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*Sir Salar Jung Bahadur G. C. S. I.*

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# BEFORE THE DAWN.

*A Tale of Italy.*

BY

KATE CRICHTON.

*Second Edition.*

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II.

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# CONTENTS

## OF

### THE SECOND VOLUME.

	Page
CHAPTER I.	
The Lovers' Trial and a Noble Deed. . . .	1
CHAPTER II.	
A Bright Day. . . . .	15
CHAPTER III.	
A Wedding. . . . .	34
CHAPTER IV.	
The Fire. . . . .	50
CHAPTER V.	
Rachel's Departure. . . . .	77
CHAPTER VI.	
The Road to Italy. . . . .	89
CHAPTER VII.	
Rosa at Milan. . . . .	110
CHAPTER VIII.	
Mrs. Triebner's Departure. . . . .	125
CHAPTER IX.	
Brother and Sister. . . . .	132

	Page
CHAPTER X.	
Carnival Time at Milan, 1853. . . . .	144
CHAPTER XI.	
Austrian Justice. . . . .	165
CHAPTER XII.	
A Glimmer of Hope. . . . .	184
CHAPTER XIII.	
The Expulsion of the Swiss from Milan. . . . .	20
CHAPTER XIV.	
Friends of Old. . . . .	220
CHAPTER XV.	
Rachel's Decision. . . . .	241
CHAPTER XVI.	
The Power of Love. . . . .	261
CHAPTER XVII.	
An Unexpected Meeting. . . . .	264
CHAPTER XVIII.	
A Chapter of Troubles. . . . .	277
CHAPTER XIX.	
The Sacrifice draws Near. . . . .	293
CHAPTER XX.	
The Conclusion. . . . .	301

# BEFORE THE DAWN.



## CHAPTER I.

### THE LOVERS' TRIAL AND A NOBLE DEED.

HANZ kept the promise he had made to Carlo, and took an early train to Mayence on the following morning.

Crest-fallen and ashamed, he walked along the streets towards his aunt's house, wondering if they knew all; or if it had been left to him, to relate the unpleasant circumstances of the last few days.

He stands before the door, yet hesitates to pull the bell; and then, as if to mock him and remind him of that happy day, when Marie had consented to link her fate with his, the little birds chirped loudly and merrily. Now he begins to think that he was over-hasty, that there was no great harm; after

all in Marie's teaching the Count *Schwarze Peter* ; but, unfortunately, matters had taken too serious a turn for thinking to be of any service—repentance, although a good thing, could not bring back the lost money, even if it might procure for him his aunt's and Marie's forgiveness.

The bell, at last, was drawn out of its place in a half reluctant manner, and rang so softly that only the quick ear of Marie, who had been anxiously listening from early morning, could hear it ; and with a heart beating very fast she hastened to answer it. The door is opened, and there stands Hanz on the outer side of it ; not the happy, proud-looking Hanz of a few days before, but a figure haggard by late hours and excitement, grave and fearful almost to enter.

The little Marie stands inside, *his* little Marie he would have called her but a short time back, but now he dare not do so. There is something more even than that door between them ; and then how changed *she* is also. Many would have hardly recognized that pale anxious-looking face, as one who had the character of being the rosiest and merriest disposed amongst the inhabitants of Mayence.

Hanz saw the change at once, his heart softened, and he felt more angry than ever with himself

for his hasty behaviour. Marie *must* love him, or she could never have changed so much in so short a time.

He stretched out his hand, determined to make his peace with her before seeing his aunt if possible and said, "Marie, may I speak with you alone for a moment?"

"Yes, come into the parlour, mamma is busy now, so she will not be there at present."

They went in, and a very different couple they seemed from what they had been before in that very room. There was hesitation on both sides; more so, perhaps, on Hanz's, for he felt the difficulty of his position.

"We have been very unhappy about you Hanz," ventured Marie in a low tone, and with hesitation, then bursting out into tears, "oh, Hanz, forgive me for my thoughtlessness. *I* have been to blame."

"Oh, Marie, so have I, far more than you!"

"Not so—but let us say no more about it. You will not be jealous any more with your own little Marie, who loves you warmly and sincerely in spite of her faults; and she will learn to be more steady in future. Come, dear Hanz, be cheerful, this has been but a passing cloud, and all is bright as before—come, smile and look

yourself again," and she placed her hand on Hanz's arm and looked into his face with a confiding and brightening look. Hanz was no longer angry, so she was happy again.

"Oh, Marie, alas! you know nothing I see, my poor darling; what will you say to me when I tell you how much to blame I have been?"

"What is the matter? what *can* have happened? How distressed you look!"

"Ah, well I need do; have you any idea where Mr. Romelli found me?"

"No. Where? at the professor's?"

"I wish it had been so. Marie, don't despise me, when I tell you that I was gambling away the money that was to have enabled us to live happily and comfortably together."

"All lost?"

"No, one quarter left; but that is not enough to buy the share of Dr. Greuser's practice; and then, my aunt, what will she say?"

"Yes, the difficulty will be with her, perhaps; poor Hanz, and I have been the cause of it all."

"No, Marie, don't say so. It was all my own stupid jealousy; but never mind; you will not forget me. I have seen enough to show me the sincerity of your love; we must wait now some

time before we can settle, but with true love on both sides, and confidence in each other, we shall surmount all difficulties ; and I need not tell you, that I will work hard to win back the money. Not, however, in the way I proposed when feeling almost in a state of desperation just after leaving the gambling table, and which reckless intention Mr. Romelli fortunately prevented me from exercising ; but with honest work, such as may make a man proud of what he earns. So, Marie, there is peace between us," and Hanz placed his arm around his cousin's waist ; then in a low tone, " and love, love that shall never be checked again by doubts of any kind."

The door opened, Mrs. Felten entered, and Marie disappeared, thinking it better to leave her mother and lover alone, until the latter had made all known to her.

The task of confession was more difficult to Hanz now than it had been before, for he knew that Mrs. Felten was not likely to make the same allowances for him as Marie had done. Still, he had her love to give him courage ; and so he related every circumstance of the few past days, blaming himself entirely, and expressing great penitence for what he had done. He then begged his aunt to overlook his fault, and to allow the



engagement to continue ; promising that he would strive hard to replace the lost money.

His aunt heard him in silence, without a single interruption ; nevertheless, she had made up her mind the engagement should cease, and told him so after he had finished speaking. Those quiet, timid people are often very obstinate on some points, and Mrs. Felten remained unmoved, in spite of all the powers of persuasion Hanz made use of to induce her to alter her determination.

She affirmed, that she considered the length of time they must wait before they could be married, would be very unfortunate for them ; for she was persuaded that it would be some years before he could replace the lost money. *She* had known very few long engagements that had ended in matrimony. In short, she declared it an injustice to both her child and Hanz. At the same time, she treated her nephew affectionately, expressed her sorrow at what had happened, and told him how her love for him, like that of a mother's, should never change, her interest in his welfare be just as strong as ever.

Both Marie and Hanz had been somewhat prepared for this, still they felt it severely, and tried all in their power to overcome Mrs. Felten's objections ; but the lady was inexorable, and they were

left to feed their hopes upon the buoyant feelings of youth.

At nearly the same hour that this scene had taken place, one of a different kind was being enacted in another quarter of the town.

· Worthy old Doctor Greuser sat in his little breakfast parlour, just finishing a cup of coffee, and looking over his list of patients for the day, when the servant came in to say that a lady desired to speak to him.

“Who is she? what does she want?” exclaimed the Doctor, not best pleased at being disturbed.

“I don’t know, Sir, I think she must be a stranger, for I never saw her before; and she neither gave her name nor spoke of what she wanted.”

“Well,” said the Doctor to himself, while recovering from his annoyance at being called off his coffee and his arrangements for the day; “it would not be quite polite to send and ask a lady such a question. I must go and see myself, I suppose.” Then aloud to the servant, “tell the lady I will come almost immediately; you have shown her into the drawing-room of course?”

“Yes, Sir.”

Dr. Greuser put all his papers carefully together on one side, took a sip of his warm coffee, and

shortly followed the servant into the drawing-room, to see who could be the guest who came to pay him so early a visit."

"Be seated, madam, I beg," said the Doctor, as the stranger rose on his entrance. "What can I do for you, I suppose this is a medical visit?"

"No it is not. I ought to beg you to excuse me for having called at such an unreasonable hour, but I wished to see you as quickly as possible, to ask you to afford me your assistance in a matter in which I am interested, and I fancy you are so also."

Dr. Greuser was at a loss to understand this speech, delivered in a soft hesitating tone; had he been a young man, the novelty of the lady's appearance would have highly delighted him, heightened as it was by the youth of the interesting pleader. But such days had long been passed with him, and he watched his visitor with as much of an inquisitive look as was consistent with a gentleman, waiting gravely without any remark for her to proceed with her story.

The lady, in spite of a slight nervousness at the strangeness of her position, proceeded to say that she was very much interested in the welfare of some friends of hers, a Miss Felten and her

cousin, the latter she had heard had intended entering into partnership with the Doctor.

The Doctor bowed his head in assent and the lady continued,

“Thus far, then, I am right ; and now I am coming to the favour I am about to ask you, and which, from what I have heard of your kind-heartedness, I feel but little hesitation in believing you will grant. In making you acquainted with a circumstance which is yet unknown to you, I hope you will not think I am betraying a confidence ; for Mr. Felten will, without doubt, inform you of the matter himself, which I shall leave him to do as he may think best, merely informing you that he has lately lost a large sum of money, more than the half of his property. This misfortune renders him unable to pay the sum he agreed upon with you for a small share of your business, on which I understand you had put as low a figure as you felt was consistent with your duty to others. I know that an attachment exists between himself and his cousin, and that, unless he is able to secure a moderate income, his marriage with her must either be given up or delayed for a long time.”

“Poor young man, I am very sorry for him, he is a deserving fellow, and hardworking too ;

and then poor little Marie—dear me, I have known them both from children, how did he lose the money?—oh, I forgot, you intend leaving me to hear that from himself—how do you propose to help him, madam? I feel almost persuaded to take him without any remuneration. I am still in good health, and he will be able to pay it back I dare say, so my sister will not—”

“That would hardly be just I think, for Mr. Felten, with the best intentions, might still find it difficult to pay you the money; a thousand things might happen to prevent him—and although you look strong and active, life is uncertain with us all, and we ought never to speculate on its long continuance. I, on the contrary, have no relations who require my assistance, they were all provided for by the liberality of one who has been profuse towards myself. So I wish to be allowed to supply the sum which is wanting, to ensure the happiness of the young couple; and to request you to devise some plan in which it may be given to them without their knowing from whence it comes, not to let them feel it as a gift, but as something earned by Mr. Felten.”

“It is very good of you to make this generous offer; they must be almost strangers to you, or I should either have seen or heard of you before;

but I do not see directly in what way the thing can be managed. Still, a little consideration may enable us to find some means, I will think of it and let you know; allow me to take the liberty of asking your name and address, that I may write or call on you, whichever you should prefer?"

"My name is Mrs. Graham, and I am staying at Mrs. Triebner's, whom you know most likely."

"Oh yes, very well, then you are the English lady whom we have heard so much about. I knew you were not a German by your accent; though pardon me, for you speak German wonderfully well for a foreigner."

"You are very good to say so, for I felt great hesitation on first addressing you, coming as I did at so unusual a time to disturb you. I need hardly ask you to keep this visit of mine a secret, for it will suggest itself to you at once, that I should prefer my desire to be useful to remain a subject of discussion between ourselves only, which will tend, also, to keep the fact from the knowledge of the Feltens. If, therefore, you will write me word when you are decided upon a plan, I will send you the means of carrying it out; and for your kind assistance, I beg to offer you my best thanks."

"Thanks! it is I, madam, who am *your*

debtor, for the honour you have done me." Here the Doctor bowed, and when Mrs. Graham rose to go, he conducted her to the door, and handed her into the coach, which was waiting there for her, with a politeness and deference worthy of the most finished courtier—nay, far surpassing him, for, while the courtier acts thus more from habit than anything else, the worthy Doctor's actions proceeded from an innate reverence of what was good and gentle.

"A very singular person! very interesting—charming I should have said in my youthful days," and the Doctor finished his coffee quite heedless that it was cold, and overflowing with good temper, although his arrangements for the morning had been somewhat disturbed.

Rachel Graham felt that day all the satisfaction which an endeavour to do good ever brings with it; and it was further increased, on her receiving, a day or two afterwards, the following letter from Dr. Greuser.

"Madam,

"I have weighed well many different means of offering Mr. Felten the assistance you are kindly anxious to afford him, in a way which shall not appear to him as a gift; and I have come to

the conclusion that I might propose the undertaking of a translation of some old works on the uses of different plants, and their applications medicinally, besides a few other things, for all of which I will offer to pay him in advance. Pray allow me to conclude with the deepest esteem for yourself, and many thanks for the interest you have taken in my young friends.

“ Believe me, madam,

“ Your respectful servant,

“ JOHN GREUSER.”

Rachel Graham put the letter, when read, into her pocket, well satisfied at the hopes held out for the success of her intended generosity. The pleasure of being useful, and, perhaps, the means of preventing unhappiness between Marie and her cousin, helped to withdraw her from painful thoughts. Her face, in addition to that composure she had forced upon herself, began to wear a somewhat brighter look; and everybody said that Rachel Graham was getting better. Yes, all, even Carlo Romelli had imbibed the erroneous impression, that the visit to Frankfort had caused her graver looks, and somewhat paler cheeks.

If they could have seen her there, the spark of hope then shining brightly in her eye, which all



the pity and compassion for the mother and her invalid daughter, could not dim but only soften ; if they could have watched those elastic steps, which bounded from the same feeling, but which now followed one another with something even of languor—then they might have gleaned an idea of the truth.

As it was, none had seen her at Frankfort, so possessed not the faintest notion of the struggle she had been undergoing, or the sudden shock she had received.

Well it was so, or her position would have been doubly difficult and painful.

## CHAPTER II.

## A BRIGHT DAY.

HANZ thought it best to leave Mayence for a short time, after finding his aunt's dislike to the engagement between himself and his cousin, remained unchangeable ! trusting that absence might soften her, and induce her to recall her determination.

Poor Marie, all her hopes of the future, and her confidence that the clouds were all blown over, weakened sadly when she saw her cousin prepare to depart, without one word from her mother to make them think she would relent.

"Be brave ! be brave, dear Marie !" were the last words of Hanz, "and I will make the money somehow or other ; and then surely my aunt will have compassion on us."

This cheered Marie as long as her lover stood before her, with the strength of a good intention

stamped on his manly brow ; but when he was gone, she thought of all the difficulties he must have before him.

Hanz, on leaving his aunt's house, had still an unpleasant performance to go through before quitting the town ; for Dr. Greuser, as he believed, was yet ignorant that he was unable to pay the sum, which had been agreed upon for the share of the partnership, and that their arrangement must consequently be given up.

Hanz Felten found Dr. Greuser at home, and told his tale with all its real facts, suppressing nothing. It might have been less humiliating to have withheld his blameable conduct, and there was no absolute necessity for him to have said how he had lost his money. Still Dr. Greuser had been always so kind to him, and possessed a certain way with him which induced confidence, that he had determined to make a full confession, and seek his advice as to a means of obtaining employment, to try and recover the lost money.

Dr. Greuser, as we know, was already acquainted with part of the story, and having at the same time heard some whisperings of Hanz's jealousy towards the Italian Count, he was prepared for the remainder. Nevertheless he shook his head very gravely, and read him a lecture in his mild way,

to which the young man listened very attentively, and promised amendment for the future.

Then the good Doctor spoke again, and said, "So Mrs. Felten objects to long engagements which may end in nothing, or still worse, a union when either the one or the other, or both, have outlived their love."

"Well, but dear Doctor, look how many couples live together through many years, and support troubles and changes with undiminished love."

"Quite a different thing, my good fellow, quite another side of the story, when they are husband and wife, I can tell you that, bachelor that I am."

"Could you then put me in the way of earning the money I require, to enable me to induce my aunt to give her consent once more? I am quite ready to work hard—night and day, anything to gain dear Marie."

"Perhaps I may be able to do something for you—let me see—" the Doctor put his finger to his cheek as if striving to remember. He made use of this little *ruse*, knowing that Hanz was a sharp fellow, and likely to suspect something were he too ready with a proposal. Afterwards he looked at his companion steadily, and said, "are you disposed to devote some hours during the day

to the translation of a book, for which undertaking a friend of mine has placed a handsome remuneration in my hands? I, knowing you to be an honest, industrious lad whom I can depend upon, will take it at once as part payment for the share of the practice, and I think I can find you some other work to do ; if you accept there need be no difficulty about money matters. I will go to-morrow and explain all to Mrs. Felten, and tell her I am ready— anxious to take you into partnership immediately, and that she can let you marry Marie without any imprudence.”

“Thank you ! oh, thank you ! deeply I feel your kindness—but—the translation, may I be sure you are not the gentleman who gives the commission, for I cannot impose on your generosity and impoverish your sister.”

