great soldier too," said the horse-dealer.

"I did not feel the least bit afraid," said she, as she jumped down, and patting Garry Owen now with fearless loud resounding pat, she pronounced him the gentlest of dear little creatures, and "oh how glad I am," continued she, "that you are to belong to brother Gerald; many, many, many a pleasant ride I shall have upon you, Garry Owen—shall not I, Gerald?"

Gerald smiled; "I cannot resist this," thought he, "I must have Garry Owen."

"The only thing I don't like about him is his name, Gerald; I wish, when you have him, you would call him by some prettier name than Garry Owen—call him Fairy, Good Fairy."

"Or talking of fairies and fairy horses, if you had a mind to an odd Irish name, Miss Cecilia," said the gamekeeper, "you might call him Boliaunbuie, which is the Irish name for the yellow rag weed that they call 'the fairies' horses,' because the fairies ride on them time immemorial."

While the gamekeeper was making out some fitness in this conceit, which struck his own fancy, but nobody else's, perhaps, the housekeeper came out to give to her mistress some message, in which the name of the snow-woman (a name which had been adopted below stairs as well as above) was often repeated.

"What! do you say that she is going to-morrow?" inquired Gerald.

"No, sir, but the day after she has fixed, and will come up here to take leave and thank all the family to-morrow. A grateful creature, ma'am, and not encroaching she is, as ever breathed, not expecting and expecting, like the rest, or too many of them. I've promised to buy from her some of the little worsted mittens and gloves she has been knitting, to put a few pence in her poor pocket."

This speech brought back all Gerald's thoughts from Garry Owen to the poor woman. He turned his back on the pony, took Cecilia aside, abruptly opened the matter to her, and asked if she could be contented if he should give up Garry Owen.

It was a sudden change. "Oh, could there be no other way?"

"None."

"Well, dear Gerald, do it then; oh never mind me! I am only sorry for your not having the beautiful pony; but then it will be so good of you—yes—yes—do it, Gerald, do it."

The generous eagerness with which Cecilia urged him acted directly against her purpose, for he felt particularly sorry to give up what would be such a pleasure to her. With uncertain steps and slow he walked back again to those who waited his decision, and who stood wondering what he could be deliberating about. His speech, as well as his walk, betrayed signs of his inward agitation. It would not bear reporting; the honourable gentleman was scarcely audible—but those round Garry Owen gathered from what reached their ears that, "in short he did not know—he was not quite sure—he was not determined—or he was determined not to purchase Garry Owen, unless he should change his mind."

The auditors looked upon one another in unfeigned astonishment; and for half a minute silence ensued. The master of the horse then said in a low voice, in Irish, to the saddler, "What can be the cause? The father said he had the money for him."

The saddler, in a low voice, gnawing a bit of a leather strap, without turning head or eyes as he spoke, replied, "It's the housekeeper—something she put into his ear was the cause of the change."

"Just as your honour *plaases*, Master Gerald, Sir," said the horse-dealer, stroking Garry's nose, "which ever way you think proper, Master Gerald," said he, in a tone in which real anger struggled and struggled in vain with habitual servility and professional art, all care for his moneyed interest forgotten in his sense of the insult which he conceived aimed at his horse; he continued, as he turned to depart, "I thank my stars then Garry Owen and I can defy the world, and all the slanderers, backbiters, and whisperers in it, whomsoever they be, man, woman, or child."

Cecilia looked half frightened, Gerald wholly bewildered.

"I don't understand you," said he.

"Why, then, master, I ax your pardon. But I think it is asy understanding *me*. Its plain some person or persons have whispered through another, perhaps"—glancing towards the spot where Gerald's mother was sitting drawing the group—"something, myself can't guess what, against me or Garry Owen—a sounder horse never stepped nor breathed, I could take my affidavit, but I will not demean myself, I should not be suspected, I don't deserve it from your honour; so I only wish, Master Gerald, you may find a better horse for yourself, if you can get one in all Ireland, let alone England."

He turned Garry Owen to lead him down the hill as he spoke. Gerald, feeling for the man, and pleased with his feeling for the reputation of his horse and for his own suspected honour, now stood in his way to stop him, and assured him that nothing had been said to him by any human being to the disadvantage of Garry Owen or of himself.

But prepossessed with the belief, as is but too common in Ireland, and often too just, that some one had been belying him, the indignant horse-dealer went on in the same tone, but, seeming afraid of failing in respect to young master, he addressed his appeal to the groom.

"Just-put-the-case-the-case-was-your-own!" Nine words which he uttered with such volubility that they sounded like one, and that one some magical adjuration. "Just-put-the-case-the-case-was-your-own, would not ye have some feeling? Then, if by the blessing of luck I had been born a gentleman, and a great young gentleman, like Master Gerald, why, in his place, I'd give up an informer as soon and sooner than look at him, who-some-dever he was, or who-some-dever she was, for it was a she I'm confident, from a hint I got from a frind."

"Tut, tut, man!" interposed the saddler, "Now, Dan Conolly, you're out o'raon entirely, and you are not listening to Master Gerald."

"Then I am listening to his honour—only I know it is only to screen the housekeeper, who is a favourite, and was never my frind, the young gentleman spakes—and I'm jealous of that."

This was more incomprehensible than all the rest to Cecilia and Gerald. While they looked at each other in amazement, a few words were whispered in Irish by the cunning saddler to the enraged horse-dealer, which brought him to reason, or to whatever portion of reason he ever had.

The words were—"I must have mistaken, may be he'll come round again, and be for the horse."

"Why then, Master Gerald, sir, I crave your pardon," said the horse-dealer in a penitent tone, "if I forgot myself and was too free, then I was too hot and out of rason; I'm sensible I'm subject to it. When a gentleman, especially one of this family that I've such a respect for, and then above all, when your honour, Master Gerald, would turn to suspect me—as I suspected you was suspecting me of going to tell you a lie, or misleading of you any way, about a horse of all things. But I mistook your honour—I crave your honour's pardon, Master Gerald."

Gerald willingly granted his pardon, and liked him better for his warmth.

"About Garry Owen, above all, I had no occasion to be puffing him off," continued the master of the horse, turning to him proudly. "Then the truth is, it was only to oblige you, Master Gerald, and his honour your father, who was always my

frind, as I ought to remember and do—it was only on that account, and my promise, that I brought Garry here *the* day, to make you the first offer at the price I first said; I won't be talking ungenteel, it does not become me; but I'd only wish your honour to know, without my mentioning it, that I could get more from many another."

"I am glad to hear that," said Gerald; "that relieves me from one difficulty—about you, Conolly."

"Oh, make no difficulty in life, my dear young gentleman, on account of me. If you have made up your mind to be off, and to give up Garry Owen, dear sir, it's done and done," said the knowing and polite horse-dealer; "and 'tis I in this case will be obligated to you, for I have two honourable chaps in my eye this minute, both eager as ever you see to snap him up before I'd get home, or well out o' the great gate below; and to whichsomdever of the two I'd give the preference, he would come down on the spot with whatsomdever I'd name, ready money, and five guineas luck-penny to boot."

"Very well, then," said Gerald, "you had better ——." But the words stuck in his throat.

"Is it Jonah Crommie, the rich grazier's son, that's one of your chaps, Dan Conolly?" asked the saddler.

The horse-dealer nodded.

"Murder, man!" cried the saddler, "would you let him have Garry Owen? The likes of him—the squireen! the spalpeen! the mushroom! That puts me in mind of the miller, his father, riding formerly betwix' two big sacks to the market, himself the biggest sack—Faugh! his son to be master of Garry Owen!"

"They ought not to look so high, them graziers and middlemen, I admit," said the horse-dealer; "the half gentleman might be content to be half mounted—but when there's the money."

"Best not for him to be laying it out on Garry Owen," said the saddler, "for even suppose Garry would not throw him and break his neck at the first going off, I'll tell you what would happen, Jonah Crommie would ruin Garry Owen's mouth for him in a week, and make him no better than a garron. Did any body ever see Jonah Crommie riding a horse? It's this way he does it," lugging at the bridle with the hand, and the two legs out. "It is with three stirrups he rides."

All joined in the laugh, groom, coachman, helper, gossoon, and all. Garry Owen's master then protested Jonah Crommie should never ride him. But the other offer for Garry was "unexceptionable—undeniable."

"It is from Sir Essex Bligh, the member. Sir Essex wants an extraordinary fine pony for his eldest son and heir, young Sir Harry that will be; and he rides like an angel too! and what's more, like a gentleman as he is too. Accordingly, Monday morning, next hunt day, the young baronet that will be is to be introduced to the hunt, and could not be better than on Garry Owen here."

The whole hunt, in full spirit, was before Gerald's eyes, and young Sir Harry on "Garry Owen in glory." But Gerald's was not a mean mind, to be governed by the base motives of jealousy and envy. Those who tried these incentives did not know him. He now decidedly stepped forward, and, patting the horse, said, "Good bye, Garry Owen, since I cannot have you, I am glad you will have a gentleman for your master, who will use you well and do you justice. Farewell for ever, Garry Owen." He put something satisfactory into the horse-dealer's hand, adding, "I am sorry I have given you so much trouble. I don't want the saddle."

Then, turning suddenly away, Garry Owen was led off; and Gerald and Cecilia hastened to their mother, who, in much surprise, inquired what had happened.

"You will be better pleased, mamma, than if Gerald had a hundred Garry Owens," cried Cecilia.

At that moment their father threw open his study window and looked out, well pleased indeed, as he saw how the affair had ended. He came out and shook Gerald by the hand with affectionate pleasure and paternal pride.—"Safe out of the hands of your flatterers, my boy, welcome to your friends! I am glad, my dear son, to see that you have self-command sufficient to adhere to a generous intention, and to do the good which you purpose."

Gerald's father put a purse containing the promised price of Garry Owen into his hand, and offered to assist him in any way he might desire in executing his plan for the snow-woman. After some happy consultations it was settled, that it would be best, instead of building a new house for her, which could not be immediately ready, to rent one that was already finished, dry, and furnished, and in which they could set her up in a little shop in the village. Whatever was

wanting to carry this plan into execution, Gerald's father and mother supplied. They advised that Gerald should *give* only a part of the sum he had intended, and *lend* the other part to the poor woman, to be returned by small payments at fixed periods, so that it would make a fund that might be again lent and repaid, "and thus be continually useful to her, or to some one else in distress."

"Gerald," said his father, "you may hereafter have the disposal of a considerable property, therefore I am glad, even in these your boyish days, to have any opportunity of turning your mind to consider how you can be most useful to your tenantry. I doubt not, from your generous disposition, that you will be kind to them; but I feel particular satisfaction in seeing that you early begin to practise that self-denial which is in all situations essential to real generosity."



THE SPANISH WIDOW AND HER CHILDREN.



"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

Antonia and Juan were the children of a poor Spanish widow named Paula Sevilla, who lived in a small cabin in one of those secluded valleys which are to be found in the mountainous districts of Spain.

The produce of the chestnut trees that shaded their lonely dwelling, the vegetables and esculent roots that were cultivated in their small plot of garden ground, with the milk of two or three goats, formed the whole subsistence of Paula and her fatherless children: but contentment, which softens the hardest lot, shed its blessings over their cottage, and the widow and her children never broke bread without having first lifted up their hands, in silent gratitude, to Him whose bounty provideth food for his creatures, from the children of men, down to the humblest insect that crawleth in the dust.

Pedro Sevilla, the husband of Paula, had followed the humble and peaceable life of a shepherd and herdsman, till that disastrous period when the lawless ambition of Napoleon Bonaparte caused Spain to become the seat of warfare,—making many a happy home desolate, many a wife a widow, and many a mother childless.

While feeding his flocks on a distant part of the mountain, Pedro was summoned to join the troop which had been raised in the defence of his country; nor was he allowed the melancholy satisfaction of bidding farewell to his wife and children, but was instantly marched away to the distant camp.

The flock returned bleating to the fold that night without their shepherd, and Paula beheld her husband no more;—he fell, defending one of the secret passes of his native mountains, overpowered by numbers.

Antonia and Juan wept with their mother, or strove to comfort her with hopes that it might yet be possible that their father would return; but Paula had seen and talked with those who had looked on the dead face of her husband, and she felt that she was indeed a widow, and her children fatherless. But hers was a common case; every hamlet contained widows that mourned for the beloved partners who had fallen in the war, and Paula submitted herself humbly to the chastening hand of affliction, and said, "it is the will of the Lord."

Antonia and Juan were kind and dutiful children to their mother, and were so fondly attached to each other, that their chief happiness appeared to consist in being near one another, to render acts of kindness, by which they might give proofs of their mutual affection.

Together they tended the little flock; all that the rapacity of the enemy had left them. There was no crag so steep but Juan would climb it, if Antonia but cast a wistful look at the mountain flowers that hung upon its brow. The clustering hazelnuts or mountain berries he sought for to fill her little rush basket. If the goats strayed, it was Juan who hastened to recall them, while Antonia rested on the grass, or seated on some mossy stone beside the little rill that flowed rippling over its rocky bed, dancing and sparkling in the sun-beams, pursued her knitting or plied her needle with industrious zeal.

As these children resembled each other in features, so they appeared to be alike in mind; they loved the same pursuits, the same flowers, the same walks—to sing the same songs, and to listen to the same tales; and the countenance of Paula would brighten into smiles of maternal affection, as her ear caught the sound of their sweet joyous voices in the valley, chanting snatches of the old Moorish ballads which she had been accustomed to sing to them in happier days. Sometimes she turned her wheel at the cottage door, as they stood before her, their little hands fondly linked together, listening with alternate tears and smiles to her songs or tales of other times.

About this time the inhabitants of the neighbouring hamlets were greatly distressed by the frequent incursions of the French, who were stationed among the passes of the adjacent mountains, from whose heights they made frequent descents to plunder the cottages of the peasantry, seizing the corn and food which had been preserved from their previous depredations; nor were there wanting instances of those who cruelly put to the sword, or levelled the dwellings of such of the starving peasantry as endeavoured to protect their little substance from their lawless and rapacious oppressors.

These acts of cruelty rendered the very name of a Frenchman hateful to the ears of a Spaniard; and those who would have shown mercy to the merciless invaders of their country would have been regarded by their indignant brethren as traitors

and enemies to Spain.

There is no hatred so terrible as national hatred, which is regardless of the universal love and forbearance that Christian should exercise towards Christian: it makes men forget, that in the midst of judgment it is good to remember mercy.

One evening, the widow's children were sharing with their mother the scanty supper of chestnut bread and goats' milk, when the ruddy gleam of light which the setting sun cast through the open lattice was suddenly intercepted by a dark shadow, and on looking up to ascertain the cause, they beheld a stranger, of pale and ghastly countenance, wrapped in a soiled and blood-stained soldier's cloak. His eyes were sunken, his cheek hollow, and his whole appearance bespoke the extremes of misery and famine. In broken Spanish, he requested a morsel of bread and a cup of water; but it was with the look of one who did not expect to receive what he asked for.

Paula drew back with a feeling almost of dread as the French accent fell upon her ear; the remembrance of her suffering country, of her dead husband, and all the woes she had lately witnessed, rushed upon her mind. "How can the destroyer of our corn-fields, of our vineyards, and our flocks, ask food at our hands? the murderers of our husbands and children seek our protection? the ruthless levellers of our hamlets look for shelter beneath our roof?"—thus was she about to exclaim; but, touched by the expression of hopeless wretchedness in the unfortunate soldier, she checked the unkind words.

At this moment the young Antonia, who had been regarding the poor stranger with tearful eyes, approached him, and placing in his hands her yet untasted supper, said, "take this; it is all the French have left us."

"God reward you, my child," murmured the soldier; and sinking upon a vacant bench by the cottage-door, and covering his face with his hands, he burst into tears.

A really benevolent heart cannot look on distress unmoved; and Paula, now forgetting the national hatred which existed among her people, remembered only the words of Him, who has commanded us to love our enemies, and to do good to those who hate and despitefully use us; who has said, "if thy enemy hunger, give him bread; if he thirst, give him drink." "And shall I refuse the cup of cold water which he has asked, and which my Redeemer has commanded me to bestow on all such as ask in his name?" she said, mentally, as she approached her unfortunate guest, and offered him shelter, rest, and such scanty food as the plunder of the enemy had left it in her power to bestow.

Paula was aware, that in affording an asylum to a French soldier, even for a few hours, she was exposing herself and her children to danger from the indignation of her countrymen; but she feared God rather than man: and said in her heart, "surely at my hands will God require the life of this stranger, if I refuse to give him food and shelter in his dire necessity."

The broken and hardly intelligible thanks and blessings of the war-worn soldier sent a glow of joy to the hearts of the generous widow and her children, who seemed to vie with each other in showing kindness to their sick and sorrowful guest. He was one of the fugitives, as he informed them, from a late conflict in which his regiment had been nearly cut to pieces; and had passed many days among the secret recesses of the neighbouring mountains, till, driven to desperation by hunger and thirst, he had ventured to ask for food at the door of an enemy's cabin.

For many days the poor foreigner remained extremely ill and weak, owing to the hardships he had endured, as well as from the breaking out of a wound which was not quite healed. Paula's knowledge of the medicinal properties of some of the mountain herbs enabled her to administer to the sufferings of her guest, who at length began to appear more cheerful.

He often spoke of a wife and children in his native country, on whose names he seemed to dwell with tender affection.

"If I return to my country," he would say, "my little ones shall learn to bless the names of Paula Sevilla and her children, as the preservers of their father's life. And should I ever have it in my power to befriend you, Paula," he added, with impressive earnestness, "you shall not find Philippe Marcet unmindful of the time when he was sick and wounded and you gave him shelter; hungry, and you fed him; thirsty, and you gave him drink; an enemy, and you befriended him."

A report had by some means reached the inhabitants of the hamlet, that a French refugee had been seen in the neighbourhood of the widow's cabin; and Marcet, alarmed for the safety of his generous hostess and her family, now resolved to leave them, his health being much restored.

Antonia and Juan, who had contracted a great friendship for their sick guest, now hung weeping on either side of him,

lamenting that the time of his departure was so near; while Paula, anxious for the further preservation of the life she had saved, prevailed on him to exchange his uniform for the simple habit of an Andalusian shepherd.

But when she saw him arrayed in the very dress that had been worn by that beloved husband whose blood had been shed by Marcet's countrymen, her heart yielded to the bitterness of her grief, and she burst into tears. "Go," she said, at length, turning weeping away, as Marcet expressed his inarticulate thanks for her kindness; "go, and should the chance of war ever place the widow and orphans of a Spaniard at your mercy, remember Paula and her children."

The soldier's heart was full; he wrung the hand of the widow in silence; and tenderly embracing her little ones, hastily left the cottage, and bending his steps towards a distant path that led through the mountains, speedily disappeared. Scarcely had his retreating shadow been lost among the rocks, before the cabin of Paula was surrounded by persons clamorously requiring her to give up the unhappy refugee. The widow and her trembling children were led out while every part of the cabin was searched. But there was a feeling of conscious virtue in the mind of Paula, which supported her courage, as with firm voice she replied to the charge of having concealed an enemy in her house; "that she had indeed afforded succour, and a temporary shelter to an unfortunate stranger, who was on the point of perishing from want and sickness. Soldiers and Spaniards!" she continued, addressing herself to them, with intrepid look, "should you not have blushed for your countrywoman, could she have been base enough to have betrayed to his enemies a dying fugitive, who threw himself on her protection? I know ye would, or ye are not Spaniards; nor the followers of that Redeemer, who has expressly charged us to forgive our enemies."

A murmur of applause was heard from among the crowd; and without offering any further molestation to the family, they slowly dispersed towards their several homes.

The long lonely winter passed heavily away, and the returning spring found Spain still the seat of warfare, and suffering from the miseries of want and rapine. The troops of the enemy had again made good their station in the neighbouring plains, and frequent skirmishes took place between the two hostile forces.

"Mother, when will this frightful war be at an end?" asked the weeping Antonia, clinging to her mother's arm, as the distant report of a cannon shook their lowly cabin. "The end of all things is in the hand of the Lord, my child;" replied her mother, folding her hands meekly on her breast.

"Hark, mother! there is a sound of battle on the heights above," exclaimed Juan, who had been listening with intense eagerness to the distant tumult.

The roar of the musketry now became fearfully audible, and the dun wreaths of sulphurous smoke might plainly be discerned from the cottage door.

The widowed mother clasped her terrified children to her breast, while she raised her thoughts in silent supplication to the Lord: for she well knew "that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong; but that it is God that giveth the victory."

The event of the battle remained for a long time doubtful; at length a reinforcement of French troops decided the victory in their favour. The Guerillas were obliged to retreat to their secret holds in the mountains; and the enemy, elated by their success, proceeded to plunder and lay waste the adjacent villages, destroying with fire and sword the habitations of the unfortunate peasants. Nor did the humble dwelling of the Spanish widow escape their notice; a band of the ruthless soldiery had surrounded it, and were already on the point of levelling it to the ground, when a stern voice commanded them to desist, and a French officer hastily approached the spot where stood the widow, with her children clinging in terror to her knees.

A cry of joy burst from the lips of Antonia and Juan, as the sounds of that well-remembered voice reached their ears; and springing towards Philippe Marcet—for it was indeed the French fugitive, whom they had sheltered and befriended—they implored him to save them from these cruel men.

"Soldiers!" he said, "touch not, I command, any thing belonging to this widow and her children. She saved the life of your captain, when he must have perished but for her generous aid. Take not a morsel of bread from her, not let one single stone be removed from her hearth, as you would answer for it with your lives. Paula Sevilla," he added, turning towards her, "happy am I, that the life you once preserved has proved the means of protecting you and your children from the lawless violence of these men; nor need you fear, for the name of Philippe Marcet will be sufficient to protect you

from any further molestation." While he yet spoke, the cries of distress from the neighbouring hamlet smote on the ears of Paula, and blanched the cheeks of her children.

"You have saved the lives of your friends, generous Signor," said the widow; "add yet further to your goodness, by shielding from the vengeance of the soldiers the inhabitants of yon village."

The French officer heard no more, but hastened to use his influence to save the hamlet from destruction,—nor was his voice heard in vain; and the grateful peasants now acknowledged they had reason to bless the hour when Paula and her children gave shelter and succour to a distressed enemy!



THE FISHERMAN'S FAMILY.

BY THE OLD SAILOR.



"As he spoke,

A sea burst o'er them, and their cables broke!
Then, like a lion bounding from the toil,
The ship shot through the billow's black recoil;
Urged by the howling blast—all guidance gone—
They shuddering felt her reeling, rushing on—
Nor dared to question where; nor dared to cast
One asking look—for that might be their last."

"Come aft here, my lads, and haul down another reef in the mainsail!" exclaimed a hoary veteran, who stood at the helm of a fishing-smack, which was buffeting the waves at the entrance to the British Channel, one October evening, when the lowering of the clouds and the freshening of the breeze gave strong indications of a south-westerly gale. The order was promptly obeyed; and the snug little craft again breasted the lofty surge, like a bird upon the wing, skimming the foaming tops of the billows.

"We shall have a rough night, father," said a middle-aged man, whose hardy countenance had borne the washing of many a salt-sea spray; "the sun is setting on yon bank, and tinges the ocean with his reddening hue. The summits of the Scilly Isles appear like dying watch-fires through the sullen haze; and these, you know, are sure prognostics of a rising gale."

"Then let it come," replied the veteran. "He whom the winds and the seas obey can, when it pleaseth him, allay their fury and command them, 'Peace, be still!' But go, Richard, have the trysail ready, and get the storm-jib up; for, by the long swell from the westward, I am of opinion there has been bad weather to windward, which will be down upon us before long: so let us have all low and snug before dark, my lad! And James," continued he, to a noble-looking fair-haired lad, "James, set St. Agnes' light-house by the compass, for the fog will thicken presently; and yon Seven Stones^[1]—worse than the plagues of Egypt to a sailor—look far from tempting, crested as they are with feathery foam."

"I hope mother won't be uneasy about us," rejoined the youth, as he laid the edge of his hand upon the compass, directing it towards the light-house: "we have been a fortnight at sea, grandfather, and the tempests must have howled round the cottage fearfully o' nights. It has blown hard ever since we came out, and not a fish caught; besides losing part of our nets!"

"What, still uttering complaints?" exclaimed the veteran. "Look at your brother yonder, on the windlass-end; how fearlessly he sits and watches the ill-omened bird,^[2] which triumphs in a storm."

"He does not think of home," replied the youth. "But what would become of mother, and Jane, and the little ones, should the Fisherman's Family go to wreck?"

"The Fisherman's Family go to wreck!" reiterated the old man, stamping his foot upon the deck; "she'll weather many a gale yet, my boy! Look at this white head!"—and, as he uncovered his hoary locks, that wildly wantoned in the breeze, he presented a fine picture of Time steering inexperienced youth through the dangerous channels which beset human life. "Look at this white head!" he exclaimed; "the snows and storms of sixty-seven winters have passed over it, yet was I never deserted in peril by HIM in whom I have placed my trust. Your mother knows what a fisherman's life is. Ay, boy, it was my pride to fortify her mind against adversity. But go, James, and help your father to reef the bowsprit; for we shall have the gale here presently."

And a gale indeed they had; for scarcely was the glory of the day departed, when the wind, like a destroying angel, came sweeping over the surface of the deep, and dashing the billows up to heaven with fury. Night shed its blackness on the scene, whilst the dense fog rendered it more drear and horrible. Poor James thought of his mother and his happy home; whilst his brother Ned, though two years his junior, seemed like a child of the tempest exulting in its lavish wildness.

The Fisherman's Family (for such was the name of the smack) rode buoyant on the waves; she rose and fell with the heave and set of the sea, like the swift-winged swallow when it stems the tempest; and the small bark scarcely felt the roughness of the billows, where larger vessels would have laboured fearfully with their heavy burdens.

It was about ten o'clock, when the crew of the smack thought that, amidst the roaring of the storm, they could distinguish the reports of signal-guns at a distance; and every ear was anxiously inclined to discover the quarter whence the sounds proceeded. At length they became more distinct, and it was soon ascertained that the vessel must be nearing them. The fog was still thick and gloomy, yet occasionally there were intervals of partial clearness; and it was during one of these breaks that a ship was descried drifting at the mercy of the wind and waves; for it was evident, from the wild course she was pursuing, that all management was lost. Her foremast, bowsprit, and maintop-mast, were gone; and, having nothing left aloft to steady her, the billows beat against her sides and dashed raging over her. The smack showed a light, which was immediately answered, and two guns fired to acknowledge the near approach of succour.

"That ship has lost her rudder as well as her masts," exclaimed the old man; "she has struck somewhere: and now, my lads, to render them assistance!"

"Oh, if we should get her safe into Mount's Bay, grandfather," said James, "and a good salvage^[3] awarded, what would mother say to us then? I should not mind the loss of the nets."

"Let us save their lives," said Ned, "at all events; and if we can save the ship too, so much the better."

In the course of another hour, the smack was hailing the ship, and found that her rudder had been knocked away upon the rocks, at the same time that the masts and bowsprit had fallen with the shock. She had also sprung a leak under the bows, and the pumps could barely keep her free. As, however, no immediate danger was apprehended, the smack kept near the shattered vessel until daylight, when the father of the youths contrived to get on board, by running close alongside and catching a rope with a noose at the end, which he passed securely round his body, and was hauled through the water by the ship's crew. The smack then dropped astern with a stout rope, and, by her judicious movements, acted as a rudder to the large vessel, which was got before the wind for the Bristol Channel; but the tow-rope parted soon afterwards, and the gale increased to a downright hurricane.

Upon an eminence on the coast, between Penzance and the Land's End, stood a substantial dwelling, which, though designated a cottage, presented every token of homely comfort. A quantity of fishing-materials, hung out to dry, showed it to be tenanted by those hardy sons of the ocean who brave the greatest dangers to procure fish for the markets; whilst the air of neatness and enjoyment also proved it to belong to one of that class of men who risk their existence to save the lives and property of others—the undaunted pilot. A winding and declivous path led to the shelving rocks below, which formed a small inlet or bay for vessels of a light draught, that had received the name of the Smugglers' Gap, from its having been frequently used by those daring outlaws in their illegal trade.

On the same evening that has been already mentioned, an anxious mother quitted the cradle in the cottage to look out towards the sea for those whom next to heaven she loved best. Her foreboding eye had witnessed the same prognostics of the gale, and, with a heavy heart, she resumed the mother's watch over her sleeping infant. A fair and beautiful female, about fifteen years of age, was attending to the duties of the house; a boy of ten years sat by his mother's side, gazing on her care-marked countenance; whilst a girl of three years was sharing her supper with a rough but favourite dog, on the hearth before the fire.

"I must feed poor Dorey, mother," said the little one; "for James told me to be kind to him. Poor Dorey!" continued she, patting his head, "I wish James was here."

"You should remember, Mary," replied the mother, "there are also your father and your grandfather."

"And Edward," added the boy; "I miss him very much; for he used to help me up the rocks; and I am afraid to scramble along alone."

"All are equally dear to us, William," rejoined the mother; "and all are equally under the care of Providence. Yes; I trust the Fisherman's Family is safe."

"Who gave her that name, mother?" inquired William; "you promised to tell me."

"I did, my child; and, as my heart is heavy, I will now relate to you how it happened. Your grandfather, in his younger life, was brought up to expect a genteel competency; for his father was a wealthy ship-owner at Liverpool. He was sent to sea early, whilst his brother remained at home to manage the business. But that brother was cruel and treacherous; he weaned his father's affections from the poor sailor, and got a will made entirely in his own favour. Your grandfather, not suspecting the wickedness of his brother, was frequently absent on long voyages; and, when only in his twentieth year, he married a poor girl, who had no other recommendation than her beauty of person and integrity of heart. He married, too, without the sanction of his father, who from that hour forbade his presence, and never saw him more—for the angry parent died a few months afterwards. On arranging his father's affairs, your grandfather found himself disinherited; and his brother, who had dissipated a great portion of the property previous to the old man's dissolution, gathered the residue together and embarked for the East Indies. But your grandfather was not wholly destitute; he had saved something handsome to begin life with, and purchased a share of a ship, of which he obtained the command. Still adversity pressed upon him: his ship was captured by the enemy, and he returned (for they did not detain the prisoners then) to England almost penniless. My mother had relations at St. Ives, and thither the poor sailor and his wife repaired. They were received with welcome; and he, unwilling to leave my dear mother for any length of time, commenced his career as a fisherman and a pilot. Success crowned his labours; and he not only obtained a handsome maintenance, but was enabled to purchase a vessel of his own. In this house I was born, and, when I grew up, was married to your father, and had a family. The old vessel was broken up, and a new one built, which was called by the name it now bears. Oh, how many anxious hours does your father pass for the fisherman's family ashore, and how many days of earnest solicitude do I endure for the Fisherman's Family at sea! But go, my children, the storm is coming—go to your beds; but first kneel to the Creator, and humbly implore his guardian care for the poor mariners."

Heavily passed the night with the apprehensive mother: often did she approach the dizzy edge of the steep cliff; but no other sounds were heard besides the continued howling of the tempest and the roaring of the breakers. Fervently were her petitions offered up before the throne of Omnipotence; and amidst the appalling demonstrations of Almighty power, did the creature of his will plead with her Creator. His voice was heard upon the storm, proclaiming dominion and majesty; but hers mingled with it, as, in prostration of heart, she earnestly supplicated mercy.

Morning appeared, but the desired vessel could not be distinguished. The sea presented one wide sheet of foam, with here and there a dark object driven like the ocean-weed upon the waters. At the close of the day, a dismasted ship, with a smack in company, was seen through the dim haze drifting towards the shore. They were yet several miles distant; but hope for the ship there was none, unless the gale abated. The intuitive eye of the mother readily recognized the little bark, that held, as she supposed, her father, her husband, and her two sons; and all the several relative bonds were linked more closely round her heart. Their occupation was manifest—they were waiting to assist fellow creatures in distress; and the abundant prayer for the safety of all spontaneously ascended from her lips.

Night veiled them from observation; but the bold seamen of the neighbourhood, headed by the reverend pastor of the village, as a magistrate, remained in readiness to act as circumstances should require. Apprehension sat on many a furrowed countenance, and dark anticipations filled many a feeling breast. But language would fail to describe the agony which suspense and fearful agitation wrought in the mother's heart.

At length, about midnight, the report of a heavy gun echoed among the rocks, and told that the devoted ship was near at hand: the flash had pointed out her position, but nothing could yet be seen. The pastor, with his resolute band of determined boatmen, hastened to the shore: report followed report; fires were lighted on the rocks, to show that land was near; but still no object could be discerned.

The storm came more heavily, and vivid lightnings rent the frowning clouds; then, when the glaring flash threw its stream of awful splendour on the feathery foam, that fated ship was seen struggling with the waves. As a last resource she had let go her anchors; and there she lay, like the soul of the mighty wrestling with despair. Another gun—and yet another—but help was hopeless. From the shore no assistance could be given; every attempt to get through the raging surf was useless; and the brave boatmen were compelled—an unusual circumstance—to be sad spectators of the scene.

The ship rode heavily, as the long rolling waves came foaming in. Suddenly a shriek was heard upon the shore—a wild cry: the vessel had parted her cables, and the streaming lightning showed her careering towards the rocks with resistless force. Onward she came (as was now plainly visible) through the hissing foam. Still onward, onward, she urged her desperate course, till a tremendous crash—a loud yell—proclaimed that her stout timbers were shattered, and many a stouter heart was buried in the waves.

The ship had struck on that part of the shore where the rocks were steepest; and the wreck remained wedged in firmly between two craggy knolls, not more than one hundred fathoms from perfect safety. But even that was a fearful space; for the heavy breakers rolled over the sunken rocks, and dashed with wild fury. Body after body came on the surge, and were thrown upon the land; but life had fled, and no effort could restore animation to the mangled and disfigured corpses.

The inhabitants of the adjacent village, young and old, were crowded on the strand; and amidst the group was the venerable rector. Often, when the vivid flash illumined the foaming billows, and showed the deck of the rending vessel, he rushed with his horse towards the spot; but the barrier was impassable, and the bitter shriek rang upon his tortured ear. "Oh, that I could die for them!" he exclaimed. "Father of mercies, stretch forth thine hand and save!" Willingly would he have given his life for theirs; for he was prepared to meet his God, whilst they would be hurried into the presence of their Maker without a moment for repentance.

Morning began to dawn, and dawned in horror; but with its earliest beam the smack was seen about a mile from the shore, under snug sail, and apparently in safety. The anxious mother was with the villagers, but the children remained at the house upon the cliff. Sleepless had been their night; and at the break of day, the terrified Jane, with William and the little Mary, stood upon the shelving rock, above the yawning gulph which had already entombed many of their fellow creatures. They could see the Fisherman's Family, as the light became more clear; and it was evidently the intention of those on board to run for the Smugglers' Gap—a small red flag having been hoisted at the mast-head, to require the boatmen on shore to hold themselves in readiness to give assistance.

At this moment, whilst the children were standing gazing at the vessel, the heavens seemed to be rent asunder, and the red blaze of the forked lightning darted forth: it struck the smack, and masts and sails came tumbling down in one general wreck. "My father! my father!" shrieked the horror-stricken Jane, recoiling backward, and grasping her brother round the neck, as if she feared that he too would be torn away. The little Mary clung on the other side, and even the poor dog looked with instinctive dread towards the ocean.

But, though the smack was dismasted, her hull still continued to float; and every wave drove her nearer to the shore. Oh, what an agonizing sight was that to the fond mother and her children! The former ran hurriedly about amongst the boatmen, exhorting and imploring them to use their best exertions to snatch her relatives from death. Her spirit seemed to rise in proportion as their peril increased; and she laboured to forward the preparations which were making as a last effort to rescue the little crew.