“Rest contented on that head, I am not the party who is to pay for the work, rest assured of this ; for I always act on the maxim (an old English one, I believe) be just before you are generous.”

“Then I am most happy, and feel equally grateful to you for the offer that now I can accept, but which otherwise would have been impossible. If you can give me the work for translation, I will take it off to Heidelberg with me,

for I intend to go there until my aunt shall relent."

"My dear boy, there is no occasion for that. Stay here, I have a room for you where you can do your translation much better than at Heidelberg—there, no more thanks; here is the book, begin it at once if you like. Now I must leave you to the care of my sister until the evening, so good bye, keep a good heart, and we shall be able to set things all right again I have no doubt."

"So far so good," said Dr. Greuser to himself as he walked out of his street door. "Hanz has not the least suspicion, and now there is only Mrs. Felten to manage. I wonder if it is the want of money, which has made her so determined not to allow the engagement between the young folks to continue? Well, we must see what the old man can do with her after he has gone his rounds."

Dr. Greuser put his good intentions into execution, but found Mrs. Felten more determined than he had imagined. She spoke kindly and affectionately of Hanz, and yet thought it for the best that his engagement with Marie had been broken off. Dr. Greuser having been able to remove the fear of want of money from the lady's mind, then set his wits to

work to think what other obstacle stood in the way, and prevented things from going smoothly. "There is a hitch somewhere, patience, and I will find it out," said the indefatigable doctor to himself.

Days passed, and news found its way to Mrs. Triebner's in a letter from Marie to Rosa, that Dr. Greuser had been so good as to procure something for Hanz to do which would make up the money lost at Wisbaden. The Doctor had kindly said he would take Hanz immediately, but Mrs. Felten still objected to the engagement.

"Very strange!" exclaimed Rosa, "when she was glad of it at first. I had no idea Mrs. Felten would be so unkind—so cruel!"

"There, my dear, do moderate your language a little. Just wait until you know Mrs. Felten's reasons before you condemn her."

"Yes, my dear Mrs. Triebner, but see how unhappy poor Marie is; I wonder she can bear to see her daughter so wretched; perhaps she will pine away and go into a consumption."

"Pooh, nonsense! that strong healthy body to go into a consumption. Oh, here comes Rachel, let us hear what she thinks of such a thing. Rachel, do you think Marie Felten is likely to go into a decline, because her mother won't let her marry

her cousin? Here is Rosa going to cry her eyes out about it, just look at her, what an exciteable child it is to be sure!"

"No, Mrs. Triebner," replied Rachel smiling, "Miss Felten is one of the last persons likely to be driven into, or overtaken by such a malady. Do not cry, Rosa," and she put her hand on the young girl's shoulder, "Mrs. Felten will be brought to reason shortly, I have no doubt, and your friend made happy. Why does her mother object now, when she was so contented before with her nephew for a son-in-law? Does she fear that he may have an inclination for the gambling-table, because he ran over to Wisbaden when his brain was heated with passion? rather unjust that would be, I think."

"No, I fancy it is his proneness to jealousy, and Marie's want of consideration in allowing her lively spirits to get the better of her," said Mrs. Triebner, "which makes her fear that the marriage might not turn out a happy one. She was a little anxious at first she told me about it; but Hanz being so good a young man in every other respect, she hoped when her consent had been given, and it was an understood thing that they were to be affianced after a few months' trial of the duration of their affection, that there would be no more



jealousies, and that Marie would learn to be more sober and sedate."

"Well, but how could she expect these things to be brought about immediately? All that Mrs. Felten requires will come in time I have no doubt; and really I think they will make a very happy couple, they seemed quite suited to each other."

"That is right, dear Mrs. Graham, I am so glad you take their part; and do see if you cannot induce Mrs. Triebner to talk to Mrs. Felten, and try to make her recall her present objection to the marriage, will you?"

"Here comes Carlo," exclaimed Mrs. Triebner, before Rachel could reply to Rosa, "and Dr. Greuser with him I declare. He must have something to tell us about it, for he is always so busy that we never get a sight of him without some one is ill."

Dr. Greuser and Carlo entered, and after Mrs. Triebner had introduced Mrs. Graham to the former, who bowed to the lady with a meaning look and a merry upturning of the corner of his eye-lids, he said, "I have good news to tell you; and as I met Mr. Romelli, I thought I might just as well walk back with him and give it you myself, for I know Rosa will be glad to hear that it goes right at last with her friend Marie."

“To be sure I am! how kind you have been to them throughout the affair, but now do tell us all about it, for I long to know.”

“Rosa and ladies, you shall hear at once the history of my success. After having received a full confession from Hanz, who seemed very repentant, I started off on my rounds, and finished up with Mrs. Felten. I informed her that I had been enabled to put Hanz in the way of regaining his lost money, (here the Doctor could not help venturing a side glance at Rachel) and tried to paint as interesting a picture of my young friend’s contrition, his love for Marie, and his despair at being separated from her, as an old bachelor could conjure up. Vain! all, all in vain! Mrs. Felten was as implacable as ever, and I had to give up the attempt for that day. On my return home, I found Hanz had set to work in good earnest at the translation, and although his looks fell considerably on hearing the account of my failure with his aunt, still I was enabled to cheer him a little after supper, over a glass of our famous Rhine wine, and buoy him up with hopes that I should eventually succeed in my undertaking; next I set to work to find out what could be Mrs. Felten’s reason for withholding her consent to the engagement. An idea that entered my head that it must be Master

Hanz's proneness to jealousy which was the stumbling block, so I taxed him with it, and he confessed he thought it most likely I had found out the mischief. 'Well, you must get over it you know, it is a very foolish thing to make troubles, where there are none, I told him;' and he assured me that the events of the last few days had persuaded him so strongly of his own folly and Marie's constancy, that I might promise in his name that he would never give way any more to such a feeling. Again I started off to Mrs. Felten's, and after expending a host of words scattered over the space of two long hours, I convinced her that she might fearlessly give her consent to the young people. Hanz, however, will not return to his aunt's house, for it was thought best for him to remain with me, as I shall take him into partnership at once."

"Bravo, Dr. Greuser!" exclaimed Mrs. Triebner, "and I suppose the young people are all life and spirits again. When was it all settled?"

"Only this morning. There, now I must be off; Hanz has to go some rounds with me this afternoon, and if we keep the supper waiting, the mistress will be angry, for she hates her cooking to be spoilt, and she is so rejoiced at my persuasive powers, that there is some mysterious dish which

is to make its appearance in honour of my triumph."

"Stop, Doctor, just a moment," interrupted Mrs. Triebner; "I want to know how that translation was so lucky as to drop in just as it was wanted? *You* give the commission in reality, I suppose?"

"Oh, yes, I know it is all Dr. Greuser's doing," exclaimed Rosa.

"Not so fast! Not so fast, ladies. I have had no hand in this opportune assistance, which has fallen to Hanz's lot; in short, I am *not* the person who has commissioned the translation. Now I am going. Let me shake hands with you, Mrs. Graham. Every one gives you so good a character, and I know they cannot be wrong."

"How do you know, Dr. Greuser?" asked Rosa, laughing; "for you see Mrs. Graham now for the first time."

"Do you think I cannot read faces as well as books, you saucy child?"

"Child, indeed! I am a young woman!"

"Yes, just like youth; all in a hurry to go up the hill, but never anxious to come down it. There, now I must leave you; and it is such a lovely day, I advise you to go and hear the band in the Anlager gardens."

When the Doctor had gone, every one agreed he had given them good advice, so the ladies rose, and went to seek their bonnets and shawls. Mrs. Graham was the last to leave the room, and as she was passing out, Carlo placed his hand on her arm and said,

“*You* have been at work here. Don’t try to shake your head, I saw it all at once. How thoughtful and considerate for others ; how generous. Who but *you* would have thought of such a thing ?”

“Oh, many ! many ! But do not say any more about it. You will keep my secret for me, will you not ?”

“Trust me !”

“Yes, in all things.”

Rachel ran into her room, and as she fastened her bonnet strings and pinned her shawl, the fingers trembled and the cheeks flushed. *He* had understood her. How her heart throbbed ! Yes ; a look glowing and full of admiration had lighted upon her from those eyes. Did Carlo love her ? asked her heart. No, reason replied ; how could that be, he had been free to choose !

“Be still ! be still !” the inward voice repeated, as the idea of her own riches and his poverty flashed across her mind, and his proud independent

feelings seemed to give colour to the idea that perhaps he *did* love her after all. Yes ; peace, be still, dismiss such surmises, for he is bound to another. In honour he cannot withdraw from the engagement he has formed.

But it was joy to Rachel to believe she had been loved by Carlo, although his engagement to Rosa rendered it impossible for them ever to stand in any other position to each other than such as friendship permitted. Yet, in spite of her throbbing heart, she walked by Mrs. Triebner's side to the gardens, listening, with her usually quiet manner, to the new experiments on cakes and puddings ; how Rosa's winter things required mending and replacing ; surmises as to when Hanz and Marie would be married ; and whether Mrs. Felten would make them wait longer than the three months.

The gardens reached, Carlo sought a table near the music, and round it they soon established themselves. The ladies drank their coffee, and took out their work. Even Rachel had fallen into that German habit, for she had at times found it very useful to hide a truant look, by bending the head over some complication of stitches. Yet now she sometimes raised her eyes from her work, to watch the expression of Carlo's face, when she could do so unobserved. Nothing, however, was to be

learnt there. To Rosa he was attentive and affectionate, to Mrs. Triebner, cordial and friendly ; but to herself, almost cold, and more reserved than she had ever known him before. The band played beautifully, but she could hardly be said to hear it ; certainly, she did not listen, and the leaves of the music were turned and re-turned—polka succeeding to waltz, and waltz to overture, without her having any conception of the change, and only carrying away a confused notion of sounds. Her ideas were not in a much better state, for she now began to think that the glance of love she believed she had seen a short time back, had existed but in her imagination. Besides, why had he engaged himself to Rosa if he had not loved her ?

Rachel was as much at a loss as many others, to interpret the many turnings and strange phenomena in the nature of man. First one reason, then another would suggest itself to her mind ; at one moment she was sure that at any rate he *had* loved her, the next she blamed her folly for having thought such a thing for an instant—that he had never felt otherwise than a sincere friendship towards her. Why had she delayed her departure ? Why not have boldly made up her mind to leave a scene which was fraught with nothing but sadness to her ?

Yes, she would go ; no matter what any one might think. But then she must wait to receive the money from her Agent, that she might deliver it into Dr. Greuser's hands for Hanz Felten. How pleasant to her was this excuse to stay yet a little longer, for although her daily intercourse with Carlo was painful, now she knew him to be the promised husband of another, still there was pleasure even in that pain, and she dreaded to sever the last link of their acquaintance. The last she felt it would be, for she must go to England to look after her property, and he to Italy, to marry Rosa ; so sea and land would separate them. Carlo would soon forget that such a person as Rachel Graham existed ; family cares, his art, new associations, would help to blot out the past, even if there had been once some feeling of tenderness in his heart towards her, and then—

“ Rachel, all the people are going ! ” broke in the words of Mrs. Triebner upon her meditations. “ Had you not better put your work away ? ”

“ Oh, yes ; what ? ” replied Rachel, starting.

“ Why that last piece has quite stunned you, you look quite bewildered ! we are so near the horns here, and those men do blow away so furiously ; come, Carlo, pay for the coffee, and let us be off. I hate to have to wait at the gate while the



string of carriages passes through, and one has to jam oneself up against the wall, or run in and out of the line rubbing one's clothes against the horses' noses—come.”

Rosa and Carlo led the way as before, she talking in her enthusiastic way about her delight at Mrs. Felten having withdrawn her opposition to Hanz's engagement to Marie; and he gravely listening. Then, by degrees, the conversation turned on their own affairs, and Carlo asked Rosa if she thought Mrs. Triebner would consent to go to Milan with them, which would enable them to carry out her brother's wish, that their wedding should take place at Milan.

“Oh yes, I hope so,” replied Rosa, “she has not refused, although I cannot make her give me a decided answer—when shall we go, Carlo? how I long to see Italy and Antonio! dear Antonio! I know you will like him so much!”

“We must think about it shortly, or we shall be too late in the season for crossing the mountains, otherwise than in a sledge, and I must not let my flower run the risk of being frozen; we must bring Mrs. Triebner to a decision.”

Rosa smiled, and looked on her lover with eyes of love, as she listened to his thoughtful consideration for herself.

"Dear Carlo, how kind you are! How I will strive to make you a good and obedient wife. Will you put up with all my faults and bear with them, and remember that I have one thing, and that one only to recommend me to you? earnest never dying love, that will cling to you as long as life remains. Yes, I have now two people to live for, yourself and Antonio, for he must never be forgotten. All his kindnesses to me are woven in my nature from childhood; I remember even from the time poor mamma died, how careful he was of me, like a parent almost, and so tender and so loving."

"Dear Rosa, I fear I am hardly fit to fill his place; yet God knows I wish to make you happy."

"Oh, Carlo, do not be so modest, I have no fear, we shall be as happy as the day is long!"

Carlo sighed.

"Why do you sigh, dear Carlo? sometimes you are very grave; but Mrs. Triebner thinks it is your anxiety about your painting. Oh, never mind, do not worry yourself about that, the humblest lot will be happiness to me shared with you; but tell me if you have a sorrow, confide in me dear friend."

What could he say to this—could he tell her that he loved another woman? that he had by

degrees learnt to regard her (Rosa) with affection, but that all his warmer and more ardent feelings were buried in the grave of an hopeless love. Very much tempted he felt at first to confess all—it would have been the wisest, the best plan; but her exciteable nature, her susceptibility, he trembled at what might be the consequence; and then her love so confiding and so pure—what a cruel wretch he would be to dash her bright happy future to pieces! Why when she seemed so contented with his sober affection, why not leave her in peaceful ignorance of his struggles?

Therefore he answered her with much affection, set her fears at rest about himself, induced her to speak of all the arrangements for their departure, and expressed himself so anxious that their marriage should take place as soon as possible, that had the shadow of a doubt crossed her mind of his satisfaction at their proposed union, it could have lasted but a moment.

But Rosa's was a nature full of confidence in those she loved, thus there had been no need of anything to assure her. Carlo she believed loved her, why should she think otherwise? he had asked her of his own free will, and she was dow-erless.

On our party arriving at home, they found

Marie and Hanz Felten waiting for them, both looking quite happy and smiling again.

"Oh we know all about it," exclaimed Mrs. Triebner, "Dr. Greuser has been before you."

Then followed congratulations from all; and Rosa took her friend aside, where they kept up a low earnest conversation together until Mrs. Triebner called out to them, to come forward and give the rest the benefit of what they were saying.

Marie blushed a little, but Rosa led her friend towards them; and then all Dr. Greuser's arrangements for the partnership were related openly.

Mrs. Triebner insisted that the young people should stay to supper, and when that time arrived she went herself to the cellar and brought out a bottle of choice wine, to drink to the health of the young doctor and his future wife.

Rachel felt quite happy, and almost forgot her own trouble, as she watched those two young faces of whose smiles she had partly been the cause; she owed to herself as she laid down to rest that night, that better than possessing happiness yourself, is to confer it on others.

## CHAPTER III.

## A WEDDING.

“HERE I am again all right you see,” exclaimed Count Ferris, who entered Mrs. Triebner’s drawing-room a few days after the evening of rejoicing at that lady’s house. “Here I am, and there are the birds—now have I not behaved myself well, eh?”

“If you shot them all certainly,” replied Rosa, the only one of the ladies present to welcome him. “But have you heard what has been going on since you went away?”

“Yes, Carlo told me; I am afraid I acted very foolishly, nevertheless, it is all going on swimmingly now, I only served to give a fillip to the affair. Dear me, how stupid it was for that Mr. Felten to be jealous of me, could he not see that I meant no harm to him, and only viewed the lady as I would any other pretty lively girl, who might

come in my way—and then if I had wanted to beat him out of the field, I certainly should not have left him with the prize, to run after these plump little fellows.”

“Yes, but he did not know that, until he returned from Wisbaden, I daresay he believed you were making desperate love to Marie; and you know you have been somewhat to blame.”

“Well, yes, and I am really sorry—I wish though I could have made that money up to him.”

“That you need not do, for Hanz I know would not have accepted it from you—all is for the best as it is, he has now useful employment for his time, and the satisfaction of earning the money. Marie is happy again, and Mrs. Felten has put aside all her fears; so do not go and play marplot again, Count Ferris.”

“Be assured I will not, I will be the gravest, the most proper—quite a model young man for the future. I suppose, though, I may take my little friend, or her mother, a brace of birds.”

“Yes, I think you may venture to do that.”

“I am glad you say so, for it will give me an opportunity of trying to make my peace with the hero of *Schwarze Peter*. Mrs. Triebner and Mrs. Graham are both well I trust?”

“Yes, thank you, they are gone out shopping. Mrs. Triebner has at last consented to go to Italy,” —the speaker blushed a little—“and she wanted Mrs. Graham to help her in the choice of things best suited for me, and for herself also, although I fear we shall not be able to induce her to stay with us long.”