The ship still continued grinding between the rocks, and victim after victim was hurried into eternity. From portions of the wreck which had drifted on shore, it was conjectured that she was a free trader from Calcutta; and the number of hands and passengers were calculated at seventy. The boatmen had made repeated attempts to get a rope from her, but all their efforts had failed. At length, part of a mast, with five individuals clinging to it, was seen to be rent away from the body of the wreck, and lifted by a mountain surge clear over the craggy rocks. Another wave came rolling in, but, just before it reached them, it raised its awful crest, and, with a tremendous roar, like the famished panther when seizing its prey, dashed furiously upon their heads. They were seen for a few moments, hurled confusedly amidst the bubbling eddies, and then disappeared. Once more the shattered mast floated, but there were now only three, who clung to it with desperate energy as they neared the shore, and hope of life revived. The next wave was still more raging than the last, but its fury was spent before it reached the swimmers; and "They are safe! they are safe!" was shouted from the shore. The boatmen plied their oars with redoubled strength, and in a few minutes the three men were hauled into the boat, which immediately stood for the safest landing-place.

The villagers hurried to the spot, and the anxious mother, hoping to hear tidings of her family, stood foremost among them, as the boat ran upon the strand. But who can paint her joy and her terror, her delight and her agony, when she saw that one of the individuals saved was her husband! They were soon clasped in each other's arms; but the bitter recollection that lives infinitely precious to them were still in jeopardy, with scarcely a hope of rescue, roused them to exertion. Richard turned to the boat, and assisted an elderly man to land. The moment the latter touched the ground, he fell upon his knees, and offered up a thanksgiving to the Creator: he then clung round the neck of Richard, and blessed him as the instrument of his preservation. "I should have sunk," said he, "but you supported me: you snatched me from death, and—but I have power to show my gratitude."

The other man saved was a seaman, who reported the ship to be the "Isabella," from the East Indies. How many had perished he could not tell; but there were yet more than half of the crew and nearly the whole of the passengers on board.

By the aid of their glasses, the boatmen could discern the hapless creatures, as they watched the success of those who had been saved; and several launched themselves upon the fickle element, lashed to broken pieces of the wreck. The boats were again on the alert, and the boatmen had the satisfaction of picking up all that the billows allowed to come within their reach.

But now the principal attention was devoted to the smack, as she neared the craggy barriers to security. The old man, with his two grandsons, and two men, who formed the crew, had been actively engaged in getting up a boat's mast, on which they hoisted a small sail, so as to give the vessel steerage-way: and it seemed to answer the required purpose; for the little bark, with impetuous haste, rushed onward to the Smugglers' Gap, as if bidding defiance to suspense.

Pale anxiety sat on every countenance. "Is there any hope?" inquired the rector, addressing a grey-headed veteran, who from infancy had been inured to the tempest, and had the character of a bold intrepid sailor. Report made him the associate of a gang of smugglers; but, humane as he was brave, many a shipwrecked mariner was indebted to Donald Ferguson for his life. "Is there no hope?" inquired the rector. A look of melancholy anxiety was the only answer. The rector repeated his question.

"Sailors never despair, sir," replied Donald; "and if they once get well in the——but stop; I have no right to disclose to any one, much more to you."

"Yet," rejoined the rector, "when yon gallant ship has been lost, can so small a vessel be saved?"

"Have hopes, sir," replied Donald; and then turning away—"Ned!" he exclaimed to a rough hardy-looking fellow, well drenched with the surf, who immediately approached him. They whispered together for a few minutes, and then Ned ran from place to place, selecting the strongest and most daring of the boatmen for some particular purpose.

"Ned," exclaimed Donald again, "overhaul the hawser down, ship the capstan-bars, and be all ready. Remember, it is life or death, my hearty! I myself will hook her on."

"No, no," said Richard, "that shall be my doing; you are old, Donald."

"But not feeble," replied the veteran. "Your anxiety would betray you; besides, you have a wife and other children, but, if old Donald goes, nobody will miss him. Do as you are bid, my boy; and now for the marks!" He waved his hat, and two conspicuous objects were instantly raised at different distances on the rocks, to act as a guide to those in the smack where to make their passage.

Who can describe the feelings of the spectators as they looked on with doubtful apprehension and silent astonishment? The smack was now so close to the shore, that every one was visible. No bustle or confusion prevailed: all seemed ready with cool intrepidity to attend to their several duties. The old man stood stationed at the helm, and, with steady gaze, kept his eyes fixed on the beacons. Now was she lifted up to heaven, and borne with amazing rapidity through the outer breakers; again she sunk, and disappeared between the hollow seas.

"She's gone! she's gone!" exclaimed the rector; but, in an instant, the vessel again mounted on the topmost wave, and rushed with surprising swiftness through the foaming surge. At this moment a dreadful broken sea came raging with all its fury: it burst upon the deck, and seemed to bury the little craft in the dark abyss. Breathless agonizing fear filled every heart, and groans and shrieks mingled with the gale. But again the smack rose, though the helm was now deserted, and the vessel seemed abandoned to her fate. Once more, however, was hope revived; for young Edward, with cool determination, ran to the tiller, and directed her headlong course.

The vessel had reached the secret channel, known only to the illicit trader: she neared the beach; the sea again struck her, and she was carried by its force through the inner breakers. A wild shout of joy arose from the shore, as the smack gained the smooth water, agitated only by the receding swell; but, at this instant, she struck the ground and rent in twain, the retiring surge carrying back the shattered remnants towards the rocks. And now the hardy race of brave boatmen, reckless of danger, plunged headlong in the waves. Old Donald took the lead: he grasped the arm of the lad James, and turned towards the shore; the surf threw them up with violence, and would again have returned them to the sea, but Donald seized the rope which had been overhauled down, and kept his firm grasp: in a few seconds more, they were safe on land. Richard succeeded in saving his father-in-law, aided by the boy Ned, who swam like a fish, and seemed to triumph in the element. Not a soul was lost of that little crew; and relatives and friends flocked round, rejoicing in their deliverance.

The grandfather, with Richard, his wife, and the whole of the fisherman's family, accompanied by the stranger who had been saved from the ship, hastened to the cottage on the cliff. They entered the abode amidst kind congratulations, and the stranger was ushered into the best apartment. He sat down, blessing his deliverer, and forming schemes, in his own mind, to testify his gratitude. Suddenly his eyes were rivetted on a picture that hung suspended over the mantel-piece: it was a portrait of the unkind father who had disinherited his son, through the false representations of a still more cruel brother; but it had been preserved by the old man as the last relic of his family. The stranger gazed upon it with earnestness, and he then eagerly turned to the aged fisherman. Their eyes met, and again both looked at the picture. The stranger covered his face with his hands, and groaned bitterly.

"I do not value the loss of the vessel," said Richard, "so that we all have met together again. But come, father," he continued, "let us kneel and offer up our praises to the throne of grace."

"Stop, stop!" cried the stranger convulsively, "my presence would be a clog upon your prayers. I, too, had a father: that picture was his. Years have not effaced the remembrance from my mind. And you *must* be," he continued, falling on his knees before the venerable old man, "you are, my noble-minded, my much-injured brother."

Oh, what a meeting was this! Animosity had long since subsided; and the word "brother" revived all the attachments of their boyish days.

What need of saying more? they knelt together; and whilst without the storm raged—within the cottage,

"The peace of God, beyond expression sweet,
Fill'd every being humbled at his feet."

They rose, and the stranger—stranger now no longer—was received into the circle with delight. A man entered the room, announcing that several of the seamen, who had been saved from the wreck, were waiting outside the house, to know if they might take shelter in some out-buildings. The kind-hearted mother would not permit this, but succoured them under the same roof with her children, and gave them plentiful refreshment. The stranger went amongst them, and they instantly rose from their repast with the utmost respect. From them he learned that the whole of the remaining portion of the crew and passengers had quitted the ship. About thirty had perished, but the rest, nearly forty in number, were safe on land. Another man now entered, and addressed the stranger as "Sir William Russell." Yes! he was great—he was wealthy; and, from that hour, his influence and his wealth were devoted to the promotion of the happiness and welfare of the "FISHERMAN'S FAMILY."



THE DESERTED VILLAGE;

OR, THE CONFIDING BOY.

BY MRS. HOFLAND.



"What will become of me? the sun is going down, the children are weary and hungry, and I have neither food nor shelter for them; would I had remained in my own country, and perished among my own kindred."

Such was the exclamation of Janet Ferguson, as she clasped the babes in her arms closer to her breast, and pressed with deep emotion the hand of her little Sandy, whose strength was failing, though his spirits were unsubdued. Like many others, she had been driven from the Highlands of Scotland, to seek a far distant home in Canada, and until within a few hours had never repented the step adopted by her excellent husband; but sudden misfortune had befallen her.

Their dwelling in the New World was chosen in a spot of such singular beauty, as to compensate for that magnificent scenery remembered so fondly by all those who are born in the "land of the mountain and the flood." It was situated within a short distance of the river St. Lawrence, at that part where it enriches the Richelieu Islands, where the general temperature is mild, the soil productive, and the advantages offered by the country concentrated. So profitable had it proved to the industrious farmer, that he was now gone (with several of his neighbours), to the great fair at Montreal, for the purpose of selling grains and furs, which had been partly purchased from the native Indians.

The inhabitants of this new settlement called their village Benoni, (child of sorrow,) yet until this day it had little merited the name, but the arrival of an old man journeying much farther, who had learnt by chance that a tribe of Indians was on the way to attack them during the absence of their men, placed all who remained in a state of the utmost terror. They were out of the line of the roads, had no connection with the river, at a distance from all neighbours, and ignorant of the way by which their foe was advancing; but of that foe every one entertained the most lively terror. A few only of the red men (such they call themselves) had found their way to Benoni for the purposes of trade, and from them the women and children held aloof, for they had heard such terrifying details of the ferocity of this people, their treachery, cruelty, and even cannibalism, that the bare idea of falling into their hands was insupportable to them all.

The sad news ran like wildfire from house to house, and the inhabitants of each ran out, and, impelled by the same fears, soon met in the open ground, and began to consult on the possibility of saving themselves and their little ones, for more they could not hope to effect. All their cattle, furniture, and humble wealth, must be instantly abandoned, and it was further deemed advisable, that they should separate into small parties, and hide themselves in the trees and among the rocks, in order to escape from those merciless savages to whom their homes were abandoned, and who, in thus dividing them, half accomplished the ruin they meditated.

Thus situated, Janet wandered forth with her two children, suffering under such anguish of mind as few even of the unhappy can conceive, for not only was she bereft in a moment of all the comforts of life, but she was parted from that beloved husband, whose presence would have consoled her, and she did not know whether she was not going every moment still farther from him. In the horror and confusion of the hour, she had omitted to enquire the route to any settlement, or learn if any of her neighbours could rejoin each other at a particular spot—in their terror they had been scattered like a flock of sheep, but they were not blest with the power of instinct to unite again.

Janet had dragged her weary limbs forward in the darkening twilight, sometimes looking from side to side in hope of discovering a distant dwelling, or a safe resting-place, when all at once, upon turning a projecting knoll, she was startled by the light of a bright fire, around which were seated a number of Indians, with their squaws (or wives), and little ones. The sight was in itself so surprising and curious, that although poor Janet was sensible these were the enemies she dreaded, and those who were perhaps on the road to destroy her forsaken home, and her beloved neighbours, she stood for a moment to gaze upon them.

The men were nearly naked, and painted in such a grotesque manner as to render them objects of horror; for being prepared for an expedition, their heads were almost covered with vermilion, and their ribs marked out by broad black stripes, whilst their hair was bristled up in the midst of the head, so as to increase the look of fierceness natural to their

stern and sedate countenances. The appearance of the women was much more prepossessing, as they were generally arrayed in cloaks and trowsers, of blue cloth, which had been purchased at Montreal, and as they sat behind their husbands, and appeared to wait upon them as servants, it struck Janet that they were civilized and gentle, but under severe subjection to the terrible-looking savages before her. Just as she was turning round, to retrace her steps in silence, her little girl, who had been slumbering, awoke, and terrified by the blazing light and the strange objects, uttered a loud shriek, which instantly drew the attention of the Indians to the alarmed and fugitive mother.

In a few moments Janet and her children were surrounded by the Indians, and led towards their fire, and since all resistance to their will was evidently useless, the poor woman very wisely appeared willing to accompany them, and to throw herself upon their mercy in such a manner, that if they had indeed any traces of humanity in their dispositions, it might be called forth in her behalf. For this purpose, she sought eagerly to still the cries of her affrighted child, by turning its eyes away from the objects of dread, whilst she whispered to her little boy, in a voice of cheerfulness, "Sandy, my man, dinna be feared o' the guid folk around ye; be good-humoured an' civil, and doubt not their kindness: it is fra them your dear father gets the fine furs an' the sweet honey, my child."

This little boy was naturally courageous, and habitually obedient; his father had very wisely taught him to exert his mind (young as he was) by sustaining certain hardships, and practising certain privations, which rendered him manly, enterprising, and enduring. Poor Sandy had been hungry for the last two hours, but he knew his mother could give him no food, therefore he did not wound her by complaints which were useless. His feet were sore, but since he could not be carried by her, he would not grieve her by describing his sufferings; and since he knew she always told him the truth, and knew what was the best to be done, he determined to conquer his own fear of the Indians, and rouse himself, notwithstanding his weakness, to fulfil the wishes she had expressed.

In consequence of this resolution, when they had arrived at the circle of Indians, he directly went up to the Chief, who was an old man, seated on a mat, and, after asking his name, he sat down beside him, and, with an air of confidence, showed him his swollen feet, and informed him that he was hungry.

The chief, in a few words, but to Sandy's joy they were uttered in English, informed him that his name was Apaeth-Yaali, or the stranger's friend, and as such he gave instant orders to his squaw to feed the mother and her young.

Long stripes of the dried flesh of the reindeer, and the Indian maize, compounded into delicate cakes, were immediately placed in the hands of Janet and her famishing babes; and so glad were they to receive sustenance at a time when nature craved it so importunately, that they fancied they had never tasted food so sweet, nor met with friends so kind. The extraordinary gravity of the Indians made Janet afraid of speaking, lest she should offend those whom she desired to propitiate; but her little boy, refreshed and gladdened, crept closely to the old warrior, and, with all the endearing confidence of childhood, thus addressed him, despite of the tremendous appearance he had assumed.

"My good master, Apaeth-Yaali, I am very much obliged to you for my good supper and the kindness you have shown to my dear mother and little Janet. I shall always consider you as my friend, and I wish you would tell me the names of the rest of these warriors."

"The one nearest to thee," replied the warrior, "is called Split-log—the one now standing near thy mother is Red-jacket. These are named by thy own people. He who is now advancing to us, is Nico-Mingo."

"And a very good-looking fellow he is," said Sandy, "and though he has not a British name, I like him as well as any body here."

So saying, little Sandy by a strong effort arose, and ran to the Indian, who having heard his words, received him kindly, led him to his hut or wigwam, and gave him the place of repose so necessary for him. The wants of his mother and her child were also supplied, and, after a night of profound repose, the worn-out family awoke to find themselves in the midst of the enemies they had dreaded, and be sensible not only that they were uninjured, but most hospitably entertained.

Hour after hour, and day after day, passed on for the following week, and Janet continued as if spell-bound with the Indians, who laid no injunctions on her will, but continued to supply herself and children with food, and to receive her attention to their own babes, and especially her kindness to their sick, with much gratitude, though few words passed on either side. Janet still in great awe, and considering herself a prisoner, dared not rouse their anger by attempting to escape, which was not likely to succeed, and even if it should, "might she not meet with some other tribe who were less

kind and civilized than these?"

In the mean time Sandy made himself perfectly at home amongst them—he joined the women in weaving mats, the men in fishing, listened with profound attention when any of the orators made a speech, though he could not understand more than half of it, and when he was permitted, sung them the songs of his country, and taught their children the national dance. His good humour, frankness, and courage, so won the heart of Nico-Mingo, that he offered to adopt him as his own son, to clothe him in the finest skins, tattoo his whole body with stars and flowers, feed him with the best venison and the purest maize, and finally to instruct him how to scalp his enemies, and endure their utmost torture, like the "son of the brave."

To this generous offer, the boy replied as far as he was able, in the language adopted by the people amongst whom he was placed.

"Warrior, you have given me food when I was famishing, and rest when I was weary. I love you, and I desire to handle the tomahawk like an Indian, and to brave danger as the son of a Chief; but, like you, I love truth also, and it compels me to say that I desire to see my dear father, and to live in my own home above all other enjoyments."

"Thou hast well spoken," said the old chief Apaeth-Yaali.

Nico-Mingo and the rest were silent, but there were no symptoms of anger in their manners, and when Janet retired for the night as usual, she did so under the belief that they had forgiven the honest assertion of her little Sandy, though they might not grant the request which was couched in it, of restoring him to his father.

Soon after the sun arose, Janet and her children were awakened by the voice of Nico-Mingo, who thus addressed his sleepy little companion:—

"Son of my love, arise, behold a journey is before thee."

They all instantly arose, and followed their conductor, who proceeded with the customary silence of this extraordinary people, until Sandy gave token of weariness, by taking hold of the hand of his guide, and casting a look of enquiry towards the wallet girded round his waist. The Chief comprehended his wants, and sitting down on the first green sward near them, he presented each of the party with sufficient food for breakfast—the remainder he packed up with care, for the Indians are always frugal, (having great difficulty in supplying their wants,) and this he placed on the arm of Sandy, after which they recommenced their journey.

Janet had for some time conceived that the kind-hearted savage was leading them towards Montreal, but as that was a distance of at least sixty miles, she could not suppose one apparently so considerate would expect that she could walk all the way, or that he would dismiss them in a district where there were apparently neither roads nor dwellings, with only such provision as so little a boy could carry. Still she dreaded making enquiries and giving offence, and was endeavouring to render Sandy the medium of learning their guide's intentions, when he suddenly stopped, and, after drawing the boy closely towards his bosom, thus spoke:

"To the left of that little mountain, you will find the blue stream which waters your own dear village of Benoni. Return to it, and remain in peace, for thy father even now is on his way thither in alarm and sorrow. Sandy, take thou the last embrace of him whom thou hast loved and trusted, and who for thy sake promises safety to thy people."

"Do not go—do not leave us," cried the boy, "come to our cottage and eat bread, dear Nico-Mingo; my father will give you ale and beef, my mother will knit gloves and stockings for you, and I—Ah! I will love you and sing to you, and call you my Indian daddy."

At this moment, Janet, thankful for all she had been delivered from, not less than all she had received, warmly seconded her son, and with tears protested that neither he nor his tribe should ever visit Benoni without receiving a Christian welcome.

Nico-Mingo answered, "I believe thee, because thy child did not mistrust us; therefore, when the leafs falls, and the cold winds blow, I will visit the door of thy husband's wigwam."

The Indian departed, and the steps of the exiles were quickened, until they reached the clear stream, on the banks of which they joyfully pursued their way, and by the hour of noon were thankfully sheltered in Benoni, which but for

Sandy's courage and obedience, would now have been a heap of ashes. They found several fugitives returned, who were ready to expire with terror at the sound of a human voice, but had yet been driven by want to re-enter their dwellings. Others had pursued the path to Montreal, and were bringing thence succour which was no longer wanted. With the earliest of these Sandy Ferguson appeared, and with a joy the wretched can alone appreciate, found unharmed, and happy, the beloved wife and children whom he believed to have perished.

When peace and plenty were restored, when the harvest had been gathered, the fuel stacked, and the leaves were falling, Sandy said, "My new daddy will come soon," and his prophecy was fulfilled, for as Ferguson was returning late one night from his labour, he found a red man seated on the outside of his cottage door.

"What do you want, friend?" said Sandy, thinking him one of the traders in skins whom he had formerly dealt with.

"I come to smoke the calamat of peace with the pale man who is father to little Sandy."

"Then welcome, thrice welcome, brave Nico-Mingo," said the farmer, as he led him into his house, where he was welcomed with ardour by little Sandy and his mother, the former exclaiming, "I knew he would come—you know I told you he would come—the red men always speak truth, and Nico-Mingo is the best of them all."

"Son," said the Chief, "I come to thee, and to thy people, whom thou savedst by thy confidence once, and mayest again save, if they will, like thee and thy house, be simple and sincere."

"I will answer for all Benoni," said Sandy.

"And I will confirm his words," said the father.

The Indian ate his supper, smoked his reed, and lay down on the mat provided for him, in token of reliance on this promise, and the next morning opened a treaty of commerce which eventually benefited alike the settlement and the tribe, and which, at the instance of this powerful chieftain, was named, "The Treaty of the Confiding Boy."



THE BEAR OF ANDERNACH.

BY W. H. HARRISON.



On the banks of the majestic Rhine, between Bonn and Coblenz, stands the ancient town of Andernach, a place of some note in the times of the Romans, and celebrated, in modern days, for the grandeur and picturesque beauty of the surrounding scenery.

At the period to which this narrative refers, the laws by which society professed to be governed were loosely framed and badly administered; and unless a man, who required justice of his neighbour, could demand it with some score or two of armed attendants at his back, his chances of obtaining it were but slender. Among other evils resulting from such a state of things, the aggressions of might against right were formidably frequent; and numerous bands of robbers were accustomed to establish themselves in the ruined castles on the heights, from which it was difficult to dislodge them, and whence they made descents upon the surrounding country, spreading dismay and desolation wherever they went.

The most dreaded of these hordes was a band commanded by a man whose brutal manners and ferocious disposition had procured for him the *sobriquet* of "The Bear of Andernach;" a name which struck such terror into the inhabitants of the district, that it became a by-word with which silly nurses were wont to frighten refractory children into obedience. Indeed, the incursions of these banditti were so daring and desperate, that none but those powerful nobles who could shut themselves up in their strongly-fortified castles were secure from attack. The strong-hold of this renowned but lawless chieftain was on the top of a high mountain, which, being very precipitous on one side, and artfully fortified on the other, was inaccessible, except by one path. This avenue, or pass, was never without a sentinel, who, from his commanding situation, was enabled to descry the approach of strangers at a great distance, and, consequently, to summon his comrades to the defence of their fortress before the arrival of an enemy.

About a mile from the town of Andernach, and on a slight eminence commanding a view of the Rhine, stood the castle of Baron Stormenbach, a nobleman of considerable wealth, who had retired from a short but active and honourable career of military duty, to enjoy himself in the bosom of his family, which consisted of his accomplished and amiable wife, and the survivor of their three daughters. Agnes Stormenbach was, at that period, in her eighth year,—a pretty little fair-haired blue-eyed girl, as merry as a grasshopper, who returned the dotting fondness of her parents with all the ardour of an affectionate and tender heart. She was clever, generous, and good-tempered, and kind and obliging to every one about her, down to the humblest domestic of the household; but, among her many virtues, she had one fault, and that was a grievous one. It arose out of the volatility of her character, and consisted in this;—that, although she listened to the injunctions of her parents with the sincerest intention of obeying them, her resolutions frequently yielded to the first temptation that crossed her path.

The grounds within the walls of the baron's castle were very spacious, and, among them, was a grass-plot or lawn, richly bordered by flowers and shrubs, in which Agnes was wont to play for hours together by herself, and which communicated with the high road by a sort of wicket-gate, or postern. Now, this gate, although it might be opened by a child from within, was perfectly secure from intruders without. Agnes had been repeatedly and earnestly cautioned by the baron and his lady from venturing beyond this barrier; and, never having been particularly tempted to transgress the injunction, she continued to observe it for some time. One fine summer morning, however, Agnes was amusing herself, as usual, in her favourite play-ground, when, chancing to look through the wicket, she perceived some children of the village gathering wild flowers on a bank on the opposite side of the road, which wound under the castle wall; and, although the flowers in her own garden were infinitely finer, and in much greater profusion and variety than those which the rustic girls were culling, she felt an irresistible desire to join their party.

Like many other thoughtless little girls, whom it is so difficult to persuade that those who have lived much longer in the world must know better than themselves, Agnes reasoned upon the commands of her parents instead of obeying them. "Those little children," said she to herself, "are not doing any harm, and, if they were in any danger, it is not likely that their parents would allow them to play there; therefore, if it is safe for them, it must surely be safe for me; and perhaps, after all, mamma was only afraid I should spoil my frock, which, as the day is so fine and dry, I shall certainly not do." Accordingly, although not without some smittings of conscience, she drew the bolt of the wicket, and joined the little villagers, who joyfully received this accession to their playmates, presenting her with the choicest of their flowers, and

vying with each other in doing homage to the daughter of so great a man as the baron.

The vanity of Agnes was gratified by these marks of deference, and she was in high good-humour with herself and everyone around her. It is but fair, however, to mention that her manners were always kind and conciliating towards her inferiors, she having, in this respect, profited by the example of her amiable parents. On a sudden, however, there was heard a trampling of horses, and, the next instant, there was a scream from the villagers, who, with one voice, cried, "The Bear of Andernach! The Bear of Andernach!" and fled in every direction, while poor Agnes, who was almost paralysed by fear at the mention of the dreaded name, was seized by one of the party, who placed her before him on his saddle, and galloped away with her to the mountains, before the inmates of the castle could be summoned to attempt her rescue.

The baron and baroness were, of course, overwhelmed by consternation and sorrow when the melancholy tidings were brought to them, particularly as they well knew that, without the combination of such a force as the contrariety of interests among the neighbouring feudal barons rendered it difficult, if not impossible, to assemble, any attempt to recover their lost darling by dint of arms would be worse than useless. Nor was their affliction alleviated when, on the following morning, they found a billet, which, enveloping a stone, had been thrown through an open casement of the castle, purporting that, unless a ransom, to an amount infinitely above what the baron could raise, were paid within three days, the head of his daughter should be sent to him as a memento of the robbers' revenge for some act of summary justice which he had done upon a member of their community.

In the mean time, Agnes was hurried away by the robbers, who halted not until they had reached their strong-hold at the top of the mountain, where, after having been nearly shaken to pieces, she was taken from the horse by a most ferocious-looking man, with huge black whiskers, and a hideous scar upon his forehead—the Bear of Andernach himself—and conveyed to a dark subterranean cell or dungeon, the only access to which was by a rope ladder from a small aperture at the top, which appeared to have been made through the grass-grown courtyard of the ruin. The robber gave no reply to her earnest entreaties to be restored to her parents, but shook her roughly off, and departed, taking care to draw up the ladder after him.

Poor Agnes, on finding herself alone in this horrid chamber, burst into a fit of uncontrollable grief; but, if she wept bitterly at the consequences of her disobedience, it is but justice to say that she wept also from the sense of it, as well as for the anguish which she well knew it must have occasioned to her affectionate and doting parents. Repentance, although it cannot atone for our errors, is one of the means which have been mercifully pointed out to us of obtaining forgiveness, and Agnes' next impulse was to fling herself upon her knees, and implore the assistance of that Power, to whom her parents' pious instructions had taught her to commend herself, as to "a very present help in time of trouble."

The night came, however, but brought no deliverance; the morning dawned, and she was still a prisoner; she, who had been accustomed to repose upon a bed of down, to be fed on the choicest viands, and to be waited upon with the most assiduous attention, found herself alone upon the cold damp floor of a miserable dungeon, with a loaf of coarse bread and a pitcher of water by her side.

The birds were singing merrily on the trees that grew over her prison-house, and, as she contrasted their liberty with her own loss of it, her grief was augmented, and she gave vent to her feelings in another flood of tears. On a sudden, she perceived the dungeon grow considerably darker, and, although fearing to encounter the forbidding visage of the Bear of Andernach, or one of his ferocious followers, she ventured to lift her eyes towards the aperture, and, to her surprise, beheld the features of a beautiful boy, about her own age, who called out to her,—"Little girl, little girl, why do you cry so?"

"Because," was the reply, "they have shut me up in this dark cellar, and I can't get out."

"Then it was very wicked of them to do so," rejoined the little stranger; "for I am sure you look like a good little girl, and my poor mamma used to say that nasty dark hole was only made to put naughty children into."

"O yes, I have been a very naughty girl indeed," said Agnes; "for I did not mind what my papa and mamma told me, but went out of the wicket gate of the castle this morning to play with some of the children of the village on the flower bank, when those frightful-looking men came and carried me away, and shut me up as you see. But, indeed, indeed, little boy, if you will ask your mamma to come and let me out, I will never disobey my parents again—indeed I will not."

"Ah!" replied the little fellow, sorrowfully, "my poor mamma died a great many weeks ago, and they have buried her

down by the chapel there, in the valley. I did cry so when she could not speak to me any more, and call me her dear Arthur; but the priest says she is happy now, and I am sure she was not happy then; for she would weep so, and wished so much to get away from this nasty old castle, but that naughty ugly Wolfgang would not let her. He wants me to call him papa, but I won't though; for my mamma said he is not, and I won't have him for a papa."

Agnes, continuing to look up towards the mouth of the dungeon, espied a portion of the ladder by which her captor had descended with her, when she cried out to her little visiter—"O! do pray let that ladder down again, I could get out then; I know I could!"

"Ay," was his reply; "but you don't know that there is that wicked Otto guarding the pass down there, and he would soon carry you back again, and perhaps beat you, as he has done me many a time. Ah! there he is," continued Arthur, peeping over the ruined wall; "how cross he looks! I wish he'd go away, or fall sleep; I'd soon show you the road down the mountain. And there's his leather bottle too: I've heard them say he'd go any where after his bottle—let's try."

So saying, the little fellow, snatching up a hazel rod with which he had been playing, crept softly along the ruins, until he got within a few feet of the robber, and, concealing himself behind a projecting rock, stretched forth his stick, and unperceived, set the bottle rolling into a hollow, which the owner could reach only by making a *détour* of several hundred yards, by a difficult and somewhat dangerous path.

The sentinel, grumbling at the circumstance, without detecting the cause, cast a sharp look down the pass, to satisfy himself that no one could reach his post from below before his return, and set off in quest of his bottle.

Arthur, full of exultation at the success of his experiment, hastened back to the prisoner, lowered the rope ladder, with the use of which he was familiar, and assisted Agnes in ascending it. No sooner was she set at liberty than, hand in hand, they ran off as fast as their little legs could carry them, and succeeded in passing the post of the sentinel some time before he could regain it; and it was not until they had arrived almost at the foot of the mountain that he discovered their flight. Firing his carbine, less, perhaps, with a view of injuring them, than of alarming a party of his comrades who were carousing in a remote part of the ruins, he hurried back for his horse, and a detachment was, consequently, soon in pursuit of the fugitives.

The latter, however, having once gained the valley, were enabled to proceed in a much straighter line than their pursuers, who, being mounted, were impeded by banks and fences, which the children could scramble over. They had already arrived within sight of the castle of Agnes' parents, and she was exulting in the prospect, when a sudden turn in their path brought them to the brink of a rivulet, which was too deep for them to ford. They simultaneously uttered a cry of terror and disappointment, and, casting a fearful glance behind them, perceived their pursuers, four in number, within a hundred yards of them.

At that instant a party of horsemen galloped up to the opposite bank of the rivulet, and Agnes, immediately recognising the baron as their leader, cried out, in an agony of terror, "O papa! papa! save me! save me!" The troop, who were superior in force to the banditti, dashed their horses into the stream, and, gaining the other bank, soon placed themselves between the fugitives and their pursuers, who, disappointed of their prey, scampered back to their strong-hold, to endure, as they best could, the reproaches of their commander for their want of vigilance.

My young readers will more easily imagine than I can describe to them the joy of the baron and his lady at the recovery of their daughter; and it is scarcely necessary for me to add, that they not only received little Arthur under their immediate protection, but took care of his future fortunes, justly considering themselves indebted to him for the restoration of their lost treasure.

Nor was the lesson lost upon Agnes, who, from that hour, added to her virtues that of implicit obedience, not only to the commands, but to the slightest wish of her affectionate parents.

My dear young friends! for whose instruction, and not amusement only, this story has been written, let not the moral it is intended to convey be addressed to you in vain; but learn from it the sinfulness of filial disobedience—a crime which, as far as my observation has gone, is more frequently punished in this life than any other offence not cognizable by the laws of man. Learn also, that the ears of our heavenly Father are ever open to the prayers of those who call upon him "in spirit and in truth;" and that he is able to work out our deliverance in circumstances apparently the most desperate, and oftentimes by means, to our fallible judgments, most inadequate to the end.



GOING TO MARKET.

BY JAMES BIRD.



Every one who had seen, admired the beautiful cottage of Dame Ashford. It was the abode of cheerful piety, and the home of content and happiness.

The dame was sitting in her ancient chair, and beside her stood her daughter, whose husband was pursuing his daily employment in the fields, while little Amy, with a basket upon her arm, her head decorated with her "Sunday bonnet," and her shoulders arrayed in the very *beau idéal* of dotted tippets, was listening to the manifold injunctions which her grandmother was giving her respecting sundry commissions with which Amy was intrusted, for the exemplification of her talents during this, her first essay at "Going to Market."

As her mother was to accompany her, Amy was confident of success, and this was observable in the placid smile that played around her lips, as she listened to the praises, the cautions, and the oft-repeated "Recollect, Amy!" of her kind-hearted grandmother. Her little brother Tom was busily employed in tying a cord around the neck of his favourite Shock, who, with great complacency, and with much serious canine submission in his countenance, awaited the commands of his juvenile master, without even once deigning to turn his eye upon his agile playmate, and sometimes teasing companion, *Mynheer Grimalkin*, who sat curled up in a half-dreaming insensibility, at the foot of the dame's chair, with all the gravity of a bearded Mussulman.

Dame Ashford doated upon her grandchildren, and prided herself upon being Amy's instructress: she was, moreover, not a little vain of her "acquirements;" for she could, as she had often affirmed, read "The Pilgrim's Progress" without spelling the words, and knew the first six pages of "Fenning's Universal Spelling-book" by rote. Besides, she had worked a sampler when at school, and had stitched "Good King Charles's Rules" upon the superficies of a chintz bed-curtain.

"Recollect, Amy," she said to her granddaughter; "recollect *all* the little things I have told you—when in the town keep close by the side of your mother, and"—here the old lady assumed an air of proud secrecy, and, bending to the ear of the little girl, whispered softly, "and—don't forget the two ounces of *best* Scotch snuff! You can buy it, Amy, of Pinch, at the corner of Market-street." To this important commission Amy promised to pay proper attention, and, with her mother, was soon on the road towards the county town, with a heart light and happy, the certain result of an amiable disposition, and of a constant willingness to obey her parents, and "all that were put in authority over her."

Little Amy and her mother had arranged their various purchases, and accomplished the principal object of their "Going to Market," and the former had seen all the most attractive objects which a market-town presents for the juvenile eye to wonder at, when Amy's mother proposed that they should immediately pursue their way homewards. "I have not bought Tom any thing yet," said Amy; "I love Tom, and *must* buy him something." Her mother, having commended the pleasing proof which Amy had given of her affection for her brother, suggested that she should purchase Tom something which might prove useful to him. "*Useful!*" rejoined Amy; "I will buy him a *pretty* thing." "My dear, that which is pretty is not always useful," replied her mother, accompanying this remark with a little proper advice upon the necessity of observing this distinction; but Amy either did not, or was unwilling to, comprehend the difference. "Why, mother, what a pretty doll I have—what a pretty whip Tom has—and what a pretty snuff-box my grandmother has!" "And in what consists the usefulness of these things, Amy? You nurse your doll—Tom whips the cats—and your grandmother takes snuff!" At this forcible, though somewhat homely, illustration, Amy turned her blue eyes timidly upon the ground, and, although she was unable exactly to understand the distinction between the *pretty* and the *useful*, or to comprehend why the object which possessed one of these qualities should not necessarily possess the other, she was still determined that the present which she intended for Tom should partake largely of the former attractive property.

As the child was about requesting permission to step into a neat-looking shop, situated near the spot where her mother and she were standing, their landlord and neighbour, Launcelot Lovechild, Esq., patted Amy gently upon the shoulder, took her hand, and led her silently into the shop. Her mother, after giving her child an injunction to wait a few minutes for her there, retired to arrange certain necessary preliminaries for her departure homeward.