“Yes, Carlo told me she had been brought to view Italy with rather less horror; and had quite given up that idea of stabbing by wholesale, which some stupid persons had put into her head, partly Carlo says through Mrs. Graham’s reasoning and good sense, and aided, I say, by our having proved such harmless tractable animals. Poor Mrs. Triebner! how people shut up all their life in a small place get conventional ideas.”

“But she has been in England.”

“Has she! then perhaps she did not remain long, or had not much opportunity for observation.”

“I believe her stay was short. It was there she made the acquaintance of Mrs. Graham. I, however, have no right to think or speak of any little prejudices she may have, for she has been like a mother to me, so good and so gentle when I was ill; and all her efforts to crush my love of the romantic are all done with a good intention, be-

cause with her thoroughly practical nature, she thinks all such feelings rather hurtful than beneficial to us."

The conversation continued for some time, but still the ladies did not return; so Count Ferris took his leave, and started off with his brace of birds to Mrs. Felten's.

This visit proved a far more satisfactory one than the last had been; he found Mrs. Felten and Marie sitting with Hanz, all looking quite happy and contented together. The former knitting warm stockings for the winter, and the latter explaining to Marie numerous little plans for their future household arrangements; Count Ferris on first entering, felt somewhat awkward, as the remembrance of his former visit rose up before him. But Hanz came forward so frankly, and shook him so cordially by the hand, that all uncomfortable sensations passed away. Indeed, Hanz made quite a different impression upon him from what he had ever done before, for dark frowning looks were now all gone, and a pleasant happy expression had taken their place. They all chatted and laughed together, and Count Ferris amused them with little anecdotes of his shooting adventures; and in conclusion he brought forward the birds, which he begged Mrs. Felten would do him the pleasure of



accepting. That lady smiled and thanked him and altogether everything went off very well.

So *Schwarze Peter* quite sunk down into insignificance, and Hanz Felten, and Count Ferris struck up a friendship on his ruins. Mrs. Felten was greatly relieved at this, for she, with her usual timidity, had dreaded Count Ferris' return.

The translation progressed rapidly, for Hanz worked very hard ; and Dr. Greuser had begun to take him with him on his different visits.

Shortly after, the Doctor seeing how smoothly things were going on, set to work at Mrs. Felten again, to induce her to allow the young people to marry at once. He had some difficulty at first, for she wanted further proof of the stability of her nephew's good intentions.

Whether the Doctor would have come off victorious, also this second time, it is hard to tell, for Mrs. Triebner brought her influence into the scale, and begged as she should have to start in a short time with Rosa and Mr. Romelli for Italy, and as Mrs. Graham had signified her intention of leaving very soon for England, that the wedding might take place before the party broke up. Rosa also came in her beseeching way, to say how unhappy she should be, were she obliged to leave

Mayence without having acted as Marie's bridesmaid.

Thus pressed on all sides, Mrs. Felten found herself obliged to give way; and Hanz was told, that he might begin making preparations for the wedding.

It was decided that the young people should reside with Mrs. Felten, as there were two or three spare rooms in her house, which she could give them. These Hanz began to furnish as a sitting-room for Marie, a study for himself, and a bedroom. The money for the translation had been placed in the hands of Dr. Greuser, and all the articles of partnership were quickly executed. Marie was busy from morning to night, superintending the arrangement of the things which Hanz sent in from time to time; and helping her mother, in the different additions which were being made to her wardrobe. Mrs. Triebner was deciding in her own mind what boxes she had better take to Milan; and giving a suggestion every now and then to the finishing of Rosa's bridesmaid's dress.

Carlo was trying to console himself for his disappointed feelings, with a letter just received from England, which stated that the success of the picture, that he had painted for Lord G— had

been immense, and enclosed an order from a wealthy merchant for an historical painting. It left him his own choice of subject, and offered so high a remuneration, that he, the unknown artist, who had been accustomed to sell his best works for sums next to nothing in comparison, looked on it almost as a dream. Nevertheless the satisfaction of success, and the proud feelings of rising ambition, came not to him all unalloyed. The recollection of Rachel would break in upon it all; and oh, if he had waited, if he had only known that such a chance, such a means laid before him, of raising himself more on a level with that loved one? But he had never dreamt of such good fortune, for true genius is always modest, sometimes even diffident.

“If Rachel could have loved me,” said Carlo to himself.

“But then what use?” replied conscience, “can I break my pledged word to another, and that other one who loves me with all the first fresh confiding feelings of her young heart?” “No,” boldly answered justice and honourable feelings. “Yes, anything to gain Rachel,” broke in incorrigible love; so he wavered between duty and passion.

Rachel amongst them all, led the most quiet life during this time, she had received the money

from her agent, and had placed it in Dr. Greüser's hands. No excuse could now keep her at Mayence, after the marriage which was to take place so shortly ; and with calm determination she was awaiting the moment which was fast approaching, when she and Carlo should clasp each other's hands for the last time. Thus stood affairs on the eve of the wedding.

The sun shone brightly on the bridal day, as Marie peeped from behind the curtains in haste, and blushing half from modesty, and half from pleasure, she runs to welcome a little tribe of bridesmaids.

Mrs. Felten is more quiet than ever—almost grave. Perhaps she remembers the time when she was dressing for a little occasion, all full of hope and love, and buoyant youth ; or is she thinking on Marie's future prospects, a mother's anxiety excited to the highest at such a time, or does not grief exactly, yet a sad feeling oppresses her as she remembers that this day she gives her child over to another's care.

The early breakfast is laid, in a small room where Mrs. Felten made up her accounts.

There is but little talking amongst this small female party, now sitting round the tiny table ; for Mrs. Felten and Marie are both too full of

their own thoughts and feelings, and the bridesmaids hardly like to interrupt them. So the coffee and rolls are discussed quickly, and almost in silence, and then Marie, with her bridesmaids, withdraws to deck herself in bridal attire.

The hours crept on ; and all the rooms of Mrs. Felten's (including those, which she has made over to her daughter, and future son-in-law for their use) were thrown open to receive the numerous relations and friends, who had been invited to join the ceremony. A pretty coup-d'œil they formed, all opening one out of another, with their fresh furniture : for Mrs. Felten had also made many new purchases for her own rooms.

Mrs. Felten received her guests as they followed each other in succession, with quiet politeness, although she looked a little flurried as the door continually opened to admit some new arrival ; for she hardly felt herself equal to entertaining a numerous company, when all her thoughts were taken up with Marie. It was therefore a source of great relief to her when Mrs. Triebner entered, accompanied by Rachel Graham ; for she knew her good-natured friend would stir up a little life amongst the party, which she had been quite unequal to attempt. Afterwards dropped in numerous officers, who had been connected in some way or other with Mrs. Felten's

late husband; and lastly, in walked Dr. Greuser looking quite spruce, for he had been asked to give the bride away, a compliment paid to him on account of his long friendship with Major Felten, and his present connection with Hanz.

The guests are assembled; and now all anxiously await the coming of the bride. Soon the carriages are driving up, to take them to the church when she shall be ready; the last door of the suite of rooms is opened, and Marie makes her appearance with her friends. There has been great good taste displayed in her dress, but it is not what many of the party there assembled had expected. The idea of a rich and gorgeous material, seems woven in some people's minds, as the only one suited to be used in the fabrication of the bridal robe. They quite forget that the young bride should give an idea of simplicity and purity, which Marie's little figure certainly did, in her plain white tarletan, beautifully made, with its three skirts falling lightly one over another, with hardly any ornament, and her veil fastened only with a simple sprig of myrtle blossom on either side.

The bridesmaids in peach blossom coloured silk dresses, smiled and nodded gaily to those they knew, looking very fresh and pretty; but amongst them all, Rosa's lovely face was conspicuous.

Marie had to go through the ordeal of congratulations from all her friends ; and though she smiled and looked happy, all the expression of her face was softened and subdued, and Dr. Greuser declared that she was a downright charming little maiden.

All the company left the rooms in couples, and by degrees filled the carriages, which were waiting for them ; the bride, Dr. Greuser, and the bridesmaids alone remained at last. They also took their places in carriages, set apart for them, and drove off after the rest to the Prussian Protestant Church, where Hanz was waiting to receive them with the clergyman.

The simple service was soon performed ; and then Hanz turned to Marie, and embraced her as his wife ; their names were signed, and all returned to Mrs. Felten's house, Hanz and his young bride leading the way.

Of course there was a *déjeûner*, of which it is needless to speak, these things are much the same everywhere.

But a short time, and Marie is going round amongst her friends to say good-bye. Poor child, she is much agitated, and a tear or two wets her cheek ; and although she will return soon again to live with her mother, still she dreads somewhat

the parting kiss which she must shortly give her. Mrs. Felten had slipped out of the room a short time before, that she might have her child all to herself during that last minute ; there she stands by the parlour door, anxiously waiting for Marie to come. For she wishes it over, wishes all the people gone, that she may sit down quietly, and compose herself after the agitation and anxieties of the day.

Marie comes, and putting her arms round her mother's neck, bids her be cheerful, for she will write to her from Geneva the moment they arrive there ; and then recalls to her mind that they will only be away a fortnight.

" So short a time, mamma, it will soon pass," said Marie as she kissed her mother again, " for you know we cannot stay longer, because Dr. Greuser wishes Hanz to be back as soon as possible."

" God bless you, mother," said Hanz, as he followed behind, and bowed down his tall figure to kiss her, " God bless you, take care of yourself and I will bring Marie, bless her !—back safe and sound."

Away they went, and Mrs. Felten felt she should have been relieved, if she could have allowed her tears to flow in abundance ; but the re-



membrance of all the people in the drawing-room checked them at once ; and wiping those truants from her face, which had rolled down in spite of all her efforts, she turned back to go and play her part of the hostess. Just before entering the room, she met Rosa, who came to tell her that Mrs. Triebner thought she had better not rejoin the company until she had recovered herself a little ; and that if she would go and lie down in her room, Mrs. Triebner would attend to the company, and give them their coffee.

“It is very kind of Mrs. Triebner to be so thoughtful,” said Mrs. Felten, “I certainly will do as she advises—now run back, my dear child, and see if you cannot start some game amongst the young people, for I must get you to take Marie’s place to-day. Stay, here are the keys in case anything should be required, I only want a little while to compose myself, I feel rather—”

“Yes, yes, dear Mrs. Felten we all understand—now do not hurry and try to come into the drawing-room before you are quite fit to do so—we shall manage very well.”

“How is she ?” asked many voices, when Rosa returned to the drawing-room.

“Oh she will be very well—a little agitated—it will soon pass off, and she will be all right again

after a good hearty cry," exclaimed Mrs. Triebner before the young girl could reply.

To this Rosa assented, so every one was satisfied ; and then she quietly slipped the keys which had been given to her into Mrs. Triebner's hands. The good lady bustled about, and found everything almost as well as if it had been her own house ; the coffee was hot, clear, and strong, and after every one had partaken of it, Rosa proposed some game ; although if she had had her choice, she would have preferred sitting quietly in a corner talking to Carlo.

The day went on, much as such kind of days generally do—and there was but little merriment, in spite of Mrs. Triebner's and Rosa's best efforts ; but when Mrs. Felten returned to her visitors, towards the evening, the company brightened up a little, for Rachel Graham sat down to the piano and played a waltz ; and if there be one thing a German loves to do in preference to anything else, if there be any chance of stirring him up from that dreamy state in which he is so apt to fall—it is that one, two, three, of the magic waltz.

Up they rose, couple after couple, and were soon spinning round and round with evident satisfaction. No wonder though that they like it so much, for they certainly do it to perfection.

Rachel's fingers seemed to beat even the energetic dancers' feet ; for there she sat running them along the keys, waltz, polka, galop, one after another without stopping. Her mind was full of the parting which was to take place so soon, and another marriage which would follow so quickly after. She was glad therefore, to have anything to do which would leave her mind quiet.

"There—Mrs. Graham must be tired, I am sure," said Count Ferris coming up to Rachel, and begging her to give up her place to somebody else, and then oblige him by taking a turn with him.

"So that is what you call resting?" asked Rachel smiling.

"Yes, for the hands you know—come, just one turn, and then I must be off to catch the train."

"You are surely not going to leave Mayence to-night?"

"Yes, I promised to be in Frankfort at the drawing of that lottery to-morrow, and if I do not go to-night, I shall not be in time, for there is no early train to-morrow."

"How tired you will be."

"Oh no, I shall sleep all the way."

"Lucky man, if you can do that. If I were to

travel for nights together, I should never be able to rest."

"All habit I assure you—now the turn."

The turn was multiplied several times, and then Count Ferris took his leave, and walked off to the station; shortly afterwards the party broke up, and thus ended Marie Felten's wedding day.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE FIRE.

SOME time after the dispersion of the party at Mrs. Felten's, just as the morning was breaking through the night clouds, when it was hardly light enough to be called day, and yet not sufficiently dark to be considered as night, Rachel who slept very lightly, was awoke by the drums beating, the trampling of many horses' feet, and the tolling of the church bells. Wondering what could produce such movements at so unusual an hour, she got out of bed; and hastily flinging a cloak over her night-dress, she ran to the window, pushed back the curtain, and looked out.

For a minute or two she learnt nothing; and when a little drummer boy passed along beating away for his very life, this offered no further explanation to her. Still the bells tolled, and the trampling of horses again approached; soon a

detachment of artillery came in sight, and in a moment as it were, dashed past the window.

The first idea of an English person, when on the continent, at any of these unusual demonstrations among the military, is generally a revolution, or an outbreak of some kind or other; and Rachel strained her eyes, to see if anything like a commotion in the streets would follow.

All was quiet, except the tolling of the bells.

"What can it be?" said Rachel to herself.

"A fire perhaps," she suddenly thought.

"Oh!—Oh where can it be?—and Carlo—Oh my God not that!"

At the last idea she trembled and looked up and down the street; again and again her eye wandered round the heavens, to see if the sky bore any indication of such a thing. At first it did not do so, but soon the cool grey tint was warmed by a flash of yellow light which shot up suddenly to the left, and then sunk down again instantaneously—of short duration it had been, nevertheless it spoke volumes to Rachel. All sorts of fears and horrors to her seemed contained in that bright momentary flame, for she knew that the house in which Carlo lodged, lay somewhere out in that direction; although she was not sufficiently acquainted with the localities of the place, to be able

to judge if he lived exactly in that part of the town from whence the flame had risen up.

The next idea following close upon her fears, was that perhaps Rosa might help her. In calmer moments, she would have chosen Mrs. Triebner in preference; but now her anxiety for Carlo made her forget how nearly Rosa was interested in the matter. But the young girl's room being the nearest to her, and she having presented herself first as a means of finding out where the fire was, she ran at once to her.

Rosa who had just been awoke by the drums and bells, was rubbing her eyes, bewildered as Rachel entered the room.

"It must be a fire!" exclaimed she, as she became conscious; and then sprang out of bed, opened the window, and stretched her head out, before Rachel was sufficiently master of herself to speak.

"I see no flames—where can it be?" continued Rosa.

"There," said Rachel, trembling, and pointing to the left.

"Oh God! and Carlo lives there!" and Rosa wrung her hands, and walked wildly about the room.

"Had we not better think of doing something?" said Rachel white as marble, but outwardly calm—

"What can we do?" it is a quarter of an hour's walk from here—and the alarm has been given." Rosa still walked about fearfully agitated.

"Had we not better awake Mrs. Triebner?"

"No, let us go and see for ourselves—anything is better than this suspense!"

"But you are so excited; how can you walk there in your present state?"

"Oh yes! I must go! Oh, dear Mrs. Graham, do let us go, I cannot bear to wait in this way."

Rachel's own anxiety was far too great not to snatch at such a proposal; therefore they dressed as quickly as they could, and left the house without disturbing Mrs. Triebner or the servant.

A quarter of an hour's walk when taken only for pleasure, or for an errand, appears a mere nothing; but when it has to be passed over on such an occasion as the present, it seems as if it would never end; that step out as you will, you will never reach your destination. So thought Rachel and Rosa, as they hastened along the streets so quickly that they almost lost their breath, and could hardly articulate a word.

As they drew near the scene of conflagration, it became more difficult to pass, for the soldiers



lined the streets, and the crowd had collected, and was moving onwards in the direction of the fire. However, by means of pushing and shoving, and sliding into every little space they saw before them; they at last contrived to work their way as far as the entrance to the street where the disaster was going on, and from whence rose volumes of smoke. Down the street, which proved to be the one in which Carlo lived, they could not go; for it was guarded by soldiers to prevent accidents, by the falling of beams and stones. Being very narrow and consisting of those old houses built with great quantities of wood, and overhanging roofs with gable ends black with age, it was known that they burnt very rapidly, when once ignited.

The smoke was at first so dense, that it was impossible to judge on which side of the street the fire was; and to ask the people was useless, for one said one thing, one another; and even a correct opinion amongst such a confusion of tongues, would not have been rightly understood. Rosa and Rachel looked anxiously to the right hand half way down, inwardly praying that it might not be there, for *there* Carlo lived.

The fire burnt briskly, and soon the smoke gave way to brilliant flames; the crackling of the

wood, the crashing of falling beams every now and then, could be distinctly heard. The flames enabled all who stood near the entrance of the street to see where the disaster was ; and the eyes of those two women so deeply interested in the matter, saw what they had prayed *not* to see, the house where Carlo lived in flames.

“Do you recognise anyone outside on the top of that gable?” asked Rachel, as they stood together with their hands locked firmly in each other’s

Rosa was taller than Rachel, and so could see much better ; for the heads of the crowd, hid part of the houses from the latter’s view every now and then.

“Yes, my God ! ’tis Carlo ! and with a child in his arms ! Oh save him—save !” she exclaimed, clasping her hands together in the attitude of entreaty. “Will the soldiers let us pass ? Do let us go down the street—do,” and she reached her hand out, and placed it on the arm of a hard heavy-looking Austrian soldier.

“You cannot pass,” replied the rough Croat, shaking her hand off his arm at the same time.

“We should only hinder them, dear,” murmured a gentle voice in her ear, “how I wish I could see.”

A tall gentleman in the crowd, who was just in front, turned round at this instant, and observed the two anxious faces behind him. The one all agitation, clasping her hands and looking beseechingly about in every direction, for some one to take help to that man who stood on the roof with the child in his arms, where all was burning and cracking and falling beneath him ; the other, quiet, calm, almost speechless—but white as death even to the lips, with eyes fixed earnestly on one spot and never moving.

“Let me give you my place,” he kindly said, to Rachel, who bowed her head in thanks, and moved forward immediately to where the stranger had made way for her. This movement separated her from Rosa, and she looked round afterwards hesitating to leave her.

The stranger understood the look, nodded his head kindly and said, “I will take care of your friend, be quite easy, she shall be safe from all annoyance that I can prevent.”

Rachel thus assured, turned her eyes again to the perilous position of Carlo, who was still standing on the roof. The engines had been pouring showers of water on the burning mass, and the men pumped away indefatigably, with the perspiration rolling down their heated

faces ; but still the flames increased, and the two houses on either side had both caught fire at the bottom story. Carlo's position now became one of imminent danger, for the flames were fast approaching the spot where he stood, waiting until some means of deliverance should be afforded him. It was a fearful situation to be in ; but he appeared to be forgetful of himself, in trying to quiet the child he had hold of, a girl, of some four or five years old. At last a safety ladder was procured, high enough to reach almost to the place where he was standing ; and it was fixed so, that by stretching down a little, Carlo could reach it to put his foot upon it.

He looked once more to the child, and appeared to pray her to be quiet ; and then holding her as firmly as he could in one arm, leaving the other free to assist himself, he turned round to commence the descent. Just at that instant, the child, frightened by the height and the fragile looking steps to which Carlo was going to commit her and himself, gave a start of terror, which caused him to overbalance himself ; he missed his footing—man and child went down together with the rapidity of lightning.

A wild shriek pierced the air, and Rosa sank senseless into the stranger's arms.

"Take care of her please," said Rachel with a composure it was frightful to witness. "I must wait here till they bring him out."

And wait she did, standing there to receive his mangled body. They came, eight men had joined their hands together, and he had been placed upon them.

The face looked like sleep, so calm and so composed, with closed eyes, and one arm hanging down useless by his side ; but oh ! merciful providence ! he appeared otherwise uninjured.

She rubs her eyes—does she dream ?—she rushes up to take hold of the hanging arm, to assure herself—"or is he dead," again she thinks, "from some internal injury ?"

"Pray don't touch it !" cried one of the men, as Rachel put her hand out ; "his arm is broken and he is insensible from the shock, that is all ; a projection from the house saved him and broke his fall, and his arm might have been all right, only just as we were taking him down from the ledge on which he rested, a beam hit him in falling—the child then fell and was dashed to pieces, for wonderful to say he had held her until then."

He lived ! nothing else made any impression on her, and she had never expected to see him

alive again ! If she had not felt that he would need a woman's care—(and whose would be more tender than hers ?)—she would have sunk then, at this sudden and unlooked for happiness, at such a revulsion of feeling she would have fainted ; but for him, for his sake, she must bear up against the sickening sensation which comes over her.

Yes, she fights and conquers ! Rachel is very brave remember, reader ; and although joy has been even harder for her to bear than grief, she follows him into the little room where they lay him down on a bed, and finds herself more composed than any who are there.

She gives directions for some one to seek Dr. Greuser, or some other medical man if he is not to be found, and then explaining that she is a friend of the injured man, requests them to help her in restoring him back to consciousness. She bathes his temples with water, and uses various other means to bring back life—shortly he opens his eyes, glances around him in astonishment, till his looks rest on Rachel.

Then a smile, such a beautiful smile lights up his face, and he utters in broken accents, “ Rachel, did you come down to me alone ? ”

“ No, never mind now, Carlo, try and compose yourself ; do you feel much hurt ? ”

"No, only a little shaken, and my arm is rather painful, but that will be all right I dare say when it is set. What became of the poor child? I could hold her no longer—I fear she must have been dashed to pieces."

"Yes, but do not talk now; I have sent for Dr. Greuser, and I hope he will be here soon—try and rest a little."

"Well, but tell me, who came with you?"

"Rosa."

"Where is she then? poor girl did she see me fall?"

"Yes—never mind about Rosa just now, be quiet until Dr. Greuser comes."

Carlo tried to obey, but there was something so delightful in seeing Rachel moving about him, and endeavouring to place him more comfortably, so as to ease his arm; that gentle figure walking about so noiselessly, and waiting on him, made every pulse beat; and he longed to tell her how he loved her. Then came the remembrance of Rosa—and what would Rachel think of such extraordinary behaviour? so with a sigh, which his kind nurse thought proceeded from pain of body instead of mind, he closed his eyes; and then she sat down beside him, folded her small hands together and watched him.

Thus Dr. Greuser found them when he came in a little while after, and putting his hand affectionately in a fatherly way upon her head, he said, "So you and I are always to meet when there is some misfortune, and you are to be the little angel who comes in quietly to set things right."

"No, it is you, Dr. Greuser, who must put things in their places this time—he has broken his arm, and I trust that may be all."

"Let me see—come here, my dear, and help me to hold the limb, whilst I look to the mischief, and see how it may be remedied—oh, it is only a simple fracture, this will not be much—yes—I know it is painful; never mind, I shall soon have done—there now—it is over. Try and sleep if you can. You cannot be moved at present, so I leave you in the hands of Mrs. Graham, you could not have a better nurse, and we will look for some good-tempered girl to help her, so that she does not knock herself up, for I see she is ready to do more than her body is fit for."

"Oh, yes, Mrs. Graham is delicate," said Carlo, "she had better not stay—but where is Rosa and Mrs. Triebner?"

"Oh, never mind about them just now—they cannot come. Rosa you know is too exciteable to be with you just now, because you must be kept



very quiet to prevent fever, and Mrs. Triebner must look after her house, and keep Rosa calm and composed until you are fit to see her. There, good-bye, I shall be with you this evening ; in the meantime, sleep as much as you can."

Rachel followed Dr. Greuser out of the room, to inquire if he were quite sure there was no other injury besides the broken arm, nothing internal from the fall. To this the good doctor replied satisfactorily, assuring her that he was only a little shaken, the distance he fell having been fortunately not very great.

"But dear me I must run off! I hardly know which way to turn; there is the mother of that unfortunate child, who is now but a mutilated mass of flesh, has been seized with a fit, and there is Rosa still in a very serious state."

"Rosa! how? why what is the matter? oh yes, now I remember—I was so taken up with him—did she faint?"

"Something worse than that! the stranger into whose arms she fell, carried her into the square to bathe her temples at the well; and they waylaid me as I was coming here. That was the reason I was rather a long time, for she has been in convulsions of the strongest and most fearful kind. She is such an exciteable and highly nervous dis-

position, these sudden frights are extremely dangerous to her; and I must go, or send off for Mrs. Triebner to look after her—for it will require some tact to tell her that he is alive, and doing well. Pray God she never has such another shock! I hardly think her nerves would stand it."

Dr. Greuser went to look after his other patients, and Rachel returned to her charge, who was much easier now his arm had been set; so much so, that he wanted to ask a number of questions about one thing and another. But Rachel knew how important it was to keep him quiet, so she begged that he would try and sleep.

Rachel had that persuasive gentle way with her, to which the roughest and hardest of men must have yielded at such a time; but it had still more weight with Carlo, who watched every slight movement that she made with the eyes of love.

Therefore he gave way to his kind considerate nurse, so far as to remain silent.

At last he sleeps! she watches.

He is restless—he moves about from side to side, the sleep is a troubled and feverish one.

"Rachel"

"Yes," she softly replies, looking up to him

but she sees he is not awake, so she drops her eyes.

Soon she raises them again, for she hears words which make her heart beat with a quicker pulsation; and the blood runs faster through her veins.

“Rachel,” the sick man continues in his restless sleep, “if I had not allowed my pride to get the better of me, perhaps you might have learned to love me—why did I seek to forget you by paying attention to another—how will this all end?—Rosa—come here—can you forgive me for not having loved you—as you deserved to have been loved? Hush—be quiet do not be frightened—I can take you quite safe down the ladder.”

He speaks no more—his breathing becomes more easy and regular. But for her he has spoken enough!

What a whirl of feelings are contending with each other for mastery within her heart; how pleasure and pain are mixed up together, pleasure that he loves her, and pain that he is still as far from her as ever.

Very hard indeed it would be now she felt to disguise her feelings from him. Yet it must be done—duty demanded it; for if he knew that she returned his love, Rosa might be forgotten by

them in a moment of unguardedness, and then what would be the consequence? yes, she remembered too well what Dr. Greuser had said about her exciteable disposition! Carlo must marry Rosa—there was no help for it!

The room grew dark, the sinking sun had just before shot a warm ray through the window; and still he lay in a calm undisturbed sleep.

Dr. Greuser returned as he had promised, and brought with him a nurse, whom he insisted should take Mrs. Graham's place for the night, he having been requested by Mrs. Triebner to bring her home.

Rachel was at first unwilling to quit Carlo. But on Dr. Greuser's declaring he would not leave without her; that he considered his patient was going on remarkably well, and that the nurse understood her business perfectly, she put on her things without disturbing the sick man, and left the house accompanied by the doctor.

Assured of Carlo's safety, Rachel felt able to turn her mind to other things. Now she remembered Rosa, and asked Dr. Greuser how she was.

"Oh much better," replied the Doctor, "far better than I had dared to hope; although we have had a fearful day with her."

“How did you let Mrs. Triebner know of the accident?”

“Why that stranger (who is a countryman of yours, lodging at the Hotel d’Angleterre, (he gave me his card, a Mr. Hartley) was good enough to say that he would run round and break the painful news to her, and bring her down to look after Rosa. He found Mrs. Triebner on his arrival at her house, in a great state of consternation at you and Rosa having left the house, and hesitating whether she should not follow and trust to finding you in the crowd. Mr. Hartley spoke as lightly as he could, of the effect of the shock on Rosa; but poor Mrs. Triebner could not be comforted, when she heard the young girl believed her lover to be dead.

“‘It will kill her; I know it will!’ she said, ‘and what a dreadful tale to have to write to her brother, who is now making all sorts of preparations for her arrival, and looking forward to meet her well and happy!’ Poor lady, she was of course in a very sad way, but you know she is a woman who never loses her presence of mind—so she dressed and came off with Mr. Hartley immediately; and very soon after she was sitting by Rosa helping me considerably.”

"Was Rosa still in convulsions when she arrived?"

"Yes, but they were less frequent, and not so strong. Between us, we at last brought her round to something like composure. Then came the difficult undertaking of telling her that Mr. Romelli was not killed. We did it by degrees, as well as we could, and endeavoured to prepare her for the change from grief to joy; nevertheless, it was almost as trying to her as the first shock had been at believing him dead, and the convulsions returned again. Mrs. Triebner behaved most admirably. Really now all danger is past, I shall laugh and tell Hanz when he returns, that it is lucky the partnership is signed, or perhaps he might have stood a chance of being cut out by the worthy lady."

"But the convulsions have ceased now?"

"Oh yes, quite. We had to go over the same work again, and sooth and calm her as much as possible, and then we were able to have her taken home where she was put into a warm bed directly, and where you will find her looking pretty well, considering all things—only a little pale and exhausted."

"Oh you naughty little woman!" exclaimed Mrs. Triebner, as she ran into the hall, to meet

Dr. Greuser and Rachel when they entered, "I shall scold you finely when you have had a night's rest, for running down the town with that mad-cap Rosa to look at a parcel of houses burning, you see it has done neither of you any good, much better have waited, and half this trouble might have been saved."

"Oh fie, Mrs. Triebner!" interrupted Dr. Greuser, "do not forget Mr. Romelli in your anxiety for Rosa."

"But you told me he was doing well, now his arm is set, and that there is scarcely any fever."

"Yes, but who was the good little nurse who took so much care of him, and obeyed all the doctor's injunctions so well? what could we have done without our young friend here?"

"God bless her! to be sure! Rachel knows Jane Triebner better than to believe she could be really angry with her, does she not?"

"Come give her something to eat, and let her go to bed afterwards."

"Of course, I never forget my business. See, here is a nice cold chicken, put on one side on purpose; so sit down, Rachel, and begin; come Dr. Greuser, you help her with it."

"No, my good Madam, I must be off, or my

sister will think I am burnt as well as the houses."

"Just one tiny bit—no? then a glass of wine to congratulate us all on the lucky escape."

"I suppose I must not refuse that, dear me, and we were all so lately assisting at Hanz and Marie's wedding; who would have thought that this misfortune was going to take place?"

"Who, indeed! how did it happen though, have you heard?"

"If I were to tell all I have heard assigned as the cause, I should not go home until to-morrow morning. I fancy though that some one must have been careless, and let a match fall on the ground, without looking to see that the light was properly extinguished. So slight a thing will ignite those old buildings; and then when once they take fire, I will defy Neptune himself to stop the flames."

"Are there any lives lost?"

"No, none, except I believe Mr. Romelli's landlady's child, whom he so courageously tried to save. But some are fearfully burnt, and I shall have my list pretty full to-morrow. Happiness to every one of you, and I congratulate you all," he said, as he took the glass which Mrs. Triebner held out to him. "Look to Mrs.



Graham, she is eating nothing, I should prescribe the whole chicken."

"If I get her to pick at a small wing, that is as much as I shall be able to do, I can tell you, why she takes hardly enough to feed a fly!"

"Well do as you can with her, for she has had nothing to eat all day, she must be pretty well exhausted, and mind do not let her see Rosa to-night."

"To be sure not, besides Rosa is asleep."

"Oh, very good, so now I leave you until to-morrow."

"There, my dear Rachel, do oblige me by taking a little more," said Mrs. Triebner, after she had seen Dr. Greuser out.

"Just the smallest piece you can find me then, that merry-thought, and Rosa, she is much better the doctor tells me."

"Wonderfully so! I never dared to hope we should get her through it, I really expected it would turn her brain. That exciteable nature of her's has always been the subject of anxiety with every one who has ever had anything to do with her. It showed itself when she was quite a little girl before her mother's death, and you see what has been the effect to-day."

“Yes, but then in this instance, you could not wonder, any highly exciteable nature would have suffered in the like manner, remember she thought him dead, and anyone who saw him fall!” she shuddered as she spoke, “would have believed so likewise; for a ledge which providentially was the means of saving him, was hidden from those standing at the end of the street, by a large projection of one of the end houses.”

“Dear me, it must have been a shocking sight! and you poor dear, you must have suffered a great deal—there now, I see you are only playing with your knife and fork, instead of making use of it, so I shall send you to bed; and mind you do not get up to-morrow until I come to you.”

The following morning found Rosa so much better, that she was very anxious to get up early in order to proceed to the lodging where Carlo was, to which Mrs. Triebner put a decided negative saying, “I will go myself and see about him, and as Dr. Greuser considers he is doing so well there can be nothing to be anxious about, lie still like a good child, and perhaps to-morrow you may be allowed to venture. Mrs. Felten has promised to come and sit with you whilst I am away. She will be here shortly I should think,

in the meantime I must go and look after Rachel."

Mrs. Graham was not well. As long as there had been anything for her to do, any necessity for her to act, she managed to brave it through and keep off the effects of the shock ; but now that this necessity was removed, her strength gave way. Indeed Mrs. Triebner found her so exhausted and shaken by the events of the day before, that she determined on waiting to see Dr. Greuser previous to her departure, that she might hear what he thought of her. The doctor did not keep her long ; and when he came, she begged he would first accompany her to Mrs. Graham's room as she was anxious about her.