A short time only elapsed before Amy beheld her mother returning. The little girl was already on the steps of the shop door, with a small packet in her hand, which she displayed with evident triumph. "A present for Tom!—a present for Tom!" "And what have you purchased, Amy?" inquired her mother. "I do not know—the gentleman gave it to *me*—but I shall give it to Tom—I love Tom!" The heart of the affectionate mother glowed with emotion when she heard her child's artless expression of her sisterly affection; while she imagined, from the size of the carefully packed parcel, that it was composed of a "*Humphry^[4] and Mendoza*," as the country-people used to call the thick, and—to speak like a *bibliopole*—24mo gingerbread cakes, which were formerly impressed with the two figures of the above celebrated pugilists; and which were often so temptingly exhibited to our juvenile eyes, and so lovingly pressed to our lips—alas! how many summers ago!

"I dare say, Amy, you have something there which is neither pretty nor useful," said her mother. Poor Amy scarcely replied; for the joy which she anticipated of adding to her brother's happiness was so great, that she repeatedly urged her mother to stimulate the short ambling of her pony to a respectable trot, that they might the sooner arrive at their cottage.

They soon beheld their humble but happy dwelling, glittering through the foliage of the trees, that gleamed in the reflection of a setting sun, whose day's pilgrimage had been one of unclouded brightness. They found Tom at the door, holding Shock by the cord which he had affixed to the dog's collar; and Amy, having first kissed her grandmother and given the dame an account of her market speculations, proposed an immediate inspection of her packet, which was examined with all due formality, and, to their surprise, it exhibited a small but elegant volume. "This is pretty, however, if it be not useful!" exclaimed Amy's mother. When Dame Ashford beheld the book, she felt that a subject presented itself which would afford her an opportunity of displaying the depth of her erudition, and the extent of her important reading, which had not been confined, she asserted, to the "History of the Wars," nor to "The Seven Champions of Chistendom," every word of which she believed to be literally true.

"What book have you there, my dear?" asked the old lady. Amy, though not a proficient in reading, was desirous of embracing every opportunity to learn; and feeling proud of exhibiting her power over the twenty-six giants of the alphabet, she gazed delighted upon the beautiful cover of the volume, and began to spell the title, while her grandmother listened with the profound look of a philosopher.

Amy commenced—"J, U, *Ju*." "O!" exclaimed Dame Ashford, "something about the *Jews*; truly, they have long been a despised and persecuted race—go on, Amy." "V, E, *ve*, N, I, L, E, *nile*." "Ay, ay," said her grandmother interrupting her; "I well remember the battle of the *Nile*—poor Nelson!—he made the French dance to a new tune there! go on, Amy, dear." "F, O, R, G, E, T, *Forget*." "No, no!" said the old lady quickly, "I don't forget it—that battle was fought on the first day of August, 1798—Nelson took nine ships from our enemy and burnt two—poor fellow! go on, Amy, I love to hear of those beautiful sea-fights!" Amy obeyed—"M, E, N, O, T." "*Menot!*" exclaimed her mother, "let *me* look at the book, Amy. Yes! I see now! JUVENILE FORGET ME NOT. What a beautiful present Mr. Lovechild has given you! Indeed, Amy," she continued, glancing her eye over the contents of the volume, "this appears both *pretty* and *useful*. I will read you all the nice stories in it, which I hope you will soon be able to do yourself; and remember, my dear, that whenever we see the *beautiful* and the *useful* united, they will always add both to our delight and our improvement."



THE YOUTHFUL PARTNERS.

BY MISS JANE STRICKLAND.



Let us all have one purse.—Proverbs i. 14.

"Sister Ellen, we have just received our allowance," said George Hamilton: "suppose we put our money together, and have only one purse between us."

"So we will," replied Ellen, "and resolve, in future, to make useful purchases, such as books, and work-boxes, and cottons, and tapes."

"And portraits of celebrated characters," returned George; "and if *they* are too expensive for our *pocket*, their images shall adorn our playroom mantel-piece."

"You are quite determined, I see, brother, by your saying our pocket, instead of our pockets," said Ellen, laughing. "Well, so am I. Pray how much have we got between us? We have just received a quarter's allowance from papa, who generously advanced it from twenty shillings a-year to twenty-four shillings. Well, six and six make twelve."

"Grand-papa gave us a crown a-piece at Christmas, and Aunt Catherine did the same, of which we have only spent a shilling each. Come, we will reckon. Oh, thirty shillings! If we had not laid out those two shillings in sweetmeats, we should have mustered one pound twelve between us," replied George. "Why, Ellen, we never were so rich in all our lives."

"But who is to keep the purse?" asked Ellen, thoughtfully.

"Why, it shall change owners every week; and, as I am the elder, I will be banker till Monday next."

"So it will be the firm of George and Ellen. How droll *Ellen and Co.* will look, when we enter our expenses in a memorandum book. Papa," continued the young lady, "George and I are going to have but one purse between us in future."

"My dear children, you had better remain as you were; for, as your tastes are very different, I fear you will not unite your interests with your money, and will, consequently, fall out."

"But we never quarrel, papa; we love each other too well for that," replied the brother and sister, looking tenderly at each other.

Papa felt doubtful, it was evident, whether their friendship would stand the test; but, as he never interfered in the management or expenditure of their pocket-money, the juvenile partners put their joint stock into one purse, of which George, for the present, was to be the keeper.

That very day an image-man came to the door, and George and Ellen expended three shillings of their money in the purchase of busts of the Duke of Wellington and the Princess Charlotte, which they placed upon the mantel-piece with mutual satisfaction.

"Papa, you were mistaken in thinking we should fall out," cried the partners: "we are still as loving as doves."

"I hope this harmony will continue, my dears," replied Mr. Hamilton; "but, remember, your partnership is scarcely of a day's standing: I shall be a better judge by the end of the week."

The following Saturday was a day of trial to the juvenile firm. Mr. Hamilton had occasion to attend an auction in the neighbourhood, and, at George's earnest entreaties, agreed to make him his companion. Things were going "dirt cheap," to use the phrase of the auctioneer; but it was a furniture auction, and chairs and tables were not in the compass of the united purse. Regard for Ellen's interests only prevented George from bidding for a set of fire-irons, that even papa said were worth double the money given for them. The next lot consisted of a pair of bellows, an iron tea-kettle, and three spoons of the same useful metal, all absolutely going for three shillings. Struck with the singular cheapness of these

articles, George pulled his father by the sleeve; but Mr. Hamilton was engaged in conversation with a friend, and did not attend to the hint. George nodded to the auctioneer, and the lot was knocked down to him. The sound of his son's name recalled Mr. Hamilton's attention to what was going on.

"So you have made a purchase, I find, George," said he, surveying the lot with a look of surprise.

"Yes, papa; all these useful articles for three shillings and threepence," replied George, unconsciously adopting the pompous manner of the auctioneer.

"I hope you will find them so, George; but what use you can have for bellows, and kettles, and spoons, I cannot even guess."

"But they are so cheap: mamma gave three shillings for a pair of bellows only the other day, papa."

"Then she has no occasion for these, George," replied his father: "I find nothing comes cheap unless its services are required."

George thought his mamma would gladly take the lot at a trifling advance; for, even if the bellows were not wanting, the iron tea-kettle and spoons would find in her a purchaser. But Ellen would naturally think he ought to lay out something on her account: however, for some time nothing was put up that appeared likely to suit her. At length, at the close of the sale, the following miscellaneous articles were submitted to the hammer:—a baby-house, a bundle of old almanacks, a "Ready Reckoner," a pair of soiled card-cases, a bag of shot, three gun-flints, a small watering-pot, several netting-needles and knitting-pins. A general laugh followed the auctioneer's enumeration of this his last lot.

"Some of these things will be of no use to Ellen; but then, the baby-house will suit her doll, and the knitting-pins and netting-needles are all in a girl's way, and I know she wants the small red watering-pot for her garden: so I think I shall bid." And George did bid: a slight competition followed; for some person run him, out of mischief, and finally left George the master of the whole lot at five shillings and ninepence. Ellen's partner certainly felt some misgiving as he paid down the amount of his purchases, and half repented of having expended nine shillings in things which they could have done very well without. "But Ellen must set the baby-house against the first lot," thought he, as he delivered his goods to the footman to be carried home.

When Mr. Hamilton and his son entered the sitting-room, they found Mrs. Hamilton examining the articles, as John held them in his hand.

"My dear love," said the lady, addressing her husband, "what did you give for these things?"

"You must ask George," replied he, laughing; "they are his purchases, not mine: they belong to him."

"To George!" repeated Ellen, in a state of alarm: "have you been laying out our money in an old leaky tea-kettle, a pair of bellows with a hole through the leathers, and three odious iron spoons?"

George looked disconcerted.—"I did not know the articles were damaged," answered he: "the auctioneer said they were as good as new, and as cheap as dirt: however, they only cost three shillings and threepence."

"Oh, extravagance!" sighed Ellen: "besides, if they had been good ones, of what use would they have been to us?"

"Well, but the sundries are all in your way; and if I bought the first lot to please myself, dear Ellen, the last I purchased entirely on your account."

"A bag of shot, three gun-flints, a bundle of old almanacks, and a pair of soiled card-cases, are likely to prove very useful to me!" remarked Ellen, pouting.

"Dear Ellen, I was obliged to buy these things, because your baby-house, and netting-needles, and knitting-pins, were in the same lot."

"My baby-house, sir, and netting-needles, and knitting-pins!" retorted Ellen, angrily: "I have not played with a doll these three years, and your fine needles and pins are as thick as skewers, and covered with rust,—in short, good for nothing."

"Well, Ellen, I was mistaken about the doll, and you know boys are no judges of pins and needles; but you really wanted

the watering-pot."

"But this has no rose: O George! George!" The pathetic tone in which Ellen uttered her brother's name overcame the gravity of both her parents. "How much of our money have you spent to-day?" continued she, after a pause.

"Nine shillings in all," was his answer.

"Nine shillings! in an old leaky tea-kettle, a pair of bellows that will not blow the fire, three hateful iron spoons, a worthless baby-house, a bundle of old almanacks, a pair of soiled card-cases, a roseless watering-pot, a set of rusty netting-needles and bent knitting-pins, a 'Ready Reckoner,' a——"

"I am sure the last article was quite superfluous," remarked Mr. Hamilton, laughing:—"Ellen, you have enumerated all these bargains, I think."

"Fortunately for me, George's week expires to-morrow," said Ellen: "I am sure I shall not spend the money so foolishly."

Ellen's parents were not quite so certain on this head as she appeared to be. However, the following Monday she was put in possession of the purse, according to the original agreement. A few days afterwards a Persian cat was offered for sale; and Ellen, who was fond of pets, gave half-a-sovereign for this elegant animal. Now, this was a large sum to expend at once, and her mamma told her so; but Ellen was so taken with her new favourite, that she hardly considered her dear. When George came in from his ride, the young lady displayed her pet with looks that demanded his admiration. To her great mortification, he turned away his head with an air of aversion, and retreated to the other end of the room.

"Now, dear George, do come and pat my pretty puss: one would think you were afraid of her claws," said Ellen.

"Why do you ask me, Ellen, when you know how I dislike cats, and that mamma never keeps one on my account?"

"Oh yes! and the pretty wax fruit my aunt Catherine gave me was devoured by mice, in consequence of your groundless dislike to those useful creatures, cats," rejoined Ellen. "Indeed I forgot your antipathy, or, perhaps, I should not have bought Selima. Still, dear George, the poor pusses you hate are not at all like this fair-skinned blue-eyed puss, whose coat looks as if it were made of floss-silk."

"I hate all the feline species," replied he, "whether green-eyed or blue-eyed, tortoise-shell, cypress-grey, sandy, or black; though, I confess, my hatred to white grimalkins is greater than to all the rest. Pray send her out of the room: I know you have only borrowed her to tease me."

"Borrowed her, George!" repeated Ellen: "I gave half-a-sovereign for her not two hours since."

"Half-a-sovereign, Ellen! What right had you to spend my money in buying such a worthless beast?"

"Pray don't call my pretty Selima such a rude name: an animal, or a quadruped, would sound much better in your lips, I am sure. However Mr. George, you need not reproach me with laying out your money to disadvantage: remember the auction, and the bargains you bought there," added Ellen, pouting.

George was silenced; and Ellen remained in quiet possession of the purse till the end of the week. The following Tuesday, George brought home from a neighbouring town two plaster casts, which he showed Ellen with some pride.

"I don't like them at all, George," said she. "Pray who are they, and what did they cost?"

"Only half-a-crown," replied he; "but, Ellen, you look at them as if you did not know them. They are Pitt and Fox. I have ordered several other distinguished characters, who are not yet unpacked."

"We have images enow," returned Ellen; "and I cannot stand your extravagance any longer, Mr. George."

"Extravagance, Miss Ellen! remember the Persian cat, as you choose to call your white grimalkin."

"You forget the auction, Mr. George," retorted Ellen, angrily.

High words would probably have followed this sharp rejoinder, if their parents had not interposed to prevent a quarrel between the juvenile partners. "My dear children," said Mr. Hamilton, "this scheme has ended, as I thought it would, in mutual discontent. I think you had better dissolve partnership."

George and Ellen eagerly assented to this proposition; and Mrs. Hamilton agreed to divide the contents of the purse between them.

"You have expended, my dears, in the course of a fortnight," remarked Mr. Hamilton, "twenty-four shillings and sixpence, in useless trifles, to your mutual dissatisfaction; but of how much good this money might have been productive, if expended properly! A small part of it would have paid for the yearly schooling of a little boy and girl, or fed two poor families, during this hard weather, for a week."

"O mamma, if we had thought of putting children to school, we should not have wasted our money so foolishly," replied both the children.

"It is not too late to do that yet," said Mrs. Hamilton; "for you can each choose a scholar, and pay for their schooling at the end of the quarter, when you will receive your allowance; and the money you have left from this will just buy the books they will want."

"I will take the gardener's boy Tom under my patronage," cried George.

"And I will have Phœbe Bloom," rejoined Ellen; and these poor children were sent to school accordingly.

George and Ellen never had one purse from the day they dissolved partnership, it is true; but they mutually agreed in devoting more than half the contents of their privy purse to the instruction and clothing of their *protégés*. They were so fortunate as to dispose of some of their useless purchases to unhoped advantage; and though the Persian cat still remains in Ellen's possession, George has conquered his antipathy to her company, through love to his dear sister, her mistress.

From the foregoing history, we may infer that it is sometimes easier to have *one heart* between two children, than *one purse*.



THE CONTENTED FAMILY.

BY MRS. HOFLAND.



"What a happy little girl Jane is, now you have praised her! She is as proud of saying a good lesson, though she can only spell d-o-g dog, c-a-t cat, as I should be if I had done a long sum in the Rule of Three," said Harry Gibson.

"Surely she has as much right to be proud and pleased too," replied his mother; "for she has gone through as much labour and conquered as much difficulty."

"She is a little merry good-tempered thing, at all times," continued Harry; "indeed, I think we are altogether quite as happy as any of our neighbours, whether rich or poor; every body says we are a contented family, and so we are;—don't you think so, mother?"

"I can only answer for myself, Harry, though I believe your father's feelings a good deal resemble mine; therefore the same answer may do for both: we are by no means contented."

All the time Harry had been speaking, he was laid down at full length on the floor, rolling from side to side, and looking sometimes upon his father, who, overpowered by fatigue, was half asleep in his chair, and sometimes at his mother, who was sewing as fast as she could, whilst his little sister stood beside her repeating her lesson. He now started on his feet, and, with a look of considerable alarm, affectionately approached his mother, saying earnestly, "Dear mother, do you really mean that you are not contented?"

"I do mean so, indeed, Harry."

"Has something bad happened to father? does he fear that the crops will fail? are any of the sheep lost? is the brown cow ill again? or has somebody stolen the pig?"

"The poor creature was safe ten minutes since, notwithstanding the state of the sty, which is sadly broken down, as you know: all our stock of that kind is well and thriving."

"Then, dear, *dear* mother, why are you not contented?"

"I will tell you, Harry; it is because we have an idle son, which is always considered a great misfortune, especially to industrious people, who do their best to get forward in the world and to improve the situation of their children."

Harry's face was instantly covered with blushes, and he began hastily to shake off the dust and straw that stuck to his clothes: he cast his eyes anxiously towards his father, as if in the hope that he would find an excuse, knowing him to be a most indulgent parent; but, on this occasion, he only shook his head, as much as to say, "It is too true."

The tears sprang to the boy's eyes; for he was aware that his father was tired with labour, and saw that his mother was intent on finishing a shirt which she was making for hire, so that she could not allow herself time to set the house to rights in the manner she was accustomed to do. Harry loved his parents very dearly; he was good-humoured and obedient; but he was careless and thoughtless in the greatest degree; and though very lively when at play, he was indolent at home, and averse to the exertion called for in every situation of life, but especially from the poor.

"I don't see what I can do," said he to himself, "that can at all signify, after I come from school. To be sure, the garden wants weeding, and the pig-sty wants building up, and a new door making, and I see the jackdaw's cage is tumbling down for the want of a few willow twigs. I did say I would see after these things, sure enough; but somehow the days come and go before I can begin to do any thing. Sometimes I am tired with playing, sometimes I forget them, and——"

Harry's soliloquy was cut short by a call to supper, which passed in silence and sadness; and when he went to bed he found it impossible to fall asleep, for the many thoughts which came into his head respecting his parents and himself. He recollected the unceasing industry and constant care of his father, the activity and ability of his mother, and began to see that he had by no means deserved the goodness with which they had treated him, or profited by the example which they had set him. The new clothes they had lately bought for him, the fairings they had given him, the kindness shown to him by sending him to school instead of compelling him to labour at home, affected him deeply; and he cried bitterly from

shame and sorrow.

In consequence of the first bad night he had ever known, Harry did not awake till a much later hour than usual; and, on descending the narrow stairs of his father's cottage, he found two of his schoolfellows waiting for him. After observing that he was an idle fellow, they told him there was holiday at school, and they were come to ask him to take a ramble with them.