"Oh I thought it would be so," replied the Doctor, "when people struggle to keep down emotion, and bear outwardly a calmness which they are far from feeling, the body is sure to suffer in consequence of the strain laid upon it ; but never mind, my good friend, there is no use to put on that long face, I do not suppose she can be in the least danger. Come, cheer up, this is very unlike you to be down-hearted ; why, my good friend, there is no need of tears, only reason to be thankful I think. Fancy what that poor woman must feel who has lost her child."

"True, I am foolish this morning, an old woman like me ought to know better."

"No, my dear Mrs. Triebner, I do not admit that. It is your kind heart, and really it is an anxious time for you, to have three invalids to look after ; never mind, we will set them all right in a few days, in the meantime let us go and see Mrs. Graham."

Rachel although ill, proved as Dr. Greuser had thought, to be in no danger ; and the thing she seemed to stand in need of most, was rest, perfect rest, for her nerves had been much shaken.

"Leave her to herself and perhaps she may fall asleep, which will do her a great deal of good, and then give her some strong broth when she wakes—now shall we take a peep at Rosa ?"

"Oh, Dr. Greuser, I want to go and see how Carlo is, may I?" were the words which saluted him on entering the room.

"No, certainly not ! you do not wish to have such another attack as yesterday I suppose?"

Mrs. Triebner who had quite recovered herself on being assured that Rachel was in no danger answered before Rosa could reply, "Oh yes, she would if we would let her, wild child, she never thinks of the consequences of anything."

"Then we must think for her, let us see how

is the pulse ; oh, very fair, much quieter, perhaps to-morrow afternoon if you improve at this rate, we may let you take a drive and go round and see Mr. Romelli for a minute or two, only it will depend on your keeping yourself very quiet until then, you will be a very good girl, eh ?”

“ Oh yes, you are all so kind to me, it would be very ungrateful if I did not try at least. But how is Mrs. Graham ? She must be ill, or I know she would have been to see me before this.”

“ Oh, she has been looking after Carlo, and is rather tired, so I have made her keep her bed.”

“ There now ! don’t go bothering yourself about Rachel,” exclaimed Mrs. Triebner, “ because you do not see her,” for Rosa looked earnestly from one to the other of her companions.

“ You are quite sure then that there is nothing the matter with her ? or, perhaps, you have not told me exactly how Carlo is ? perhaps he is in danger, and she is with him, eh ?”

“ There, there, you naughty child, you will be ill again, if you excite yourself in that way, Carlo is doing remarkably well, and Rachel is gone to sleep I hope ; now will you promise to be quiet whilst I am away ?”

“ Yes, dear Mrs. Triebner.”

“Very well ; I am going now to see if Mrs. Felten has arrived, I heard a ring at the bell, so most likely she has, in which case I will send her up to you at once. Remember ; no talking when she comes, or you won’t be able to go and see Carlo to-morrow afternoon. There Dr. Greuser wants to go, I see ; mind now what I said.”

The ring at the door bell proved to be Mrs. Felten, so Mrs. Triebner only just thanked her for coming so promptly, gave her a few injunctions about keeping Rosa quite still, requested her to see that Mrs. Graham had her broth if she were not home in an hour or two, and then she started off.

The good lady found Carlo looking wonderfully well for an invalid ; the arm was going on favourably, and his pulse seemed quite free from fever. She became therefore very lively and talkative, cheered him up, and answered all his questions very good-temperedly. Of Rosa’s indisposition she made as light as she could, and accounted for Rachel’s non-appearance, by telling him she had obliged her to remain in bed, to rest herself a little after all the anxiety she had gone through.

“You keep mentioning a Mr. Hartley, who is he ?” asked Carlo.

“ Oh, the stranger, who took care of Rosa when she was so overcome at seeing you fall—such a nice man ! An Englishman, only here for a week or so on his way to England they say ; quite lucky is it not ? for he will be a capital escort for Rachel.”

“ Does any one know anything about him ; is he old or young ? But of course Dr. Greuser will find out something respecting him before you ask him to take charge of Rachel.”

“ He has friends at Wisbaden, I believe, so it will be quite easy to make some inquiries.”

“ Quite necessary certainly.”

Mrs. Triebner sat with Carlo for an hour or two, put his room to rights, and tasted the broth the people of the house had made for him, to see if it were what she considered the right sort of thing. Then bidding him take care of himself, and try not to be dull, and after saying that perhaps she might be able to bring Rosa to see him on the following day ; she took her leave to return home to her other charges, whom she had left under the care of Mrs. Felten.

## CHAPTER V.

## RACHEL'S DEPARTURE.

By the time Marie and Hanz returned to Mayence, everything was going on much as usual. Carlo with the care and attention bestowed upon him, soon felt himself able, first to get up, and then to go out again; and beyond carrying his arm in a sling, showed no symptoms of his late accident, even this memento of the occasion, he would have been well pleased to have dispensed with; but Mrs. Triebner called out so loudly against any such hasty folly, that he was obliged to submit to her. Rosa also had quite recovered the shock, and looked just as blooming as ever; laughing and telling Carlo that he must consent to be a baby again; as she cut up his meat, and placed the plate before him with a happy face—surely having such hands to help him, ought to have made Carlo



well contented that Mrs. Triebner objected to his using his own.

And Rachel? yes, she was well again, looking much as usual, quiet and pale, but cheerful in her outward manner! and Mrs. Triebner was full of employment having a thousand arrangements to make prior to leaving Germany.

Thus were things going on when Marie and Hanz arrived from Geneva; but many were the fearful descriptions they received on all hands of the late disastrous fire as they entered the town.

Mrs. Felten, however, on their reaching home, was able to give them the true account of the affair; and set their minds at rest respecting their friends, telling them that they could go and judge for themselves the following day.

“Certainly we will both go the first thing to-morrow,” said Hanz, “for Marie does not seem half satisfied with the assurance you have given that all is going on right.”

“Oh yes, Hanz, I am, only I cannot help thinking of the great risk they have all lately undergone, and what a dreadful thing it would have been if Mr. Romelli had been killed.”

“Yes, my little wife but he is alive you see, and all right except some slight trouble from a

broken arm, which serves to give him an interesting appearance, and to make him quite a happy man by being waited upon by the ladies. You may just change that long face into your usual merry one—a pretty way indeed to begin our home life.”

The next day Marie and Hanz walked over early to Mrs. Triebner's, as they had decided on doing the day before.

Rosa was delighted to see her friend again, and Marie and Hanz found every one looking as well as Mrs. Felten had described.

After some conversation, it was proposed that they should go to the spot where the conflagration had taken place, and away they all went together to do so.

Very different it looked, to those who had witnessed it when it had been such a scene of excitement, and very different were the feelings with which they now viewed it. All that remained to give evidence of the late disaster, was three houses reduced to mere walls, blackened with the smoke. Now, Rachel and Rosa looked without agitation on the mass of ruins before them, though not unmoved; for the recollection of that awful morning rose vividly to their minds.

Marie and Hanz had enjoyed themselves im-

mensely on the lake of Geneva, and their happiness had a good effect on the spirits of the party who would so shortly separate, yet as the moment draws nigh for the first departure, a gloom came over all.

Rachel was the one who would set the example of moving, and so near was the eve of her departure that all her things were packed. Yes—but two days more remained for her to spend in Mayence! the dear Mayence of hopeful days. How changed she felt, from the night she had entered it, full of confidence in the future—and now, how full of sorrow she would leave it—all the bright picture wiped away; and standing in its place, the difficult lesson of resignation to be learnt.

Inquiries had been made about Mr. Hartley which had been all answered satisfactorily. He was a London merchant it seemed, who was much respected, a widower with two little girls whom he had left at home. He was therefore requested by Dr. Greuser, to be so good as to take care of Mrs. Graham as he was about returning to England; which charge he very joyfully accepted, for Rachel's composure, and promptitude, and her wonderful strength of mind, had impressed him very deeply in her favour. In fact, he was very glad of the

opportunity offered him of improving his acquaintance with so interesting a person.

The morning came for Rachel's departure. The boxes stood all ready in the hall; the lady's maid (who had returned the night before, from a visit to her friends, which Rachel had permitted her to make during her stay at Mrs. Triebner's) was busy collecting together a numerous quantity of small articles which had been overlooked; and Rachel herself was trying to swallow a hot cup of coffee, whilst waiting for Mr. Hartley.

Mrs. Triebner, Rosa, and Carlo were all at the breakfast table, each in turn praying Rachel to try and eat something. Carlo, however, spoke but little, for he was grave and unhappy; thinking over his own hasty conduct, which would separate him perhaps for ever from Rachel. Pride—bitter was the sacrifice it had caused him, would that he could have lived the last few months over again, was the vain wish he then made!

Mr. Hartley came; good-tempered and obliging, and full of consideration and attention to Rachel.

"That will be a match, I should not wonder," said Mrs. Triebner in a low voice to Carlo. Carlo for answer, only crushed up all the directions he had been writing out for the travellers, which he

held in his hand; and which he was afterwards obliged to give them, all full of creases.

Carlo was like many others who fling away what they most want for a caprice, a prejudice, or an opinion; let another but venture to stretch out the hand, to possess himself of that which they have thrown away, and they are full of anger at his presumption.

So Mr. Hartley was viewed with anything but pleasure by Carlo; even with something of dislike, for his attentions to Rachel. It was in vain he reasoned with himself, and remembered that now he was engaged to Rosa, any prospect of Rachel's marrying again ought to be a matter of indifference to him; for he felt it never could be so, and wished Mr. Hartley had been going anywhere sooner than to England.

The boxes are all placed safely in the carriage, and Mr. Hartley waits for Rachel to take leave of her friends.

"God bless you," said Mrs. Triebner with a downright hearty kiss, "and as we start so soon for Italy, we will write to you first, where shall we address you?"

"Oh to my agent, Mr. Dalton, that will be best as I have no fixed residence at present."

Rosa came forward with tears in her eyes to

part from Rachel, and Carlo wrung her hand, and looked earnestly at her, as his quivering lips formed some half intelligible words.

This was the hardest of all, she felt she trembled as he grasped her hand ; those blue eyes with their sad and earnest expression fixed on her's, tested her power of endurance to its very utmost.

At last all is over ! She is in the carriage, Mr. Hartley gets in, and the door is closed—closed between herself and Carlo ! the last barrier is built up between them ; and now the driver takes his seat, and step by step the distance lengthens. Rachel has finished her hard task of duty, the work is done.

But one word ! one little word, and how different perhaps might have been her position with reference to Carlo, but no—she would have died first !

Certainly, there had been moments when she had wavered, when her feelings had threatened to gain a mastery over her ; but there had been a power within her, which had always drawn her back to the right course. A sad parting it had been ! Nevertheless a satisfaction, in spite of the greatest disappointment of the deepest grief, does ever attend the accomplishment of duty.

Rachel strove to be a cheerful companion to Mr. Hartley during their journey together.

She found her companion a man of a clear understanding, and possessing a great deal of information on general subjects ; nothing brilliant, but plenty of good sterling worth, to which he added kindness and consideration in his intercourse with the gentler sex. These qualities rendered him a pleasant companion, and the most fit one to help Rachel to forget her painful parting. His straightforwardness and plain good sense had nothing of the romantic in them ; and in his conversation there was a reality which was most healthful, to a mind which had dwelt so much on its imaginations.

During the journey the travellers became quite friendly together, and at last, towards the close, Mr. Hartley felt so much at home with Rachel, that he was led to talk to her of his little girls ; and expressed a wish that he might be allowed to present them to her.

“ Oh I shall be delighted, for I love little children !” replied Rachel to the request. For Mr. Hartley had been so kind, and had taken such care of her during the journey they had made together, that she was very glad of the chance of

being able to return some of his politeness. "Tell me, how old are they?" she continued.

"Five and six; poor little children, they have never known a mother's care. I had the misfortune to lose her, shortly after the birth of the second. They are sadly wild, and run about at home just as they like; I am away all day long at business, and I object to their commencing their education too early, I think it is apt to be injurious to the intellect."

"Yes, just like fruit and flowers forced to ripen and bloom before their time, they neither taste nor smell; but I must come and look after your little girls for you. I am quite my own mistress, you know, and I have no one to claim my time."

"You are really very good. Nothing would please me so much as for them to have such an advantage. Still, I hardly know if I ought to burden you in such a way, for they have no idea of quiet behaviour. Sometimes they climb up my shoulders when I return home, after business is over, and they are almost too much even for me; how could I submit you to such rough ways?"

"Oh, I shall not mind their childish ways; I like to see children full of life, and unrestrained at so early an age. They have plenty of time to learn to be polite young ladies, all that will come



soon enough; let them be merry whilst they can."

The journey draws nigh unto a close. The Antwerp boat which runs between that place and London is approaching the shores of old England, and Rachel and Mr. Hartley stand on its deck to be ready to land at once, and have their luggage examined by the custom-house officers.

The almost endless line of shipping, the many warehouses in long array, by the sides of the water, the numerous coal barges, the open, honest, healthy looking faces, with the well known accents of the mother tongue, tell Rachel that she is drawing near to home. Who that has quitted it for long will not feel the heart beat quicker on returning to it, and Rachel loved her country as well as any of its daughters, therefore it was pleasant to her to place her foot again on English ground, and see her countrymen everywhere around her.

Mrs. Graham's agent was waiting, full of smiles and bows to welcome her, with a carriage to take her to his house; for she had promised she would pass a short time with his wife, on her arrival in England. Not but what she would have preferred being quiet and alone, for her agent, Mr Dalton, kept an establishment of princely splendour, which ill accorded either with her tastes or present feel-

ings. Yet it had been a promise, and Rachel always kept her word.

Mr. Hartley was grieved to part with his delightful companion, and sighed as she drove off with the agent, leaving him her thanks expressed in her soft kind voice, still ringing in his ear ; and a small white card with the address of Mr. Dalton where she had begged him to bring his children to see her. He went there some days after with the little rough ones, and Rachel received them all most kindly. The little girls were certainly not more orderly than their father had represented them, and Rachel's hair and dress soon demonstrated the fact. Nevertheless, there was that about them, with all their blunt untutored manners, which gave evidence of good dispositions that time and care would develope.

Rachel interested herself very much in the little motherless children ; and took them with her, when she went out early in the morning for a drive in the country. Imperceptibly, little by little, her gentle manner won them ; and they began to catch something of its softness. Their father quickly saw the change that was taking place in them, and felt grateful to the fire at Mayence for having served him so good a turn, whilst it had been so disastrous to many others.

The little girls now began to welcome him less boisterously, and in their play to moderate a little their great spirits; Mrs. Graham was the chief theme also of their conversation; what she did, and what she told them, was related by each little voice in turn; how kind, how good to them she was—such a dear pretty lady! and numerous other little sayings which helped to make the merchant think that his little children would be all the better for a mother.

Thus far we have gone with Rachel, and have seen her safely back to England: now we must leave her for a time, and return to Mayence to follow the fortune of those she left behind her, and who were to start for Italy soon after herself.

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE ROAD TO ITALY.

MRS. Triebner and Rosa were full of occupation after the departure of Rachel, for besides the preparation for the journey, so many friends had to receive the parting shake of the hand, that a round of visits followed in close succession one after the other, and continued without intermission, up to the day before their departure.

Rosa felt something of grief, at leaving a place where she had passed so many years happily and calmly, and where she would leave behind a few valued friends. Still the prospect of the happy future, consumed all that might have tended to induce a feeling of gloominess; and left only enough of sorrow, just its shadow, to soften the brilliant hopes which filled her whole being. Every desire of her heart appeared to draw towards accomplishment—the road to Italy, the home of

her forefathers was before her. And when she should have reached this long wished for land Antonio the brother who was woven into the recollection of her childish days, to whom she had always looked up as an object of love, mixed with somewhat of veneration, would welcome her there ; and to him she would present her glory, her pride, her lover. Then with more sober feelings, yet not less sincere, she rejoiced also that her dear good Mrs. Triebner would accompany her—so sum up all together, and Rosa's path looked as bright, as inviting, as mortal need wish, or could hope to find in this our life on earth.

Yes, take them, pluck all those flowers, Rosa, if you can ; press them to your heart, that the perfume may enter therein, lose not an atom of their sweetness, for they are very precious, fresh ; and then should tribulation come, let memory open wide her doors that they may come forth, surely some of their scent will still be left, soft and soothing, though their first life—first strength be gone.

The season was now becoming rather late for crossing the mountains, still as the warm weather had lingered somewhat longer than usual, Carlo trusted that Rosa and Mrs. Triebner might not feel any bad effects from the change of atmosphere they

would have to undergo. He had also received a letter from a friend who had only just crossed, mentioning that the snow up to that time had not fallen, so carriages could pass right over into Italy without interruption.

Mrs. Triebner looked after everything that would be necessary for their journey, and felt much inclined at first to fill a little basket with provisions, for their first day's consumption on the rail from Mayence to Basle. She however remembered, that they would have a number of small packages to look after; and that any increase to them ought to be guarded against. Besides, she had travelled on the railroads chiefly of England, and she knew that in a day's journey there, you can always find a short time to eat a good dinner, which is prepared for those going the whole length of the line, at some place midway between the first starting point and that of final arrival. Thus carrying eatables, it was decided, would be an unnecessary trouble.