Before answering them, Harry, turning to a good old woman, who lived with them both as friend and servant, said, "Pray, Alice, where is my mother?"

"Poor soul! she be gone all the way to the market-town with the shirts she have made, and she have taken the yarn, too, as I spun, to the weaver. A heavy load she carries, I promise ye."

"My father is out in the fields?"

"He's been digging a ditch to drain the buttercup meadow these four hours. Little Jane be gone to take him bread and cheese."

"I thank you for calling," said Harry to the boys, "but I cannot go with you."

"We will wait whilst you eat your breakfast," answered they.

"That will be a long time; for though it stands there, I will not touch it till I have weeded that carrot-bed quite clean."

With an air of resolution, Harry walked out of the cottage, and began to weed at a great rate, and with the look of one who knew that his employment was useful. In a little time, each of the boys, finding looking on to be a very dull pastime, began to weed two flower-beds that ran in parallel lines; and by the time that Harry was ready to eat his breakfast, they were each boasting what a great heap of weeds they had collected.

"I am much obliged to you," said he; "I will now carry the weeds away, and sweep the walks clean, and water the flowers, and——"

"Oh! but that will never do; we wanted you to enjoy the holiday."

"Why, so I do. I enjoy getting all this work done exceedingly well: I don't think I ever had such a good holiday before."

The boys thought Harry's head was turned; they said that "he was never so comical before," and left him by no means in good humour; but Harry forgot all their remarks in his pleasure at what was done, when his father came home, and was so gratified with the appearance of his little garden, that he could scarcely eat his dinner for looking at it through the window. At length he said, "I did intend mending the pig-sty this afternoon, for it has long wanted it; but I think I will give myself a bit of a holiday, and go and meet my wife, that I may tell her what a nice place Harry has made of the garden."

"And I hopes, Maister Gibson, that you'll go by all manner o' means; and when ye've met her, take her for a long rest an' a hearty welcome to Farmer Todd's," said old Alice.

Harry was glad when his father set out, as he was determined now to fall to work to repair the pig-sty; and as little Jane was delighted to help him, and old Alice to instruct him, this work also went merrily on, though it was much more laborious than weeding, and much more disagreeable, for obvious reasons.

Whilst he was thus employed, the two schoolfellows again came to Harry, saying, "Well, are you now ready to go to play?"

"Play! no, good truth, I cannot play if I would, I am so tired."

"You cannot be more tired than I am," said one.

"Nor so much as I," said the other.

"You have had a great deal of pleasure, then, I suppose?"

"I don't think," answered the elder, "that we have had any at all since we were weeding with you and expecting you to go with us, for then the time passed quickly. I should not much mind helping you now, for a bit of a change."

"No, no," said Harry; "such work as this won't do for good clothes like yours; besides, I have a fancy to finish it myself. Next week I'll join you at cricket sometimes; but I am determined not to give all my time to play, as I used to do, seeing I am beginning to be good for something, and ought to help my father and mother."

The boys bade him good-bye, and moved off as if exceedingly fatigued, and in a short time he was obliged to desist, from extreme weariness, which affected him so much, that, notwithstanding old Alice's admiration of his handywork, and her assurance that "the pig would sleep as nicely as a king in a castle," he fell fast asleep the moment after he had sat down in his father's arm-chair.

Harry was awakened by the warm kiss of his mother and the proud congratulations of his father; but the former could not forbear expressing her fears that he had overdone himself, saying, "You should have taken labour more easy to begin with, because you were totally unused to it."

"More's the pity, and more's the shame, mother: but I hope you will never have to say that again; for I am so happy now, that I think I shall go on to earn more happiness, if I get nothing else by it; and as to my being tired, don't think of that, for I have been as bad many a time with doing nothing. If to-morrow had not been Sunday, I would have mended the jackdaw's cage before breakfast."

"I can now believe that assurance, Harry; for I see you are sensible of the value of your exertions, and in proving by deeds that you love your parents. Come and take your supper with us, my dear: we are, like yourself, weary and hungry; but sincerely can we thank God for the comforts which our toil has procured, and for the change in our son, which, if he persevere in his present sentiments, must make us indeed a CONTENTED FAMILY."



THE TWO MAGPIES.

A TRUE STORY.

BY MISS MITFORD.



"Come along, girls! Helen! Caroline! I say, don't stand jabbering there upon the stairs, but come down this instant, or Dash and I will be off without you."

This elegant speech was shouted from the bottom of the great staircase at Dinely-Hall, by young George Dinely, an Etonian of eleven years old, just come home for the holidays, to his two younger sisters, who stood disputing very ardently in French at the top. The cause of contention was, to say the truth, no greater an object than the colour of a work-bag, which they were about to make for their mamma: slate lined with pink, being the choice of Miss Caroline, whilst Miss Helen preferred drab with a blue lining.

"Don't stand quarrelling there about the colour of your trumpery," added George, "but come along!"

Now George would have scorned to know a syllable of any language except Latin and Greek, but neither of the young ladies being Frenchwomen enough to construe the appellation of the leading article, the words "drab" and "slate," which came forth in native English pretty frequently, as well as the silk dangling in their hands, had enlightened him as to the matter in dispute.

George was a true schoolboy, rough and kind; affecting perhaps more roughness than naturally belonged to him, from a mistaken notion that it made him look bold, and English, and manly. There cannot be a greater mistake, since the bolder men are the gentler. For the rest, he loved his sisters, which was very right; and loved to tease them, which was very wrong; and now he and his dog Dash, both wild with spirits and with happiness, were waiting most impatiently to go down to the village on a visit to old Nurse Simmons, and her magpie.

Nurse Simmons was a very good and very cross old woman, who after ruling in the nursery of Dinely-Hall for two generations, scolding and spoiling Sir Edward and his brothers, and performing thirty years afterwards the same good office for master George and his sisters, had lately abdicated her throne on the arrival of a French governess, and was soon comfortably settled at a cottage of her own, in the village street.

George Dinely and Dash had already that morning visited George's own pony, and his father's brood mares, the garden, the pheasantry, the greenhouses, and the farmyard; had seen a brood of curious bantams, two litters of pigs, and a family of greyhound puppies, and had now few friends, old or new, to visit, except Nurse Simmons, her cottage, and her magpie; a bird of such accomplishments that his sisters had even made it the subject of a letter to Eton. The magpie might perhaps claim an equal share with his mistress in George's impatience, and Dash, always eager to get out of doors, seemed nearly as fidgety as his young master.

Dash was as beautiful a dog as eyes could be set on; one of the large old English Spaniels which are now so rare, with a superb head, like those which you see in Spanish pictures, and such ears! they more than met over his pretty spotted nose; and when he lapped his milk, dipped into the pan at last two inches. His hair was long and shiny and wavy, not curly, partly of a rich dark liver colour, partly of a silvery white, and beautifully feathered about the thighs and legs. He was extremely lively and intelligent, and had a sort of circular motion, a way of flinging himself quite round on his hind feet, something after the fashion in which the French dancers twist themselves round on one leg, which not only showed unusual agility in a dog of his size, but gave token of the same spirit and animation which sparkled in his bright hazel eye. Anything of eagerness or impatience was sure to excite this motion, and George Dinely gravely assured his sisters, when they at length joined him in the hall, that Dash had flung himself round six and twenty times whilst waiting the conclusion of their quarrel.

Getting into the lawn and the open air did not tend to diminish Dash's glee or his capers, and the young party walked merrily on; George telling of school pranks and school misfortunes—the having lost or spoilt four hats since Easter, seemed rather to belong to the first class of adventures than the second,—his sisters listening dutifully and wonderingly;

and Dash, following his own devices, now turning up a mouse's nest from a water furrow in the park—now springing a covey of young partridges in a corn field—now plunging his whole hairy person in the brook; and now splashing Miss Helen from head to foot, by ungallantly jumping over her whilst crossing a stile, being thereunto prompted by a whistle from his young master, who had, with equal want of gallantry, leapt the stile first himself, and left his sisters to get over as they could; until at last the whole party, having passed the stile, and crossed the bridge, and turned the church-yard corner, found themselves in the shady recesses of the vicarage-lane, and in full view of the vine-covered cottage of Nurse Simmons.

As they advanced they heard a prodigious chattering and jabbering, and soon got near enough to ascertain that the sound proceeded mainly from one of the parties they were come to visit—Nurse Simmons's magpie. He was perched in the middle of the road, defending a long dirty bare bone of mutton, doubtless his property, on one end of which he stood, whilst the other extremity was occupied by a wild bird of the same species, who, between pecking at the bone and fighting and scolding, found full employment. The wild magpie was a beautiful creature, as wild magpies are, of a snowy white and a fine blue black, perfect in shape and plumage, and so superior in appearance to the tame bird, ragged, draggled, and dirty, that they hardly seemed of the same kind. Both were chattering away most furiously; the one in his natural and unintelligible gibberish, the other partly in his native tongue, and partly in that for his skill in which he was so eminent,—thus turning his accomplishments to an unexpected account, and larding his own lean speech with divers foreign garnishes, such as "What's o'clock?" and "How d'ye do?" and, "Very well I thank you," and "Poor pretty Mag!" and "Mag's a good bird," all delivered in the most vehement accent, and all doubtless understood by the unlearned adversary as terms of reproach.

"What can those two magpies be quarrelling about?" said Caroline, as soon as she could speak for laughing, for, on the children's approach the birds had abandoned the mutton bone, which had been quietly borne away by Dash, who was lying in great state on a mossy bank, discussing and enjoying the stolen morsel.

"I wish I knew what they were saying," pursued Caroline, as the squabble grew every moment more angry and less intelligible.

"Doubtless they are disputing about colours," quoth George.

"What an odd noise it is!" continued Caroline; "I never heard any thing like it;" avoiding her brother's compliment.

"I have;" said George drily.

"I wonder whether they understand each other?" ejaculated Miss Helen, following her sister's example, and taking no notice of the provoking George; "they really do seem to comprehend."

"As well as other magpies," observed the young gentleman. "Why should they not?"

"But what strange gibberish!" added poor Helen.

"Gibberish, Miss Helen! Don't you hear that the magpies are spattering magpie French, sprinkled with a little magpie English? I was just going to ask you to explain it to me," replied the unmerciful George. "It is quite a parody upon your work-bag squabble," pursued their tormentor; "only that the birds are the wiser, for I see they are parting—the wild one flying away, the tame gentleman hopping towards us. Quite the scene of the work-bag over again," continued George, "only with less noise and much shortened—a modern abridgment! Really, young ladies, the magpies have the best of it," said the Etonian, and off he stalked into Nurse Simmons's cottage.



PREPARATION FOR THE RACES;

OR, MORE HASTE THAN GOOD SPEED.

BY MRS. HOFLAND.



Every boy in the country knows that Doncaster races are the gayest scene imaginable—that the number of horses entered to run, the jockeys in satin jackets who ride them, the fine ladies on the grand stand, the splendid carriages of the nobility, and the immense crowd of spectators, offer altogether a scene of the utmost hilarity, which must be enjoyed, more or less, by all who witness it.

No wonder, therefore, that, when Mr. Morrison (a gentleman farmer near Bawtry) said to his wife, one morning in the race-week, "My dear, you shall go to Doncaster, and take the children to-day;" three little boys became all extremely eager to hear the answer of mamma, and to assure her, that though their father would not be present, they would all conduct themselves most satisfactorily.

Every mother is expert in reading the wishes of her children, and Mrs. Morrison was alike a tender and intelligent mother, yet she did not reply immediately; her husband, therefore, continued speaking. "The two little boys may ride Dapple alternately, with a place in the gig. George may ride old Gray, which will carry him pleasantly if not pressed too much. You are so good a driver, and Captain knows his business so well, that I shall have no uneasiness about you. I regret that I cannot go with you, but George must be my representative, and attend you." "I should like to give the children a treat," said Mrs. Morrison, "therefore I will go, though I have no taste for races myself. I know that William and Richard will do as I bid them, and keep close to me; but my hesitation in complying with your proposal arose from thinking of George. He is always in such a hurry on every occasion, that I have many fears about *him*, I confess."

"Fears for *me*! dear mother; how can you fear for me? I can ride as well as father! I can do——" "George," said Mr. Morrison gravely, "a boy brought up as you have been, hardily, and suitably for your condition in life, can certainly do what is necessary on this occasion—you can assist your mother to find a station on the course, and guard your brothers, as they ride, from those surprises and dangers almost inseparable from a scene of so much tumult as you must encounter. Now, the question is not, *Can* you, but *will* you, do these things?"

"To be sure I will, dear father; I will do every thing my mother can possibly desire."

"We will try you on the strength of this assurance."

Away bounded all the boys towards the stable, where the younger flew to the donkey; whilst George, perceiving Giles, the farmer boy, mounted on old Gray, eagerly seized him, and desired him to dismount that moment and saddle the horse for his use.

"But I be taking him to the pond, Maister Georgy."

"But I tell you I am going to Doncaster races, and will have him this moment—there will be Lord Fitzwilliam in three carriages, and the Duke of Devonshire in ever so many, and——"

"More pity for they to be cut in pieces a that how," said Giles, drily.

"Don't talk nonsense, but saddle old Gray directly; for there will be seventeen horses to-day running for the gold cup, and the jockeys will be all in different colours, and there will be music, and shows, and every thing else, I tell you."

"Well, Maister Georgy, but all the grand sights in the world won't make old Gray over and above agreeable if he ben't to have his water, and his corn, quite reg'lar. I guess he won't look as you'd like 'un to look, nor carry you as you'd choose to be carried. So let alone pullin' at his head, an' trust me for getting him into proper order for his journey."

As Giles was a lad of good disposition and knew his duty, George for the present returned to the house, where it was necessary he also should make preparations for the races. He was, however, a very short time in dressing, and before old Gray had half eaten his corn, or Giles half groomed him, the impatient boy hurried him out, mounted, and, riding to

the door, began hallooing that he was quite tired of waiting.

"But the gig is not ready, nor the donkey saddled, nor mamma dressed," said William.

George fidgetted about three times as long as would have fed his horse, before Mrs. Morrison was ready, although she was by no means long, and knew perfectly well the time it would take to accomplish her journey and secure its object. The moment she entered the gig, George considered himself at liberty, and, instead of riding beside the vehicle, and seeing how little Richard managed his donkey, which was accustomed to trot beside his friend the old grey horse, away went the eldest hope of the family as fast as his old servant could carry him.

For the first mile or two, being early, they had the road a good deal to themselves; but as they drew near to the race-course, it became crowded by numbers of persons who came in from by-paths, and they were overtaken by carriages of every kind, so that Mrs. Morrison soon lost sight of George entirely, and became very uneasy lest Richard should receive some rude push, or be driven from her side by intervening travellers. This, however, did not occur, for the little fellow managed his donkey so exactly by her directions, that the bustle, though continually increasing, never put him out of the way, and they reached the course in perfect safety.

When Mrs. Morrison had arrived at the place where she purposed stopping, she looked round in vain for her eldest son, whom she now really wanted; but as she could not see him, Richard went to seek the servant, to whom a holiday had been granted, and was not long before he found him, as the man was on the look-out for them. The cattle were given to his charge, and he was also told to look round for George, and direct him to the place where they were.

"Why ye'll be quite 'sheamed on him, ma'am, I 'shure ye, for I had a gliff of him a bit since, an he was covered wi' dust; besides, he had a new green jacket on, and old brown trousers—he won't look fit to be seen beside you and his brothers."

"Foolish boy! this comes of his being in such haste; but you *must* send him, James, for he will be very hungry."

Mrs. Morrison now produced from her basket cold tongue and ham, gooseberry tarts, and cowslip wine, and the little boys were heartily regaled; but the anxious mother was too much occupied with gazing round for George to secure her own comfort. Before she had the satisfaction of descrying him, the press of company increased, the race had begun, and her more immediate object was placing the children in a position to see what was going forward.

They were pretty children, and very neatly dressed, and, even in their extreme eagerness to gaze at the race, showed a great fear of intercepting the view of their dear mamma. This circumstance drew the attention of a lady of high rank, whose carriage was in the same line with them, and she directed her servant to place them, with their mother's leave, on her coachbox, by which means they were greatly elevated, and saw both the race and the whole course in perfection.

Whilst in this situation, George and his brothers recognised each other, but they had no chance of approaching, or even speaking to one another. George was still on horseback, closely jammed in with a body of other persons, also mounted, and it was in vain he raised himself in the stirrups, or put his head forward, for not one foot of the course could he see; and so far were the mob around him from pitying his condition or aiding his efforts, that every time he pushed forward, either himself or poor old Gray got a cut from some of their whips. A melancholy shake of the head was the only signal he could make to the children, whose situation he naturally envied.

When the race was over, the children were returned, with commendation of their persons and behaviour, to their mother, to whom they offered the cakes and fruit given them by the grand lady, whose little son, called Lord Frederick, had sat with them, and told them a great deal about the horses and the company. Their innocent delight gladdened the heart of their mother, which was also relieved by their information of her eldest son's safety, for which she had been several hours experiencing the most distressing solicitude.

The man now brought Captain and Dapple, which were well fed and rested, and they all set off home in high spirits, trying, but in vain, to discover, in the moving mass around them, poor George.

This they were the less likely to do, because Mrs. Morrison judged it prudent to keep quiet in her humble vehicle, until the coaches and six, with their outriders, and the cavalcade of proudly-mounted gentlemen, had galloped off. She then proceeded leisurely for about a mile, when she could safely quicken her pace, and proceed by a pleasant twilight towards her own happy home, fondly hoping that George had used as much expedition to reach as he had done to leave

it.

When Mr. Morrison learnt from Giles that the race people were returning, he walked out towards the road to welcome his beloved wife and family, being all day subject to certain misgivings as to George's conduct. He had only gone a little way when he perceived him coming at a tolerably smart trot, but without a hat, and his clothes so soiled, that he had been evidently rolled in the dust. Mr. Morrison, in great alarm, rushed forward, and, seizing the bridle, cried: "What has happened? where are your mother and the boys?"