The day of departure is come—a fine autumnal morning, which promises well for the first day's journey at least. The train is just starting, Rosa

looks out of the window, and waves her handkerchief as a last adieu to Hanz and Marie, who stand watching the moving off of the huge leviathan.

"Put your head in, you silly child! you will have it smashed to pieces," cried Mrs. Triebner in a fright, and drawing Rosa back at the same time.

"Yes, Rosa dear, it is very dangerous to do anything of that kind on a railroad," said Carlo, "besides, it is but a momentary satisfaction after all."

"Yes, true, we go so fast. Poor Mayence begins to look like a lilliputian city; see, now it is but a speck, there now it is gone, we have seen the last of it."

"Oh no, we will all come back again next year," exclaimed Count Ferris, who of course made one of the party.

"Ah, who knows where we shall be in a year," said Mrs. Triebner.

So the day commenced; and so they went flying from one place to another, only stopping for an instant to take up any persons who might be waiting for the train, or just to give time for those to step out, who had arrived at their destination. On—on they went, town

after town, they left behind them; the day began to wear away and at its conclusion they reached Basle.

After much waiting, during the examination of the luggage (for the train had brought a large number of people) our travellers made the usual circuit of the town, which all unfortunate individuals must submit to, who have not provided themselves with rooms before hand, and at last sat down to a comfortable supper at the hotel "Tête d'Or."

The following morning, Mrs. Triebner rose at daybreak, and made her young friends do so likewise; in order to be ready to start by the first boat going up the Lake of Lucerne, for she hated to lose time, she said. Besides, her economical habits were meeting with some shock at every instant, two wax lights, placed in each bed-room, had all been charged in the bill, although they had none of them been lighted longer than five minutes. The homely fare of bread and butter stood opposite a figure, such as one would have considered could only have been justly applied to luxuries. So to save their pockets, and poor Mrs. Triebner's feelings, they hurried onward.

What a sensation of delight it is, when the young fresh mind drinks in, by means of the eyes,



new and varied forms of nature. How the hours pass like minutes on such an occasion. How Rosa's large brilliant eyes dilated, first with wonder, and then with admiration, as the boat glided swiftly along the Lake of Lucerne. Then when she reached the pass of St. Gothard, as each step took them into a wilder region, where all was still, and stern, and grand, awe rose up in her heart, and stifled every other feeling.

Up, up, up, each turn leads to a steeper ascent, till vegetation ceases. Now on the top they are by the side of that large lake, the parent of hundreds of streams; a vast cheerless sheet of water, across which the sharp rarefied air blows towards you.

No picture could be colder, or more desolate; you turn, and now each step is downwards. Again you pass between those great hard rocks, by degrees a bit of moss, and then a little fern peeps out from some corner. Now starts up a small fir tree, whilst the winding passage becomes more expanded in its view, and at last an open space lies before your vision. And what a space! so full of beauty! close at hand stands the last of those great rocks, a white stream dashing down its sides, bathes a cluster of firs which rise up in dark array. Beyond, far out, the mountains are

covered with verdure, and still further on the sun sinking down to rest, has thrown a soft pink hue upon the distant hills. Behind these again, are others which melt away into the distance, in all the colours of the rainbow.

Rosa looks and wonders; well she may, when she remembers that all this was made out of chaos, by the hand of God. And take the largest mountain or minutest flower growing on it; each is perfect in itself, all united form one expansive whole of harmony and beauty.

Beautiful scenery, sublime in its character, has much that is ennobling in it. The mind raises itself from little things, from all that is trivial and false; and when beheld for the first time, it forms an opening to a new life. A man who had frittered much of his time away in frivolity, whose conscience is not yet stifled within him, would be apt to feel at such a moment, the desire to live to a better end. To clothe his mind with drapery, more in accordance with God's work before him; and not wind round it a lot of tinsel and gewgaws neither useful nor beautiful, and quite a horrid spectacle when tarnished by time—and time makes haste with such things, and leaves to them but a short period to glitter in their mock splendour.

There is another kind of individual, whose heart if it hath a clean spot left on which to place the finger, will beat with remorse, standing there with God's creation, and himself, once the noblest work of the Divine hand, *the image of God!* we mean the man steeped in crime, who has long since forgotten the time when he knelt by his mother's side, an innocent child, with little hands joined together raised up in attitude of prayer, lisping forth that appeal for mercy taught by the Saviour Himself. See such a one, battling with memory, bringing up her witnesses against him; shewing him what a vile thing he had made of his Creator's work; to what a worse than useless end he had turned all those wondrous faculties given to him with the breath of life. How will his mind, far more beautiful, more wonderful in its origin than the picture before him, bear comparison with it? Where is its purity—its grandeur?

Gone! all gone, it is dark—there is no light, not a ray.

Yes travel, travel, all of you if you can; it will open a world of truths to you. And more than any, you who sit hour after hour, day after day, year after year, summing up £. s. d's. travel if you have a moment to spare, it will be a ray of sunshine to your minds, overloaded with calcula-

tions of the world's business for yourself, or others.

Reader, we will return to the travellers. Even Mrs. Triebner, matter-of-fact, good, useful body that she is, feels something stirring within her, higher than the every day household cares in which she has spent a long life. Puddings and pies are very good things in their way, but she is not thinking of them now; true there is nothing of the poet in her nature, yet even she finds a little bit of romance lurking in her, which that glorious view has drawn out of its hiding place. Count Ferris also, *he* feels the scene, for he no longer laughs and talks in his usually light thoughtless way.

What then must be the sensations of those two whose natures are predisposed to the ideal? The one raises itself up to Heaven, as it were full of rapture; all hopeful, it has known no sorrow, for the loss of a mother in the first years of childhood leaves no suffering; only an indistinct remembrance. The other has struggled, has known grief, and is softened.

Away they dash almost like lightning, down the ins and outs of the mountain's side. They are all too much occupied to shudder at the sharp turnings they make; where the wheel leaves traces of a fearful approximation to the extremity of the

road, to overstep which would be certain death at the bottom of the precipice below. Yet how wonderful it is, so near danger as hundreds often are, who pass that way ; yet hardly ever do you even hear of a horse stumbling and falling, while trotting fast down those steep winding places. When, on a rare occasion, such a disaster has taken place, the animals have always laid quite still, sagacious creatures, until the driver came to help them up.

The descent is made ; and the air which has been growing imperceptibly milder, is now quite warm. The balmy breezes wave about the bright green, and voluptuous vegetation of a more southern earth.

A small white looking building, just before they reached the bottom of the mountain, came in view ; and here they stopped to repose the horses and themselves. They take a long jump from the world of imagination, down into the real, drinking some warm, well-prepared coffee, and eating little rolls and nice fresh butter with considerable relish.

“ This is a capital place upon my word for an empty stomach to light upon,” said Count Ferris, as he munched his roll, “ I wonder if that old knowing rogue, with his apron as white as that

snow up yonder, intends to charge us double for our evident enjoyment of his fare ?”

“ Never mind what he intends to charge,” said Mrs. Triebner, “ it wont be paid if it be out of reason with my consent ; take another cup of coffee, they say it will be late before we reach Bellinzona.”

“ No, thank you, I have done remarkably well. But I say, do not be too hard upon the poor man, see, we have eaten all the sugar, so he will not make much out of us there ; à propos of sugar, I once met one of your countrywomen who was as indignant as yourself on being imposed upon at hotels ; and just to give you a wrinkle for your future guidance, I will tell you, a knowing trick she told me she played the landlord on her wedding tour. It seems she travelled from Frankfort to Berlin, she and her new-made spouse, to visit his relations. As her love was not too high flown to disdain a little practice of economy, if it came in her way like you she noticed the candles in the bill, at the first place where they rested, in addition to other exorbitant charges. Her husband was a quiet sort of a man, who liked to be left to smoke his pipe in peace ; so his lady devised a scheme alone, by which means she determined to be even with the grasping landlords. They rested often on their journey, but never after did she

make any objections to the different bills presented to them next morning. They reached Berlin, and took apartments there for a month, and during their stay, they never required to purchase either sugar or candles. The lady had paid for them without a murmur, but had put them safe down at the bottom of her trunk."

"A very wise, thoughtful woman."

"*Les chevaux sont prêts, Madame,*" called out the postillion of the carriage which had brought them over the Gothard, and which it was arranged should take them on to Bellinzona.

"Very well, I suppose we had better get into the carriage at once, for they say we have still a long way to go, before we can rest for the night."

Again they started off, driving through wooded paths, catching every now and then a glimpse of the water between the bending branches, which ran on quietly by their side for many miles.

It is quite dark, nearly ten o'clock when they arrive at Bellinzona; so the kind landlady of "the Angelo" prepares them their rooms at once, to which they all withdrew, soon after partaking of the good fare provided for their supper. All were tired, and quite ready for a night's rest, so none of them were disposed to read the great book the landlady brought to them with such

pride, in order that they should inscribe their names therein. Neither could they listen to the string her ready tongue joined together, of dukes and marquises who had honoured her house with their presence. So, poor dame, she had to take back her book to its place; consoling herself for the little sensation it had created, by having added to its leaves the autograph of a count.

The first who rose from his bed the following morning was Carlo, who wandered about the picturesque little hotel, and at last found his way out of a low door opening from the landing on to the terrace. The vines hung in festoons of bright red and yellow leaves, so pushing one of the branches aside, Carlo rested his elbow on the low wall, and looked down and about him on the view. The castle stood on the left, a large old building with turrets of all sizes rising high up out of a thickly wooded hill, which for a background, had the clearest, the very deepest blue sky that even he, an Italian, had ever seen. Below him, ran one of the streets of the town composed of irregular houses, for the most part entered by steps running sideways up to the door. It was so early but few people were moving about, only a peasant every now and then going to work and whistling in careless contentment! and a girl, sometimes



with a basket full of tin jars of milk, with her back hair stuck full of silver pins in a circle, broke for a moment the stillness of the place, with the clattering of their thick boots over the irregular stones with which the street is paved. There Carlo remained, his head resting on his hand; thoughtful, but less hopeful. Now the face was beginning to wear a sort of indifferent melancholy, a kind of inertness, as if he had lost the heart to exert himself.

“Carlo!” exclaimed Count Ferris, clapping a hand on his shoulder which made him start, for he had been so taken up with his thoughts, that the approaching footsteps of his friend had been as unheeded as those of the few passers by below.

“Carlo, this will never do, you must wake yourself out of this lethargy.”

“I really don’t care what becomes of me, Ferris, I wish I were dead.”

“Oh, nonsense! rubbish! you don’t wish anything of the kind, thousands say so, but—”

“Well, if I were put to the test I might hesitate to accept it, perhaps cling to life when I found it going; still, I assure you everything like energy, like hope or happiness seems dead within me. I cannot love that beautiful girl, it

is no use, I have tried very hard, but the very duty which binds me to her makes the tie distasteful to me."

"Then why, my good fellow, are you so mad as to continue the engagement?"

"Why? because I cannot do such a cruel dishonourable thing as to destroy all her happy illusions, and damp those bright prospects she has built up."

"But you will make her a thousand times more unhappy, by uniting yourself to her without loving her."

"Oh, no, she has such a confiding nature; if I am but kind and affectionate to her, she will be satisfied."

"Yes, now, just at the onset perhaps, when all is novel to her; wait though for a little while, then you will see that she will become quick-sighted, and she will discover too late, that you married her out of compassion."

"God grant it may never come to that, Ferris, anything rather than set such a worm gnawing at her heart. It is of no use, however, breaking out in this way. The marriage must take place, there is no help for it, so now let us go to breakfast."

"Try and wear a cheerful face then, if you are

bent upon it, and turn to your painting as a source of consolation."

"Ah! there is where I fear I shall fail most, I seem to be losing all aspiring feelings, all that anxiety to excel; and a kind of deadness, of inaction seems to be creeping over me."

"Oh come, courage, man! Take life as I do, enjoy the good fortune, and forget the bad."

"Yes, very well for one who has only known the former."

"Do not say so. I have had my crosses in life, as well as my neighbour; but I have a happy knack of forgetfulness of all that is unpleasant, and so nothing troubles me long."

Carlo gave a smile at his friend's easy indifferent way, which with an exertion he kept up to salute the ladies at the breakfast table.

There they both sat waiting, and looking quite fresh again, after the night's rest. Mrs. Triebner was in right good spirits, and Rosa had such a bright flush on her cheeks—they were so near to Italy now; and her brother, her dear brother, she felt all full of excitement!

"Carlo we shall soon be in Italy!" she said as he came up to her. "How happy I am! everything seems like a fairy tale, all things turn out so well for me—all looks so fair!"

she raised her graceful head, the hair all flowing about it in beautiful profusion; and she looked up into his face with such a joyous happy gaze, it made him sigh inwardly to look on it. Something like a sharp pain shot through him. But he took her hand and pressed it, then turning away looked out of the window, saying to himself, "Alas! how is this all to finish?"

"Carlo is very tired I am afraid," said Rosa anxiously to Mrs. Triebner across the table.

"Dear me, child, you are always afraid of something! perhaps he is a little tired, but what of that, it won't kill him I suppose—not that I see any reason he should be though, for I feel nothing of the journey, a woman, and double his age—there, just make a good breakfast. Come, gentlemen," raising her voice, and turning herself towards the window. "I have poured out the coffee, so drink it or it will be getting cold."

"Yes, here we are Mrs. Triebner," replied Count Ferris, moving towards the table.

They all sat down; the room in which they were, was the saloon or general apartment, where the travellers usually took their meals. At first they occupied the apartment alone; but certain preparations had been made by the waiter, at the farther end of the table, consisting of plates of

fruit, bottles of wine, and rolls, indicating that other guests were expected—they came.

“What a pretty girl,” said Count Ferris in an undertone.

“You had better not gaze at her too much, or that fine-looking fellow in the velvet jacket, and the broad felt hat will call you to account. The man who brought my boots to me this morning told me all about them. They have been married this morning, he is a farmer living in a neighbouring village, and that quiet plain girl who is with them, is his sister.”

She was very pretty, the bride ; so graceful, and so modest looking ; and he with the fire flashing out of his dark eyes—they made quite a picture—so simple she was, that country bride. Rosa looked at her full of sympathy, for she also was so soon to be a bride.

The breakfast is over ; the bill is paid ; and Mrs. Triebner leaves the ‘Angelo’ with a better opinion of its landlady than she has felt for any of that community during the journey, for the charges of the hostess have been reasonable.

They glide along the Lago Maggiore—that lovely lake which forms the boundary between Switzerland and Italy. The scenery now begins

to wear that softness which you feel, yet hardly can express, as you draw near to the queen of the south. The air is gentle, and slightly stirs the rich foliage of orange and lemon groves, that grow on the banks of the bright lake looking like a sheet of glass—a band is on the boat, and as they move along, the tones of music are carried across the water, and fill the air with harmony—all is peace. It is something like a pleasant dream to Rosa; a feeling from which she dreads to awake pervades her.

But wake she must—the lake comes to an end, as all pleasant things must do sooner or later; and they land at Sesto Calende to be eyed and questioned by those sharp gentlemen, the Austrian police authorities.

All is bustle, and they are hurried into a small room where the luggage of the different passengers has been placed.

Some few questions were asked about contraband goods; but the chief anxiety of the men seemed to be that no republican ideas should enter the country in the shape of books or papers.

Mrs. Triebner had wrapped up a pair of boots in an old newspaper, so this was eagerly seized, and had to undergo the scrutiny of one of the

officers. Then the questions with which they were overwhelmed, sorely tried poor Mrs. Triebnor's temper; and she would most likely have given vent to it, had not Count Ferris and Carlo begged her to submit quietly, otherwise it might bring them into trouble.

The examination over, most of the travellers ran at once to secure places for the two diligences, which were to start for Milan in a few minutes. Our party did so likewise, for Sesto Calende is very unhealthy; a kind of malaria infects the place, and strangers do best to make their stay there as short as possible.

Four places were found vacant for them, and soon they are on the road to Milan. There is little worthy of notice in this the conclusion of their journey, and nothing to see, for it is dark, and their fellow-travellers sleep soundly. Once they stopped before a small drinking place, where the driver refreshed himself with a cup of wine, and fed his horses, during which time a merry boy with olive skin and eyes twinkling like diamonds, sang with much action a romance of two lovers meeting after a long absence. Full of life and spirit it was; and when he went round to collect such coins as the people felt disposed to give him,

not a hand but dropped something into his cap, however small—he was one of that tribe fast dying out—the *improvisé*.

So they reached their destination ! they entered Milan through the very door by which Victor and Helena had quitted it for ever !



## CHAPTER VII.

## R O S A   A T   M I L A N .

●  
ROSA's heart beat quicker and quicker as they drew near to her brother's residence : indeed so agitated was she, that all Carlo's kind words could hardly quiet her emotion. Count Ferris left his companions at the gate to seek a lodging at some hotel ; and the rest proceeded to Mr. Mortara's residence.

They drove up to a large house—it was the college, and there stood Antonio ready to welcome them, the noise and stopping of the carriage wheels having given him notice of their arrival.

“ My beloved brother ! ” exclaimed Rosa, in broken and agitated accents, as she threw herself into Antonio's arms with tears of pleasure.

“ My Rosa, your brother is full of joy to have you with him at last ; my child, you look remarkably well, kind Mrs. Triebner has taken good care

of you, many thanks I owe her," and Antonio pressed that lady's hand, and looked gratefully upon her.

"Not at all, Rosa has been like a daughter to me, bless her, a little too apt to run up into the regions of fancy sometimes, and be lost amongst her heroes and poets, and the like; but that will all pass away, she is made of the right stuff after all, and is a good affectionate girl."

Antonio smiled, he knew Mrs. Triebner of old; her matter-of-fact nature had jarred even a little against his own sometimes, and he felt full well, how little she was able to understand the enthusiasm of his sister's character. Nevertheless, he knew how to appreciate her many good qualities, the truthful honest nature, the kind heart, made up for everything, besides she had been chosen as Rosa's guardian, for this very absence of all romance in her disposition; to be a check upon her.

"But you have some one to present me to, Rosa dear," said Antonio, then stretching out his hand to Carlo, who could not but feel pleased at the warmth with which the action was performed, he continued.

"Mr. Romelli, I presume? Sir, you are welcome for my sister's sake, and for your own!"

"Good darling brother ; yes, it is Carlo," she said blushing, then afterwards when they had all gone into a large and handsomely furnished parlour, she whispered in his ear as they stood together, somewhat apart from the others, "you will love him, Antonio?"

"Yes, dear child, if he makes you happy?"

"Oh he is sure to do that—so good ! so clever ! oh you will be so delighted with his paintings, I know you will."

"Very likely, my enthusiastic little pet ; I have heard from other quarters that he is a very clever artist—but come you must be all famished ; my cook who was determined to do honour to the occasion, has prepared quite a fine set out, so we will ring the bell and let it be brought in."

Antonio played the part of host remarkably well, with quiet dignity and ease. Though his disposition was not given to great demonstration of feeling as was his sister's : yet he was not the less happy in having her near him, than she was to sit by his side, with Carlo at her other hand, turning first to the brother and then to the lover, and pouring out her happy spirits to both.

But Antonio could not help feeling something of melancholy mixed with his happiness, she the gay flower from which the sun had never veiled

himself, she brought back to his mind the day when his mother, worn out with suffering, solemnly bequeathed her then a little child to his care. He could just remember the happy days of his poor mother's life, and looked on Rosa almost with fear; for those who have known suffering, (and he had been old enough to feel his parents' trials and to understand what he had lost when the hand that had often caressed him, lay cold and unmoveable) those take joy with trembling, for they know how doubtful is its duration.

We are not however going to moralize. Professor Montara as he had become, soon returned to his usual life, amidst the youths placed under his charge; after establishing Mrs. Triebner, Rosa and Carlo in the rooms which he had set apart for them, including the large light one he had prepared for the artist's studio.

It had at first been fixed that the wedding of Carlo and Rosa should take place almost immediately; but Antonio having persuaded Mrs. Triebner to prolong her stay in Italy, the summer was thought to be a better season for the ceremony, and so they were to wait.

Quite a reprieve it was to Carlo, who still could not shake off the dull listless feeling that pressed upon him. Rosa at first saw it not, he was ever

kind and gentle to her. Mrs. Triebner thought his attachment was of a very sober sensible kind, and Antonio was too much taken up with his duties to notice it; and when he joined them to obtain repose from his labours, he naturally sought it in watching that bright being whose happiness had always been his first consideration. Her manners and her appearance assured him of its consummation; he looked no further.

But there is one who understands matters better—the gay light-hearted Count Ferris; and while he remains in Milan, Carlo is every now and then stirred up by his friend's words.

So things go on through the winter, there is a great deal of visiting, for Antonio has a numerous circle of friends and acquaintances, who are all anxious to show their esteem for him, by polite attentions to his sister.

Ball after ball is arranged on her account, and Rosa quite enters into the spirit of these entertainments giving full vent to her joyous feelings like a wild happy child; Mrs. Triebner comes in every now and then as a useful moderator, and Carlo looks on with indifference.

At last all these welcomings, these dancings, and feastings come to end; and Rosa, to do her justice, returns to her everyday life, quite as happy,

quite as contented with it as she had been before. Mrs. Triebner is pleased, and expresses her satisfaction.

Thus Count Ferris leaves them—just as early spring starts up suddenly; and with her gay smile, chases away the last dark gloomy looks of winter.

The spring—how gay it is! and Rosa is gay.

But Carlo? he is graver than ever—the painting?—alas! it is hardly ever touched; and when it is, there is no longer the energy—the freedom of other days; but weak—feeble—valueless!

“It is of no use;” exclaims the disappointed man, as he throws down his brushes in disgust, “I have lost the spirit to work.”

Reader, it is human nature we are trying to show you—too often a sad medley of faults and beauties. Let us judge Carlo Romelli then with charity.

Spring had been but a little child—but now it grows in strength and brightness. The birds flock in fast, and pipe away upon the branches, which have put forth their new blossoms in thick clusters. The perfume of many opening flowers fills the air; and everyone seems to have thrown off with his wraps, that attitude in which all the

limbs appear doubling themselves up together, standing now erect with chest expanded, beneath the broad bright heavens.

Rosa is beginning to think that Carlo is just a *little* grave—it comes at last; she sits and ponders, she watches, and she thinks him sad. “Why is he thus?” the heart began to ask; “does he tire of me?” is the next anxious thought which enters her mind.

Mrs. Triebner and Rosa sat one morning together in a little boudoir, a tasteful little place, no gaudy decorations and costly draperies, but such a little nook as those with simple tastes would like.

Shall we look in?

The curtains are of snow white muslin, hanging in easy folds by the side of the window fastened with a twisted cord. Some pictures hang on the walls which are of a quiet undecided hue, so as not to disturb the eye, when resting on the works of art. The carpet has a wreath of forget-me-nots running all over it, on a drab ground; and the doors of the chiffonniers of walnut wood, are fluted with light blue silk. There are a few of those charming little alabaster figures about the room, and that is all we see; a nice cosy pretty little apartment to spend a morning in.

Particularly when the sun shines in as it does now, not with a full glare of light, but just one little ray where Rosa sits, as if it sought the most lovely thing on which it could diffuse its light.

Rosa leans forward, and looking earnestly at Mrs. Triebner says, "Do you not think Carlo seems sad and grave, more so than he used to be?"

"Lor bless the child! what has she in her head now? you cannot expect, my dear, that every one is to be as gay, as wild as you are."

"No; but I see him sitting sometimes with a face as if something pained him; and then when anyone speaks to him, he starts and looks bewildered—perhaps—do you suppose?—might it be that our engagement was too hasty, that he feels he was mistaken in his feelings towards me? Oh dear me, I would not marry him for the world if I thought that!" She burst into tears.

"Rosa! Rosa, you silly little thing! Mr. Romelli's attachment to you is just what I like to see, and what I think is good for you; kind and attentive, trying to please you in every way—what more can you want? come wipe up the tears, or we shall have Carlo wanting to know what is the matter. I am sure I wish you were married and



had done with it. I shall tell Antonio that there had better be no longer delay."

"I suppose I am wrong, and you are right, dear Mrs. Triebner; perhaps it is the strong love I feel for Carlo, which makes me dread to lose him—but then—his painting. You know he hardly ever does anything to his pictures, although he sits hours and hours together in the studio—and sometimes when I go in unawares, there he sits before the easel looking so grave—not thinking of the picture I am sure."

"There you are again! I declare I never knew such a girl; perhaps he does not like the wedding being delayed, now that won't distress you, I suppose! Yes, I certainly will have the business settled, if I can manage it."

Rosa smiled through her tears, she had just ventured to think, to hope that such might be the case, and to hear it from another came with a healing sweetness to her anxious heart. She spoke not in reply, she bowed her graceful head, contented and happy again; and rising from her chair, she went up to a stand of flowers, and plucked one of the most beautiful ones.

She looked out of the window on the bright sky, and twisted her flower about in her hand.

Mrs. Triebner left the room, determined to seek

Antonio and have the young people married as quickly as possible. Carlo had sat that morning in his studio, unoccupied and sad as usual. Then all at once the idea flashed across his mind, that perhaps if he were married to Rosa, his fate once irrevocably decided, he should be able to work again as usual. So putting down the idle brushes, he left his studio and walked into the boudoir we were lately describing.

Rosa was still looking out of the window in thought, still turning about the flower, but although she did not move when the door opened, the deepening colour showed that she knew the footsteps that approached her.

"Here all alone, dear Rosa! where is Mrs. Triebner?"

"Oh, Carlo, it is you? Mrs. Triebner left the room only a minute ago; do you want her?"

"No, dear, I came to seek you. Do you know I have been thinking about something, that nearly concerns us both this morning; and I have come to the conclusion, that it would be better not to delay our marriage any longer."

It would be impossible to explain the deep happiness those plain straightforward words caused her. They seemed to confirm Mrs. Triebner's

expressions and her own hopes, she raised her eyes to his face with a confiding look, which said ; everything as you wish, I am ready to obey you in all things.

Rosa spoke not, however, so Carlo continued, "then I will consult with your brother about it, and propose two weeks from hence."

"Oh, that is very soon," replied Rosa.

"Why, you can be ready then, can you not ? surely," he smiled, "you have not such an elaborate toilet to prepare, that fourteen days will not suffice."

"Oh you men, you know nothing about these things ; why even Mrs. Triebner would be troubled to manage it in so short a time, she who would be quite in her element."

"Well between the two, I have no doubt you will be able to arrange it ; I should like the marriage to take place as soon as possible, and then I shall be able to recommence my painting—it has been standing still sadly of late, and you know as I told you, dear Rosa, all our future prospects must depend on my own exertions."

"Yes, I remember. But do not work too hard, dear Carlo. I do not mind you know, however humble my lot may be, as long as it is shared with you."

"Thank you, dear trusting child, for your confidence in me ; I will try to deserve it."

"Oh, you are more than worthy of it, I know you are!"

He smiled somewhat sadly at her enthusiasm of manner, he caressed her kindly, as he would have done a sister, and inwardly vowed that if he could help it, she should never suffer one pang.

Mrs. Triebner returned shortly after, and her quick observant eye explained much to her.

"Rosa, will you give me that little flower, in token of your approbation of my proposition, before I go to seek your brother?" asked Carlo.

"Take it," said the happy girl with her face perfectly illuminated with joy.

He left the room, the flower in his hand ; it had begun already to wither !

"Well?" said Mrs. Triebner as the door closed behind Carlo.

For answer, Rosa flung herself into her kind friend's arms.

"I thought so!" said Mrs. Triebner, "now hear what Antonio says ; I went to him directly, for I knew that in the evening there is no hope of gaining his ear, and I found him in the library, examining a large assortment of books to be used by his pupils ; from which he looked up, wondering

at my unusual visit. I told him that I had come to speak to him on the subject of your's and Carlo's marriage; and explained my reasons for disliking long engagements. He is a sensible man, and quite ready as far as he is concerned let the affair come off as soon as possible; it now depends of course on Carlo, and by the expression of your face, I presume you have less doubts as to his wishes, than when I left you alone a short time back."

"Oh yes! you were right, dear Mrs. Triebner. It was very silly of me! very wrong for I ought to be—I am so intensely happy!"

"Carlo said he was going to your brother, did he not?"

"Yes, he had been speaking to me about our wedding."

"Oh, indeed. I concluded there had been something of the kind; what may be his idea as regards the time?"

"He said—perhaps—he thought a fortnight—"

"Pretty well upon my word, he beats me! I told your brother I should be glad to see it take place in three weeks—well, we must work hard."

"But, do you really think everything can be ready by that time? I told Carlo I thought that you—"

"Oh we will manage it in some way, get two workwomen instead of one ; dear me, I had quite forgotten that the servant put a letter into my hands from Rachel, as I came out of the library."

"From Mrs. Graham ! oh, do open it, and let us hear all about the journey ; and how she is."

Mrs. Triebner put on her spectacles, and taking out the letter from her pocket, sat down to decipher it, and read it out to Rosa.

The letter was long, beginning with descriptions of various incidents attendant on the journey ; a few words of Mr. Hartley and his little girl followed, and the whole was concluded with a regret, that her agent had not as yet been able to attend to her affairs, and draw out for her the large sum of money she had in the C—— Company.

"All is satisfactory except the latter part," said Mrs. Triebner, folding up the sheet of paper, and returning it to her pocket. "That agent, why does he delay doing what Mrs. Graham requires ? It is all very fine for him to talk of the pressure of business. And there is his wife, living like a princess, she says. I always doubt those gorgeous displays, when there appears no open legitimate means to keep them going."

"May not this agent of Mrs. Graham's have made a large fortune very quickly, and surely he

has a right, in that case, to live as he thinks fit ?”

“ He has a right to do what he pleases certainly. I am not wishing to throw doubt on the man’s honesty, for I never saw him ; neither have I ever heard anything against his character ; nevertheless, I would gladly see Rachel freed from this C—— Company. Ah well ! these young people are all alike. Come though, this is wasting valuable time ; for if you are to be married in a fortnight, we must set to work in earnest. The linen is so bad here, I wish we had brought some with us ; no use now though. And I suppose Antonio will want to ask a lot of people, so there will be a grand *déjeûner* to think of as well.”

“ Oh, I hope not ; if you fancy so, do try and persuade him to let it be as quiet as possible. I shall feel so dreadfully nervous to be stared at by a number of strangers.”

“ We shall see, we shall see ; there is time yet to think of that ; now let us look what is to be done, to set your wardrobe in order. I think though we will wait until after dinner, it wants only half an hour to that time, so it is hardly worth while commencing anything now.”

## CHAPTER VIII.

## MRS. TRIEBNER'S DEPARTURE.

CARLO and Rosa were married. Yes, they are married. The artist and his bride are gone to roam about for some weeks, and Mrs. Triebner remains behind to comfort Antonio during their absence, and send off numerous pairs of white cards placed together in envelopes, and fastened down with silver wafers. To Rachel also amongst many others, is sent the well understood missive.

The young couple return home, and find all things prepared for them, by the kind hand of Mrs. Triebner. Antonio presses his sister to his heart, and sees with pleasure her blooming face, full of joy and contentment. Carlo also is somewhat improved, and returns Antonio's shake of the hand with fervour. The sacrifice is made,



sealed, irrevocable ; at least uncertainty no longer irritates him.

He paints again industriously ; from morning until the sun goes down, he sits and works away with his brushes. To do him justice, he has struggled hard to repair the result of his fault, but his is a character which requires freedom, nothing to shackle him, so that it may expand and grow in beauty. He cannot help it, he hates his bondage. His bride is lovely, passionately in love with him ; and yet, as yet the strong warm throb of love is a stranger to his heart. Still these are early days, and when Rosa's light, graceful figure glides into her husband's studio every morning, where she tries to make herself useful ; at times, Carlo feels something which might have been the dawn of contentment, had not a small pale gentle figure risen up to block it out, and extinguished the glimmering of peace in his heart.

But he is always kind to the lovely being who has become his wife ; and she ? she is full of her earnest love ; and then all the little assistances she tries to offer him, are new and full of interest to her. Her brother, also, she still loves him enthusiastically, mixed with that kind of reverence with which she has been used to regard him from a child. Then she must learn something of house-

hold matters, for Mrs. Triebner is bent upon that ; so every afternoon she goes into the kitchen with that lady, makes certain dishes under her directions, listens very attentively to her lessons of economy, how such and such things which are left, will do for something else ; and many other culinary mysteries, with which we are not going to trouble our readers.

These daily visits with Mrs. Triebner are about the only things in the shape of hardships she has to contend against. Often she puts salt instead of sugar into the pot on the fire, while thinking how Carlo has painted such and such a figure, whether he wants his colours mixed ; and Mrs. Triebner gets angry, and says she wonders what is to become of her when she shall have a large family of children to look after. Then Rosa laughs, and promises to be more careful another time, but still her mind will wander to the painting room.

So slips the summer quietly away, and leaf by leaf drops to the ground, at first unnoticed ; but suddenly there are more branches than leaves to be seen on the trees—winter is coming fast again.

It had been Mrs. Triebner's intention to have stayed with her friends during the winter ; not

only for the sake of obliging Rosa and Antonio, but because she found that she soon became quite at home in Italy, and felt herself perfectly cured of any unjust prejudices she might have harboured against its people. Her intentions, however, were suddenly destroyed by a letter received from her only brother, who was living at Madeira, and almost her sole remaining relative. This brother had always been in delicate health; and many years before had been ordered to a warmer climate in consequence of one of his lungs being affected, which rendered him unable to stand against the bitterly cold winters that often visited Mayence. Years passed by, and the soft salubrious air of Madeira kept his delicate frame together, and saved it for a time from decay. Now, however, exhausted nature could be won no longer by soft breezes, and was sinking fast away to rest; and in his letter, the invalid expressed a wish to see his sister once more before he died.