"They are coming, I dare say, within a little distance, father. Nothing has happened to *them*; the boys, I'm certain, have had a fine time of it."

"Then what has happened to you, that you come back in such a trim? and the poor old horse, too, is sadly distressed—tell me the truth."

"Why father," said George, bursting into tears, "I have had all kinds of misfortunes."

"Well, never mind, don't cry; you set out with a resolution to act like a man, and take care both of yourself and the family—let me hear what has befallen you?"

"You see, in the first place, I pushed on a little, and there came in such crowds of people, that I was separated from my mother, and the horse grew vicious and starty, so that I had great difficulty with him, which some bad people increased by putting an umbrella before his eyes; in short, he fairly flung me, but I must say he stood stock still afterwards."

"Humph! that was for taking him from his corn. Well! what came next?"

"Oh! papa, my trousers were torn and my leg cut, and when I put my hand in my pocket to get my handkerchief to tie round it, both that and my purse were gone—yes! all my money that I have been saving so long."

"I expected as much—go on."

"Well, then I wanted my mother exceedingly, but I got into such a crowd that it was impossible for me, hurt as I was and the horse unwilling to go, to get out of it, and the race came on, and the pressure increased, and I saw nothing, only that little Will and Dick were mounted on the top of a fine coach, where two footmen took care of them and another boy, and they were eating grapes whilst I was dying for hunger and thirst."

"And did you see none of our friends and neighbours to whom you could mention your situation?"

"I saw Farmer Browne, and Mr. Simpson, and John Davy; but they all seemed to think I had played truant, and come unknown to you, because—because, it seems, I forgot in my hurry to put on my new trousers and my Wellingtons."

"I cannot blame them; you had every appearance of being such, as it was not likely a boy at your age should have been sent to a race-course alone, or seen by such a mother as yours half-dressed, or mounted by me on a horse so ill-appointed as old Gray must appear. I pity the old creature much more than you, who, in forsaking your mother and forfeiting your promise, have seriously offended me."

George wept again as he dismounted and gave the horse to Giles, and Mr. Morrison saw with sincere pity that he walked with pain; but he took no farther notice of *him*, whilst he ordered a good mash to be made for old Gray, saying, "The poor beast has not had a morsel of food the whole day, it appears."

"Yes, father, he has had a trifle, for though I lost all my silver, I had two-pence in my jacket pocket, so I bought him an oat-cake at Sally Lamb's, and she gave the poor thing some water; so then he came home freely as you saw."

Mr. Morrison was touched to the heart with this proof of good feeling in a boy, who, it was his consolation to know, possessed many excellent qualities, though they were all obscured too frequently by that bustling volatility and desire of independence which had turned a day of pleasure into one of pain. Just then his wife and the children came up to the door, both the travellers and their cattle perfectly well, and the boys eager to relate their adventures to their affectionate father. As it was nearly dark, Mrs. Morrison did not see her son's condition, and she could not forbear exclaiming:

"George! George! what a day of anxiety have you given me!"

"And that anxiety must be succeeded, my dear, by some trouble, for George requires your skill for a wounded leg; and as

he has had no food since breakfast, nor any amusement to divert him from the sense of his sufferings, we must, for the present, forget his faults. I am the more ready to do this, because he has tried to make some reparation to my old horse; so I hope in time he may do it to his own mother."

In the next moment poor George was sobbing in his mother's arms, and folded to her bosom.

"Come, come, my dear, let us go in and get our invalid to bed. I trust he will rise all the wiser for his late troubles, and be persuaded henceforward not to make 'more haste than good speed.'"



LEASIDE COTTAGE.



My dear little Fanny, I promised to tell you the story of the two children we saw yesterday evening near that pretty neat cottage, whose low walls of rough grey stone, slated roof, and old round chimney, are so covered with a tissue of ivy, rose, and jessamine, that the little dwelling looks more like a silvan bower than a structure built up of common masonry.

Come a little farther on, and the cottage will be visible close to us (while we remain unseen, and, if we speak low, unheard) from that next opening in the green lane. Yes, there it is; and at the door, just within that honeysuckle porch, sits a lady employed in needlework, and at her feet two children, a boy and girl (the same we saw yesterday), reading together in the open Bible, which they hold between them. The boy is reading aloud—hark!—about the infant Samuel; and he holds his little sister's hand in his, sometimes guiding her small forefinger as he reads along the line of Holy Writ, and then her eyes (before fixed on his face) look downward for a while, as if following the passive index. That lady, who ever and anon looks off her work, to gaze so fondly on the two children, is very plainly dressed, you see, in the simplest and homeliest garb; and yet you cannot doubt for a moment that she *is* a lady, and has seen better days, and has been very fair in her youth. Even now she is hardly past the prime of life, though the soft brown hair, smoothly and evenly parted aside under her thick muslin cap, is already streaked with grey, and there are more lines and hollows in that mild pale face than the hand of Time has imprinted there. My dear child, if you live to be a woman, you will perhaps learn from experience that the hand of Sorrow marks deeper than that of Time, great workman as he is, and often forestalls his leisurely operation. *Too often*, I had nearly said; but that would be a senseless and misapplied expression, since the work of Time and Sorrow are equally subordinate to the Almighty will, which ordereth all things—all circumstances of good and evil, exactly at such times, in such proportions, as often or as seldom as He knows to be most expedient for us. But for that poor lady's entire trust in His wisdom and goodness, she would be an object of painful compassion, my dear Fanny; for her life has been one of sadly diversified affliction. She wears mourning, you see, and all her remaining days she will continue to wear those sad sable weeds, put on many years ago for a beloved husband, who was taken from her by violent death in the third year of their union, under circumstances which left her the destitute mother of one helpless infant, and soon to become the parent of a second, who came untimely into the world, a weak and sickly babe, some few weeks after her father had been committed to the grave.—But come away, my Fanny, a little farther back into the green lane, where we shall not only find a convenient seat on those timber-logs, but I shall be able to go on with my little story without any danger of attracting observation from the cottage.

Little Harry Morton is just ten years old, as fine and promising a boy, you saw, as either of your own dear brothers; but he does not look so happy as they do, poor fellow! and that sweet little girl, who was sitting beside him, is only one year younger than himself, though such a small, delicate, fairy creature. She is not so blooming as you are, my little Fanny; and her large blue eyes do not sparkle so merrily as yours; yet did you not think they were beautiful in spite of a slight dimness, a mistiness, over them, when they were fixed just now upon her brother's face?—Alas, my dear child! those poor eyes but seemed to look on what they never must behold. Little Emily Morton will never see her brother's face again, till they meet hereafter angels in heaven; she is blind, stone blind; and that brother whom she loves so dearly, who loves her better than his own life—that gentle tender-hearted boy, who would not hurt a fly, nor willingly tread upon a worm—he was the unhappy cause of his sister's calamity.

Now you do not wonder that Harry Morton looks more serious and thoughtful than is natural at his years, than your own happy brothers, whose childhood has never known the hardships and premature cares which, from his earliest recollection, have been the lot of that poor boy, and still less any such dreadful affliction as that which has fallen like a mildew on the tender blossoms of his young life.

Never did brother and sister love more tenderly than those two fatherless children love one another. Nursed in the lap of adversity, in the shadow, as it were, of their mother's sorrow, and helpless sharers in her bitter cup, they clung more fondly to her and to each other, as you may have seen two young lambs, frightened by a thunder-storm, close cowering together into the fleeces of the mother ewe. There were many points of dissimilarity between the children, both in person and character; Harry being, as you observed, a fine robust boy, with eyes black as night, and curls of the same raven hue clustering thick over his high white forehead; and his little sister, a delicate fair creature, small of her age, and constitutionally nervous and fearful, while her brother's nature was as fearless as gentle.

These dissimilarities, physical and moral, seemed but to draw closer together the hearts of those young creatures, and to

impress a more tender character to their mutual affection. It was Harry's pride and joy to be the protector and teacher as well as the playmate of his sister, and the delicate and timid little girl was never *quite* happy or at ease except she could press her soft cheek close to Harry's shoulder, or slip her small hand in his, or at least keep near him, or in sight of him, or within hearing of his voice. And if this tender and touching union was blissful to the two innocent children, how soothing and consolatory was it to their widowed mother, whose impaired constitution made it but too probable that her fatherless little ones might at no long distant period be left to struggle through the world orphans indeed. Sometimes the fond parent would speak to her darlings, young as they were, of the time when they might be left alone together;—"and then," she would say, "you, my Harry, must be the father as well as brother of your little sister; and then your Father which is in heaven, who feeds the young ravens, and clothes the lilies of the field, will never forsake you, my children, while you love Him and keep His commandments." At such times the little Emily would hide her face in her mother's bosom in all the tearful agony of infant grief, while Harry, struggling manfully to suppress his sobs and keep in the swelling tears, would clasp his arms round the necks of his mother and sister, and press on the fair head of the latter as it lay in Mrs. Morton's bosom a kiss that was at once the pledge and seal of an accepted trust—a promise that needed not the interpretation of speech to be perfectly intelligible.

Mrs. Morton's precarious life was spared from year to year, and the industry of her own hands, eking out a small pension (that of an officer's widow) maintained the little family of love above actual want, and there was content and peace at Leaside cottage.

Such was the state of things under its humble roof till about twelve months ago, when Harry had attained his ninth and Emily her eighth year. I have told you that, from the unfortunate circumstances of her birth, the little girl was constitutionally tender and nervous to a degree that it was sometimes painful to witness. Mrs. Morton sedulously strove, by cautiously-exerted influence, gentle remonstrance, and tender encouragement, to counteract this morbid tendency in the mind of her dear little girl, and to impart a more healthful tone to its fine organization; and she was more than seconded in this endeavour by the young Harry, who, with a thoughtfulness beyond his years, and a tenderness finely tempering his spirited impetuous nature, would reason with his little sister with unwearied patience on the unreasonableness of her terrors, soothing her with affectionate gentleness when they were too powerful for control, or, by dint of coaxing and perseverance, sometimes prevailing on her to face the bugbear, conjured up by her nervous fancy, to encounter for a moment the terrors of darkness, or to search out the unknown cause of some mysterious sound, appalling to her young imagination because unaccounted for.

What would not Emily do and suffer for the love of Harry? And how strikingly is it exemplified in the most timid natures, those of loving childhood and devoted woman, that "perfect love casteth out fear." Oh! were we, indeed, devoted with such perfect love to Him who is the Father and Brother of us all; yea, "the friend that sticketh closer than a brother;" how cheerfully for His sake should we undergo all trials; how dearly for his sake should we love our fellow creatures; how should we "think of Him by day and meditate by night;" and how should we "cast out all fear" (having our hope in Christ) of that awful, but (to the humble believer) not tremendous hour, when He shall call us hence to be with Him for ever and ever. "Little children! love one another"—was the commandment of Jesus to His disciples. Are not all Christians His disciples? Should we not all love one another? And if we did so, and acted up to the spirit of that merciful commandment, how should we mutually lighten our several burthens, while travelling towards our Father's house!

I have told you, my Fanny, with what more than brotherly love Harry Morton watched over his timid little sister, striving with unwearied patience to instil into her a portion of his own healthful firmness; and he was not unsuccessful on the whole.

By the time Emily had nearly attained her eighth year, Harry began to pride himself on the effects of his gentle discipline, and to call her, half jesting, half seriously, his "brave little sister." And Emily's coward heart began to disguise its latent infirmity, and, in part at least, by degrees to surmount it. She no longer trembled and turned pale at some mysterious cracking of the old boards in the stillness of a winter's evening; and when she was laid at night on the side of the bed, to which Mrs. Morton's occupations prevented her retiring for many after hours, the little girl no longer shrank under the counterpane in an agony of terror at she knew not what, nor peeped out from time to time at the fantastic shadows in the moonlight, nor (overpowered with fear) called aloud to Harry in the adjoining chamber to come and protect her from what she would perhaps have called, had she known how to express her sensations, the powers of darkness. Now, provided the door were open, or even the least bit ajar between her and her brother, Emily could shut her eyes in peace whether in moonshine or in darkness (to keep them open was still too magnanimous an effort for her doubtful courage)

and drop asleep in the middle of the little hymn she was murmuring to herself on the pillow. But one cause of dread still operated in unmitigated force on Harry's little pupil. He had striven in vain, by reasoning and tenderness, to soothe her during the terrors of a thunder-storm; and even the sensible considerate Harry did not reflect that the electric state of the atmosphere might physically affect his little sister's nervous temperament, and that in fact he might expose her to real danger by inducing her to front the awful beauty of the storm.

You remember, my Fanny, the thunder-storm which did so much mischief in many parts of the country about this time twelvemonth; the same that struck the great cedar in your father's park. That awful visitation was sent to us also, and I shall never forget the sublime beauty of its gradual approach.

Harry Morton had been watching it for more than an hour from the garden wicket of Leaside Cottage, not many paces, as you may remember, from the house porch; within which stood the little Emily pale with terror, and shrinking behind the leafy screen every time the deep sullen sound of the yet distant thunder rolled round the dark horizon. But the fearful, trembling, little creature retreated no farther into the house, though her heart seemed dying within her; for there she at least could remain in sight of Harry and within hearing of his cheerful encouraging voice. Mrs. Morton, who had been all day oppressed with headache, had lain down in her bedchamber at the back of the cottage, and the little servant girl was absent on an errand to the village; so the two children were alone together gazing (with what different sensations!) on the coming of that memorable storm. A profound stillness was all about them—a deep and breathless hush; not a leaf stirred—not a wing of bird or insect was in motion—not a rain-drop yet descended—and though the blackness of darkness had now gathered overhead, not a flash yet darted from the electric cloud, and the muttering thunder had ceased for some moments.

"Come in! come in, brother!" implored the poor little girl; "let us go to mamma. Dear Harry! indeed, indeed, I would not mind a little thunder-storm; but that terrible black cloud will break just over us. How like night it is! I can hardly see you under the shadow of our great elm. Come in! come in, dear brother!"—"Little coward! little coward!" retorted the sportive boy, holding up his finger with reproachful archness; "who was it told me yesterday they would *never never* give way again to silly fears?"—"But this is *such* a storm, brother! and you know the lightning kills people sometimes."—"But it does not lighten, little coward. Come, take heart, Emmy, and run across to me. I shall call you little coward again if you wont come."—"Oh! no, no, Harry! indeed, indeed I can't come to you there;—and see what great drops are beginning to fall!"—"Not one can reach me under our great tree. Well, well, if you won't come for shame, come for love of me, Emmy."—In a moment the poor little girl had darted from her shelter and stood beside her brother, panting and shuddering convulsively, as the boy, half frightened at the excess of her agitation, wrapped his arms round her, and tried to sooth her into composure. Another moment, and both children were lying apparently lifeless under the great elm, which was scorched and shivered from its top downwards. And there they were almost immediately found by their distracted mother, whose first thought had been for her darlings, when the tremendous report of the shock which had felled them to the earth startled her from her imperfect slumbers. I will not dwell longer on that first agonizing scene, my Fanny, than to tell you that, assistance being providentially at hand, the children were carried into the house and laid side by side on the same bed, where after awhile both began to show signs of returning animation, and neither, on examination, appeared to have received any external injury. The first that awoke to life was little Harry, and his immediate almost unconscious impulse was to look round for his sister. She lay beside him as if in a sweet slumber; and for a moment Harry gazed upon her with a bewildered consciousness, that something terrible had befallen her, of which himself was the cause. Then suddenly the whole truth flashed upon him, and the unhappy boy sprung up from the bed in a paroxysm of tearless agony, exclaiming, "I have killed her! I have killed her!—Oh, Emmy! Emmy!—I have killed my sister!"

Difficult it was to pacify the distracted child, and to convince him that his little sister was not only living, but fast recovering, as himself had recovered, from that temporary stupor. In a few moments not only her breathing became strong and regular, but a faint carnation tint again spread itself over her soft cheek, and a streak of blue was visible through the long fringes of her fair eyelids. Then, then, at last, Harry who had been kneeling over her, in pale breathless suspense, half blinded with the intensity of his gaze on her inanimate features, drew a deep gasping breath as he sunk on his sister's pillow with a sudden feebleness like that of infancy, and, pressing his cheek close to hers, recalled her to life and consciousness with a passion of sobs and tears and kisses, and broken murmurs of unutterable love.

Tears were in the eyes of all (not in the mother's only) who looked on that affecting sight; and the only placid countenance was that of the little Emily, who awoke as if from some happy dream, with an angel smile upon her sweet lips, as she turned them instinctively to Harry's, and clasped her little arms about his neck. In another minute her voice

was heard, low and tremulous at first; and the words she uttered were confused and disjointed, for the child was yet as if half in slumber, and quite unconscious of the past. At length, "Is it night?" she said, lifting up her face from Harry's, and drawing back her head to look about her, as she half raised herself from the pillow, resting on her elbow—"Is it night, Harry? where are you? why does not mamma come to bed? but I am not afraid now."—"My child! my child!" faltered Mrs. Morton, as, throwing herself on the bed, she clasped the smiling Emily, and looked into her eyes with a sudden agony of apprehension—"I am here, my Emmy! Look up, my precious child! It is not night! Look up at me, my Emmy."

Emily's large blue eyes obeyed that tender invocation, but they wandered over her mother's features with a strange vacancy of expression, and the child's face became troubled as she stretched out both her little hands to feel for Harry, still close beside her, and then said distressfully, "What makes it so dark, mamma? I cannot see any thing."

The sweet eyes of Emily Morton were darkened for ever in this world. That electric stroke had instantaneously and irrevocably destroyed the optic nerves of both; and Harry, unhappy boy! had lured her, by an irresistible appeal to her love for him, to the spot where that fatal bolt descended.

What were the mother's feelings on ascertaining her child's misfortune, I will not attempt to describe, my Fanny; still less those that very soon consigned poor Harry to the temporary oblivion of a brain fever, which brought him to the brink of the grave, and from which his recovery was long doubtful. When consciousness returned, not only did he see his fond mother watching by his bedside, but a little angel face was bending over him with looks that at once dropped balm and bitterness into his very heart; so loving, so sweet, so pitiful was their scarcely changed expression. And when the dear child became sensible that Harry's reason was restored to him, and that he knew his mother and herself, a light of more than human intelligence beamed in her sightless eyes, and, smiling like the seraph Hope, she stooped down to kiss her brother's forehead and whisper, laying her soft cheek to his, "Dear, dear Harry! we will be happier than ever; I do not want to see."

Twelve months, as I told you, have past away since that calamitous season; during which interval, God (who has more ways of helping us than we could point out to him) has been very gracious to the family at Leaside. The bequest of a distant relation has assured an humble competence to Mrs. Morton and her children; and our worthy curate, who needed no call to the house of mourning, but the knowledge that the hand of God had stricken its inmates, became so interested for the little family, especially for the poor boy who had been so fatally instrumental in causing the calamity of his sweet sister, that he has ever since taken Harry under his daily tuition; and Mrs. Morton now entertains a hope that, with his valuable assistance, and such farther aids as Providence and her own exertions may provide, her darling boy may be enabled to enter one of the Universities, and in due time take upon himself the holy ministry. Such is the highest aim of Harry Morton's own wishes; and that, next to the service of God, he may devote his whole life to that sweet helpless creature whose claims on his tenderness are so sacred and so affecting.

Harry Morton is but ten years old; but his mind has made greater progress during the last twelve months than, under other circumstances, it might possibly have attained in half as many years.

That heavy affliction and its results have perhaps subdued for ever his naturally high animal spirits, and he will probably grow up a serious and thoughtful man. But though he will never forgive himself for that momentary error, the memento of which is perpetually before him, the bitterness of his remorse is assuaged by time and the consolatory experience, that divine mercy has so mitigated the calamity of the blind Emily, so "tempered the wind to the shorn lamb," that she is already half forgetful of the blessing she has lost, and so wonderfully gifted with that peculiar tact and increased acuteness of the other senses, often vouchsafed under the deprivation of sight, as to be indeed perfectly happy in her present condition, the very spirit of innocent cheerfulness, the blithest bird that wakes the echoes of bowery Leaside.

It is a remarkable fact that the little girl's delicate frame and naturally feeble constitution have been gaining strength and stamina seemingly from that very day when blindness fell upon her. From that memorable epoch she ceased to be the victim of those nervous terrors which, though partly subdued, still haunted her enough to mar half the joys of her young life. "The night and the day," "darkness and light," are now indeed both alike to the sightless Emily: but then it may be said, with equal truth, that "darkness is no darkness" with her. The light of Heaven's own peace is in her soul, and through the medium of that internal day the blessed child beholds in imagination all objects of the external world. And, then, Harry's love is even about her "like a cloak," and his incessant care and watchfulness ministering, like those of a guardian spirit, to her happiness and safety; and Harry's invention and ingenuity are ever at work to devise occupations and amusements in which she may actively participate. Already little Emily is skilful in many small handicrafts, useful and ornamental; and some of the work of her fairy fingers might shame the more imperfect productions of many who

possess the advantage of eyesight. That pretty little basket which stands on my work-table—you were admiring it yesterday,—that is Emily's handy work: and, besides her skill in such "small wares," she can knit her own and Harry's stockings; and her work will bear comparison with that of the best knitters in our village school. Emily knows all the wild flowers, can distinguish each by touch and smell, and every bird by its song, as well as when she delighted to watch their unfolding buds and beautiful plumage. The day is never long enough for Emily's quiet industry and active cheerfulness; yet never were slumbers so sweet and peaceful as those that fall upon her pillow almost as soon as Harry's last "good night" has been breathed over her, and his lips have pressed their accustomed farewell on each of her closed eyelids. Not unfrequently a tear will mingle with that fond kiss, the seal of memory, and then only (if she feels the tender moisture) there is trouble in Emily's sweet face and distress in her tremulous voice, as clasping Harry's neck she whispers in his ear her loving passionate assurance, that she is happier, *much* happier than ever.

And now I will wind up my long story, which has made you look very sad, my little Fanny, with a few verses, which you must get by heart some day; and I am sure they will recur to you in after life as beautifully applicable to all our trials. They were composed by a blind lady, Marianne Erskine, and the sentiments they express are such as compel one to envy rather than compassionate the person who made "such sweet uses of adversity."

Let not vain man of partial fate complain:

 If few know happiness without alloy,

 'Tis that most men their happiness destroy,

Treating possession with a proud disdain;

Of miseries and ills a countless train

 Their ever restless rankling thoughts employ;

 The present hour they never will enjoy;

The past, the future, rack their souls in vain.

Not that to us whatever is, is right;

 But compensations may be found if sought:

Though I am born without the sense of sight,

 What circumscribes to me the range of thought?

Thus study, friendship, intellectual light,

 May yet be mine; and life is still with blessings fraught.



SISTERS OF CHARITY.



"Oh! what a singular dress that young lady has on, and how thoughtful she looks," was the observation of Blanche Wilson, a lively girl of ten years old, as she drew from a portfolio the engraving which represented one of the Sisters of Charity.

"That lady, my dear," replied her mother, "belongs to a community whose lives are passed amidst scenes of suffering and distress. It would not therefore be very surprising if sympathy with the afflicted should have given a sedate expression to features lovely as those before you."

"Oh! do tell me her history," exclaimed the little girl eagerly,— "where you first saw her, and why she wears that singular costume? I long to know all about her."

"I will answer your last query first," replied her mother: "She wears that dress simply because it is the habit of the Charitable Order of which she is a member—an institution peculiar to the Roman Catholic Church, at once its highest boast and its brightest ornament."

"But what are the particular duties of these Charitable Sisters?" inquired the little girl.

"Those of the Samaritan of old, my dear—to visit the sick poor, both at their own houses and at the public hospitals. To nurse and administer medicines, and to afford them the consolations of religion. These are the occupations of a Sister of Charity: duties, simple in their enumeration, difficult in their fulfilment, but boundless in their importance and extent."

"But, Mamma, if their object is so praiseworthy, why have not *we* Sisters of Charity, as well as the Roman Catholics?" inquired the little girl.

"That is a question, Blanche," replied Mrs. Wilson, "that I have often put both to myself and others; but to which I have never received any satisfactory reply. I cannot believe that we have less benevolence among us than our Gallic neighbours. I am, therefore, bound to suppose, either that the idea has never occurred to the influential or humane, or that hitherto no ladies have been found of sufficient nerve to brave the misrepresentation and ridicule which would, in the first instance, attach to the establishment of a Protestant Sisterhood."

"But, Mamma," interrupted Blanche, "how often have I heard you yourself say that,

Evil and good report, if undeserved,
Is soon lived down.

Think how different would be the lot of hundreds of unhappy convicts if Mrs. Fry had been deterred from attempting to better their condition from the mere dread of ridicule and misrepresentation."

"That is most true, my dear; nor do I yet despair of seeing among us, at some future day, an establishment very similar to the one founded by Vincent St. Paul two hundred years ago. Meantime, I am happy to inform you, that at this very period a house is erecting between St. Leonard's and Hastings for a community of these Charitable Sisters; who, in addition to the duties before enumerated, propose taking upon themselves the further responsibility of educating and fitting for domestic servants as many of the destitute poor as the funds of the institution will permit. In this labour of love, to use their own words, they 'neither make distinction of sect or creed,' nor accept or expect any remuneration whatever."

"Oh! how very kind," interrupted Blanche; "but have they always been equally liberal in the distribution of their charity!"

"Always, from its first foundation. The benevolence of its projector was of too diffusive a character to limit his wish of relieving distress to the members of his own church; and this truly Christian spirit is a distinguishing feature of the society to the present day. To the unwearied care of the Sisters are many hundreds of English wives and mothers indebted for the very existence of those they most love. Thousands of British subjects, whilst languishing as prisoners in the hospitals of France, have borne witness how literally these Daughters of Pity fulfil the injunction of their Divine Master—'If thine enemy hunger, give him bread; if he thirst, give him drink.' Many of our fellow-countrymen are there at this moment who can adopt the words of Scripture and say, 'I was hungry, and ye gave me bread; I was thirsty, and ye

gave me drink; I was sick and in prison, and ye visited me; I was a stranger, and ye took me in!"

Tears filled the eyes of the child as she continued her mother's quotation, and repeated the reply of our Lord to the query of his disciples of "when they had ministered unto him," "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of my people, ye have done it unto Me."

Both parent and child were silent for a few minutes; after which the former of them continued the conversation.

"The Order of the Sisters of Charity was established by Vincent St. Paul, in the year 1629, assisted by the counsel and co-operation of a lady of rank named Le Gras. This benevolent individual not only bestowed her whole fortune for the establishment of the institution, but took upon herself an active part in its management and labours. Thus, whilst the worthy Pastor was travelling from town to town, and village to village, preaching in aid of the funds of the society, she remained at Paris, inciting the charitable of her own sex to become the dispensers of the bounty thus collected.

"On its first commencement, when hospitals were unhappily more scarce than they have since become, the afflicted poor were received into the houses of this community; but, alas! it was soon evident, that, however ample the funds of the society might be, they were inadequate for even a temporary maintenance of half the unhappy claimants that presented themselves: the Sisters were therefore under the necessity of attending the least destitute poor at their own houses; and this excellent method of ascertaining the wants of the afflicted, as well as the best means of alleviating them, is pursued to the present day."

"But, Mamma," inquired Blanche, "are not the Sisters of Charity obliged to take upon themselves some vows which are thought objectionable by Protestants?"

"The vows of the Sisters of Charity are simply these—'Poverty, obedience, and service to the poor.' These vows are limited to one year, although many continue their voluntary labours for a long life. During this period, their vow of 'Poverty' prevents their enjoying property individually; neither can they marry: their 'Obedience' consists in an adherence to the regulations of the society; and their "Service to the Poor" in relieving the distressed without distinction of creed or country."

"But, Mamma," interrupted Blanche, "I do not see what could be objected to in any thing you have named—the vows are so simple, and for so short a period."

"It would detain us too long to enter minutely into that question," replied her mother; "but there can be no doubt that the arrangements might be so modified as to meet the scruples of the most timid; and it would be well for us all to bear in mind that, even in its existing form, it is an institution of pure humanity. It does not immure its members within stone walls—it sends them forth into the world in all the beautiful energy of benevolence; and when the calls on their labour of love have ceased, it returns them, not cramped by indolence or soured by austerity, but glowing with the wholesome fatigue of good work—to enjoy peaceful repose, until the dawn of another day calls them to minister to the affliction it brings with it."

"But the dress, Mamma—the dress—how came they to choose so strange a costume?—it is so very unbecoming."

"I fancy, my dear, that persons who voluntarily take upon themselves the duties I have enumerated would not be very solicitous on that head. The dress, with the exception of the cap, is exactly similar to the one which the first Sister, Madame Le Gras, is represented to have worn. It consists of a black stuff petticoat, with the body made jacket-wise; a blue apron, with stockings of the same colour; a white collar and cap, the latter modelled from the form which a handkerchief, took for a moment, as it fell from the hand of Louis XIV. on the head of one of the Sisters."

"How strange! But did the King accidentally drop his handkerchief?" inquired Blanche.

"No;" replied her mother, "the Sister whom the King chanced to encounter happened to be very lovely, and his Majesty remarked that 'she needed a veil to conceal her loveliness from vulgar eyes;' and, suiting the action to the word, invested her with the embroidered handkerchief he held in his hand: this is the origin of the only very singular part of their costume; but we will resume their history on some future occasion, when I trust to be able to narrate to you a series of anecdotes illustrative of the activity of their benevolence, which will greatly enhance the interest of the sketch on which our present conversation has originated."



ANECDOTE OF AN INDIAN CHIEF.



During the great American War an English officer, in command of a foraging party, was together with his soldiers surprised by a large ambush of Indians, who poured in a destructive fire upon them, by which many of the English were killed. The survivors had hardly time to look from whence the attack proceeded, when the Indians sprung forward from their lurking place with yells more savage than the howls of the wild beasts of the forest. The few English who were not killed or disabled took to flight, it being impossible to withstand the superior numbers of the enemy, and among the fugitives was the officer, who had received a wound in his left arm.

For a short time he did not consider himself pursued, but after forcing his way with difficulty through the wildest and gloomiest thickets for about half an hour, he was alarmed to hear the well-known whoop of the Indians not far from him. He gave himself up for lost, for what chance had he of escape in those thick woods, every pass of which was probably as familiar to his enemies as unknown to himself? He sought the deepest recesses, but the Indians still kept near him, and an accident only prevented his being almost immediately discovered by them. There was a hollow place, almost like a well, in his path, the mouth of which was so overgrown with wild shrubs as not to be perceptible, except on a minute search. Into this he fell, and though he was bruised by his fall he was here effectually concealed from the Indians. More than once he heard their footsteps as they passed by his place of concealment.

When several hours had elapsed and all seemed still, the officer ventured to stir from his hiding-place. His wound was painful; his limbs were stiff; and it was with great difficulty that he could get out of the pit into which he had fallen. At last he effected his deliverance, and faint and wounded as he was, and though the night was dark and dismal, he set forth in hopes of rejoining the English army.

He had not proceeded far when a light, glimmering through the trees, attracted his attention: he approached it with great caution, and, sheltering himself from observation, regarded with much anxiety a party of Indians who were assembled round a great fire roasting the flesh of a deer. Their wild and savage looks, as they sat on the ground in the red light of the fire, were truly alarming; and the officer, afraid of being seen, changed his position in the hope of concealing himself more effectually. In doing so he struck his wounded arm against a branch, which caused him such violent pain that he was unable at the moment to prevent a cry of agony bursting from him. In a moment the Indians were on their feet, and in another they had dragged him forth.

Wounded as he was, and though his enemies were too numerous to leave any chance of successful resistance, the officer drew his sword and endeavoured to defend himself, for he dreaded the torture which he knew the Indians would inflict on him if he became their captive. So unequal a strife would speedily have terminated in the death of the officer, but that an old Indian, who had hitherto stood aloof, sprung forward, and waving his tomahawk over the Englishman forbade any one to harm him.

It was fortunate that this old Indian was the chief of his tribe, and was highly revered by his people for his great strength and skill in war and in hunting,—they sullenly obeyed him. He addressed the officer in broken French; of which language many of the Indians who were in league with the French had a slight knowledge. He promised him protection, and gave him food. Perceiving that their captive was wounded, he gathered the leaves of some healing plant, and after steeping them in water bound them on the wound, with the greatest solicitude for the officer's recovery, and by words of comfort tried to alleviate his sufferings.

After some time the Indians stretched themselves on the ground to sleep, all but one or two who remained to watch, and the chief, who carried on a short conversation with the officer.

"You cannot," said he, "go away yet, my son, for you could not find the paths through the woods, and if you could you would probably meet with enemies. I cannot now conduct you, for we go in the morning towards the north. You must therefore accompany us, but as soon as possible you shall be restored to your own people. Now go and sleep, for you are wounded and weary, and must have rest."

The Englishman, it may be imagined, did not much relish the idea of being kept among the Indians; it was however much better than being tortured or killed by them, and he returned many thanks to the chief.

Early in the morning he was aroused by the troop preparing for departure. They travelled with the most singular caution, and wound their way through the most obscure parts of the woods, and guided themselves by tracks quite undistinguishable, except by the experienced eye of an Indian. They preserved a profound silence, and showed great ingenuity in the means they adopted to prevent their course being known.

During the middle of the day they rested, and again at night. In the depth of the night the officer was aroused by some one shaking him, and looking up he saw his friend the old Indian, who, cautioning him to be silent, bade him to follow his steps. He did so, and they proceeded carefully among the woods. It was not until daybreak that the silence was broken by the Englishman asking his conductor whither they were going.

"One of our people," replied the Indian, "was wounded severely by you when you were first surprised by them. In consequence of this his brother has sworn revenge against you, and it would have been unsafe for you to remain with us. I will guide you to safety, and then return."

The Englishman made grateful acknowledgments for the Indian's kindness. "I am thinking," he then added, "why you should show me this goodness, for I was a stranger and am an enemy."

"Does a white man never do good to a stranger or an enemy?" asked the Indian. The Englishman blushed, and was silent.

"But I am only paying a debt," said the Indian: "nine months ago I was wounded, and weary, and dying of thirst; you saw me and gave me drink, which saved my life. I prayed to the Great Spirit that I might repay the benefit: behold he has heard me."

The officer was struck with the noble sentiments of the savage, and sighed to think how often his countrymen might take lessons from the Indian.

As the evening drew nigh they came to a tract of country where the woods were thinner,—presently they perceived marks of cultivation: at least the eye was struck by a village not very distant.

"That is an English station," said the Indian; "there you will find white men and friends. But, my son, when thou art with them do not forget the Indian, nor think ill of his people. Farewell, my son! May the Great Spirit protect thee, and give thee strength among thy people."

The Englishman pressed the hand of the old man, spoke a parting word, for he was too much affected to say more. The next moment the Indian was amid the woods, and the officer on his way to join his regiment.

FOOTNOTES:

[1]The Seven Stones are dangerous rocks, lying between the Scilly Isles and the Land's End.

[2]A small bird like a swallow, that is scarcely ever seen except previously to or during a gale of wind. It is viewed with a superstitious feeling by seamen, who call it "Mother Carey's chicken."

[3]Salvage is a sum of money allowed to individuals who are instrumental in saving a ship from being wrecked.

[4]Query—*Humphreys*?

THE END.

Transcriber's Note

The following printers spelling errors have been corrected:-

Page 13

'nearst' to 'nearest'

'The nearest house which'

Page 34

'be' to 'he'

'when he drooped'

Page 100

'fo' to 'of'

'part of a mast'

Page 123

'besom' to 'bosom'

'closely towards his bosom'

Page 148

'slop' to 'shop'

'silently into the shop.'

Page 155

'every' to 'very'

'tastes are very different'

Page 213

'skreen' to 'screen'

'behind the leafy screen'

Page 217

'though' to 'through'

'visible through the long fringes'

Page 237

'concealmant' to 'concealment'

'by his place of concealment'

[End of *Choice Library for Young People* by Mrs. Hofland and others]