It was a painful letter for poor Mrs. Triebner to receive, for her brother had gone on so long always ailing, but without any material change in his health, that she had learnt to look on his delicacy as of little moment. She had believed after all that he might live to return to Mayence, and look after her when she should be a tottering

old woman ; should it please God to leave her so long in the world.

“ Man appoints, and God disappoints ;” the old proverb was very applicable in her case ; for instead of waiting long years to have her eyes closed by her brother, the office now was her’s, which she must soon perform for him. Long absence, and a great difference in disposition had prevented that very strong attachment, which often exists between brother and sister, situated as they were, neither having any closer ties. However Mrs. Triebner loved her brother sincerely, and very likely would have gone to Madeira with him many years before, had he not decidedly opposed it, fearing that it might prove to be a place in which she could not make herself happy. He had a very strong love for the fatherland, from which he knew he should part with a severe pang, and this he determined to spare her. Poor man, he was like many of the rest of us, apt to fancy that other people feel things just as we do, and had no more idea than a new born babe, that Mrs. Triebner was a person who could make herself happy anywhere ; only give her her kitchen and her linen press, and one or two good-natured bodies like herself to discuss what she had been doing in each ; new plans, new things to be tried,

and how others had turned out, and that busy body was as happy as a queen in her way. One thing, however, we must do her the justice to mention, while on the subject of her tastes and occupations. It is her inimitable qualities as a nurse. Sometimes we talk of an angel moving about our bed, or around those of others; poor Mrs. Triebner, we cannot venture to give her such a title, stretch as we may the elastic cord of fancy, but when a poultice required making, or a stiff painful wound wanted dressing, no more willing or more tender hand than her's to do it. In the latter case, her confidant and matter-of-fact nature stood her good service; no trembling fingers did the work, a doctor could hardly have been more at home; and during her stay in the sick room, her usual bustling way was set aside for a quiet self-possessed manner, which enabled her to do everything just when it was wanted, and in the right way.

Mrs. Triebner did not of course hesitate a moment about the propriety of starting direct for Madeira; her only anxiety was a fear that perhaps she might arrive too late. So all was bustle at the college residence, the good lady packed her boxes, and gave various wise counsels to Rosa about her housekeeping at the same time, and

Rosa's tears flowed freely now that her old friend must so soon leave her. Much as she disliked the beating up of eggs, and the weighing out the sugar, she would rather a thousand times have stood doing it all day in the kitchen, than lose her kind sensible adviser.

There is no help for it, Mrs. Triebner must go, and go she does, carrying with her the esteem, affection, and sincere good wishes of the whole inmates of the college; boys as well, for they had had to thank her for many a holiday, when she had begged Antonio to let them out for a run in the air. "Just let them be free a little," she would say, "and you will see they will learn all the better for it, remember they are not all book-worms (excuse the term) like you."

And Antonio had seen the good sense of her remarks, so had taken her advice, and reaped the benefit of it.

## CHAPTER IX.

## THE BROTHER AND SISTER.

THE year of 1852 was drawing to a conclusion, and as Lombardy had been tolerably tranquil latterly, certain carnival amusements, such as mask balls, were to be permitted to take place after Christmas. Milan was beginning to wear a gayer appearance than it had done for years ; laughing groups of people collected together in the streets, and talked over their plans for amusement in the coming season. Nothing like the open air for an Italian, if he wants to talk about anything. Even the large space before the Post Office is converted into a general reading place of those letters which many find waiting there for them, as they often prefer their letters being left *poste restante*, to having them sent to their residence. The lover also, who takes a small delicately written letter from the man at the window, full of expressions of affection from the heart of that one whom he loves

best on earth, breaks the seal, and reads its contents in the midst of dozens of people, who neither care for him, nor the gentle one who penned the epistle.

John Bull would have put it in his pocket, and would have walked off with as unconcerned a face, as if he only carried with him a bill of lading, until he could shut himself up alone between four walls : and then, just look, get underneath the surface if you can, and see if his heart is not beating as quickly, feel if it does not glow as warmly, as that of any son of southern shores.

So Milan is very gay ; the shops are full of tempting finery, gauzes and crapes, soft and bright, for ladies to dazzle the lords of the creation with, in addition to their own natural charms. And “good gracious!” as a school girl would exclaim, what a display of trinkets there are in the jewellers’ shops, what numbers of those precious stones which earth affords, lie enshrined in golden frames of every form, that man can design for woman’s adornment. Then the numerous bonbons, made in all kinds of pretty shapes and devices, how different heroes, warlike, theatrical, and otherwise, stand there in a miniature world of sugar ; and all the streets, how they are thronged with lively individuals. Really you might suppose that the



houses were empty, even the shop-people come and stand at their doors, as if they longed to be out strolling about with the rest.

Thus Milan looked, when 1853 was just at its opening, and called the new year.

Now we must go back a few months—just after Mrs. Triebner had set off on her long journey, to join her brother—and see how the trio at the college house, as it was called, was going on. Rosa, although grieved at the departure of an old friend who had taken care of her so long, who had treated her with so much kindness, and who had given her much wholesome advice, felt glad to be able to run so much oftener into the studio, to take a peep at the large picture which Carlo was just bringing to a conclusion. Not that she neglected her household duties, for she never failed to take a look into the kitchen once every morning, to see how things were going on ; but as for spending half the morning in cooking, that she never did after Mrs. Triebner left, saying that her taste did not lie that way, and as a cook was paid for the purpose, she did not see why she need. She could make herself useful to her husband and brother, in other ways more in accordance with her inclinations.

Soon, however, poor girl, her visits to the studio

had to be curtailed, even more than during the time of Mrs. Triebner's reign over the household affairs. But first let us speak of the picture. It is finished, and Carlo looks at it earnestly to try and find out, not what *he* thinks of it, but what others may see in it. The examination is unsatisfactory, he groans and covering his face with his hands, presses them on his throbbing temples.

The painting was shewn to a few friends before being sent to England, who muttered some words of praise which they did not feel ; it was a highly finished and wondrous work of patient application, but stiff, constrained—what artists call laboured.

Rosa saw nothing of this change in the work of the before promising artist ; she looked at everything he did with so much partiality, that had he painted a sign board, I believe she would have thought it everything that was excellent. There was another who did not love him less, who looked on it some months afterwards in a London exhibition, who sighed deeply, as with her quick, unerring eye, her discerning judgment, she noted the falling off, the unfulfilment of that early promise it had been her glory to watch.

To return to Rosa ; about the time the picture was finished, she was called to keep watch in the sick room of her brother. He took that dangerous

and to the doctors puzzling complaint, the *migliara* fever. For days and nights she watched by his bedside, hardly daring to hope that he would survive, when the doctor shook his head more gravely at each visit. Nevertheless, after long waiting, there came a change for the better, and slowly and surely he recovered, to thank with grateful words, and gaze again with looks of love upon his dear nurse and sister. She was paler than was her wont, and looked fatigued from long attendance in a sick room. For she had insisted that she would nurse him all herself, and but for Carlo's fear that she might become ill herself, would have refused even to leave him for a moment.

Now the convalescent is out of danger, and picks up a little strength day by day. Still Rosa will not lose her patient, and does not allow him to do anything for himself; there is a sweet pleasure to her in being able to make him some slight return for all his care and kindness to herself. She loves him more, the strong man lying there like a weak child, taking his food from her hands; after having so nearly lost him, she feels almost grateful, now all danger is past, to have been permitted to give him a proof of her love and gratitude.

Her husband though, is ever in her thoughts;

she loves him just as devotedly ; so to have both objects of affection with her, she begs that Carlo will come and take his supper in the sick man's room. How well she looks after them both, and how happy she is, all her bright looks are coming back, and she talks to them of how they will enjoy the carnival together.

"People say it will be so brilliant," she said, cutting up some small pieces of meat, which her brother had just been allowed to begin to eat again. "There now, you must eat all that, dear Antonio, to make you strong enough to go out a little, when the gay time comes."

"Oh, I shall be hardly fit for such scenes, I fear, child, besides I do not care about them."

"Is it true," asked Carlo, "there are to be no masks in the streets, only at the balls which will be given at the theatre?"

"Yes," replied Antonio, "but no one is disappointed I should think ; for such an act of liberality on the part of Austria, any one would have been mad to expect, even the masked balls are a wonderful piece of indulgence on her part."

"Hateful tyrant ! when shall we be able to throw her off I wonder?"

"When Italy ceases to be divided against itself, when one state ceases to look with jealousy on its

neighbour, when morality shall weigh heavier in the scale than it does at present, when those red rebublican feelings die out, and Italy shall be agreed to strive for a liberty founded on moderation. But enough on this subject, walls may be said to have ears here; so let Italy's wrongs sleep deep in the bottom of our hearts, to be called up at some more fitting time than the present to find redress."

So spoke Antonio to Carlo that evening; for as we know, his opinions of freedom had always been just and moderate, and Carlo agreed to all his brother-in-law had said, and moreover, took his prudent advice to drop the subject.

Antonio soon made such rapid improvement, that he was able to get up for a few hours occasionally, and this by degrees was increased, until one day he appeared in the sitting room, after he had been well wrapped up by Rosa.

This was a signal for all his scholars to ask if they might come and say how glad they were at his recovery, for he was very much beloved amongst them, and the school had been full of grave, anxious faces during the time when he was in great danger. Rosa would have liked to have given them a denial, she wanted them to wait a few days, for she feared her brother might be

fatigued. Antonio, however, was anxious not to check the affectionate feelings of his boys, as he was wont to call them, and so requested that they might just come in a few at a time, for him to thank them for the anxiety they had shown on his account.

"You will give them a little cake and some wine to drink, eh, Rosa?"

"To be sure! oh here comes Carlo, he will help us in this reception."

"Of course I will; it is a great pleasure to us all to see your brother so beloved, and to himself it must be doubly so, knowing that he has earned it by his uniform justice and kindness towards them all."

Rosa fetched the wine and cake, and after making Antonio comfortable in his arm-chair by the fire, the boys were called in.

Loud talking, rackety, romping boys; it was quite delightful to hear how they moderated their voices, and stepped so gently, for fear they should make too much noise for their invalid master.

How benign and noble-looking that master's face, as he welcomes them all, in terms as if they had been his children; and like children they were to him, no one could have been more anxious than he for their welfare in every way. Of course,

amongst so large a number of boys, there must have been great diversity of dispositions ; and there must have been some who were much more engaging, more loveable than others, still not a look, not a word that could lead one to suppose that any of them were more favoured than the rest. The placid smile, the high open brow, the kind yet dignified manner of that man ; the boys down to the very least of them adore him I verily believe ; and Rosa joined them in the feeling, for she also had been like a child to him, as well as a sister.

Away they go the last of them, and quiet and orderly as they have been, Antonio feels somewhat exhausted.

Now Rosa has him all to herself, for Carlo has gone to clean his palette ; so she pets him and folds his wraps about him, and tells him he looked like a king receiving his subjects.

“ Greater than a king even, dear brother, for I doubt if any in such high places, are loved so universally in their kingdom, as you are in your little community ; do you know I feel quite an affection for all those boys—awkward, uncouth-looking creatures as some of them are.”

“ My bright little flower, your sainted mother looks down from heaven to bless us both, let

her memory live in your own heart as it has done in mine, and should an unworthy thought ever enter into your mind, think how it would grieve her, and stifle it at once. You have been a good child, my darling, would that your mother could see you now, so happy, so gay, and taking such care of your old brother."

"Old, Antonio! what can you mean?"

"Not in years, but in feelings; I can hardly tell why, it may be that I learnt sorrow so early. Her sudden death, my pet, just when I began to hope she might recover, and live with us for many a long year, it seemed to age me in a moment."

"Poor mamma! I can remember something of her, how she used to kiss me with tears streaming down her cheeks—that last day before we came away, and you took me to her grave. I remember that also; poor mamma, how she must have suffered."

"Yes, truly, she did, and with patient resignation; my darling do not cry, there is no need for grief on her account, she is happy now, far happier than any of us here, I only wished to awaken in you some remembrance of your mother, that it might be a safeguard, a consolation to you sometimes to look up to her in spirit."



"Oh you are her image in goodness, dear brother, I know you are."

"Poor child, you think too highly of me, and then I may be taken away from you."

"Why?" the young girl said, with an amazed and bewildered look, "You who are so much better—almost well."

"Yes, I am, yet I cannot say what it is, I feel a kind of melancholy steal over me."

"Oh, it is talking of poor mamma, and those boys have tired you dreadfully, let me sing you something," and sitting down by his side on a little stool, she held his hand, looked up into his face, and warbled a pretty little air so softly, and so sweetly; he looking down on her the while, with eyes full of affection.

Thus Carlo found them, then she bounded up and flinging her arms around his neck said,

"We must try to raise Antonio's spirits, dearest, for he is dull; come read to us will you, as you used to do at Mayence."

The book, she ran to fetch it, laid it open before her husband, and then took her seat again on the low stool which she placed between them both.

A happy afternoon that was; Carlo's good spirit

hovered around him, and helped him then to learn contentment with his lot.

Will it last? and Rosa, will he love her then? and will they live a long life of happiness together?

Reader, that is just what we are going to tell you.

## CHAPTER X.

## CARNIVAL TIME AT MILAN, 1853.

NUMBERS of people flocked into Milan daily from all parts, and the *trattorias* or eating-houses, had enough to do to supply them with dinners and suppers. The Corso which is the great lounge of the town, was filled with a strange motley crowd, unlike but in one thing, their mirth ; and surely there never was a happier looking set of faces, moving up and down that long street which runs directly from that matchless piece of gothic architecture in white marble, the cathedral with its hundreds of pinnacles and figures, right down to the Porta Orientale, one of the entrances to the city. The peasant with his short velvet jacket and peaked felt hat ; his lover hanging on his arm, her bright silver pins shining in her black hair ; dozens of *bourgeoises* in their black lace veils, are jostling against the exquisites of fashion, all good-

humoured together, for it is the carnival, when every one is expected to be merry and good-tempered. The road is completely full, and pretty dames in Parisian mode nod gaily to their acquaintances on the pathway, as they pass on in their handsome carriages. The line breaks for a little and on comes a number of horsemen, their swords clattering as they go. They are officers, and all Austrians of course. Baron Durstein the governor of the town with his suite. Let us pause an instant to observe him for he will have much to do with one of the most important events in our tale, important in every way, both public and private.

The Baron is talking to his officers on either side, and laughs loudly, and at first sight looks a remarkably good-tempered man. The small light grey eye is sparkling with humour; yet is it not almost too glass-like? is there not a hardness in its brightness? and the upturnings of that sandy-coloured moustache, leaving much of the mouth exposed to view, does it not show that though those lips are now raised at their extremities with unrestrained mirth, that they can draw down and tighten themselves into the cold relentless unfor- giving gaze of tyranny?

The answer must be left for the forthcoming pages of our tale to disclose.

There are several objects of interest to this crowd of people moving backwards and forwards—the cafés, the confectioners, the print shops, the masquerade pictures, side by side with his Imperial Majesty the Emperor of Austria, on whom the towns-people look with a little more complacency, since he has given them the permission to have some innocent amusement. They try to forget how long he has made them wait for it. True it is but half a carnival, not a mask to be allowed in the streets; but an Italian amuses himself so easily, he is a real philosopher if ever there was one; for he takes the evil and the good just as it comes, and goes his way as happy as ever. There is somewhat of levity in this we admit, but then it has its advantages, and the fruit of this is, good nature free from all grumbling and repining.

Besides the objects of attraction just mentioned, there are bills placed at several turnings leading into other streets, which draw a large concourse of people round them. They are all alike—an official permission for the masked balls to be held in the theatres, and mentioning the several dates when they will take place. Eagerly they press

around them, the pleasure seeking mortals, and those standing behind who cannot see, learn from the more fortunate ones in front, how the balls have been arranged.

Amongst one of the knots, stands Carlo with Rosa on his arm; for Antonio is getting so strong that he needs a nurse no longer, would even have taken a stroll with them himself, but for certain letters which he was anxious to write and send off to some of his friends in Germany.

“Carlo, can you read when the first ball will take place at the Scala?” asked the eager girl, for she had never seen such a thing as a real masquerade. Only slight efforts which they make in Mayence; and which are no more like those of Italy, than the weak attempts to represent the drama by the strolling players of a caravan, are to be compared with those finished and often unsurpassable productions of the great metropolis.

“No; I cannot see, but some one will be able to tell us if we wait a minute.”

“Oh yes, do let us wait, for Antonio says he will take a box you know, and then I am to have a domino, what fun it will be, will it not?”

“Yes, it will be very gay I have no doubt, I must take care you do not exert yourself too much,

though, for you are not used to these things you know."

"Oh, I am quite strong, able to do anything in the world I assure you, Carlo. I have been making up in my own mind such a host of puzzling things I will say to Antonio's friends."

"What a lively girl you are, well be joyous while you can, amuse yourself, you shall enter into all the gaieties of the carnival if you wish it."

By this time, a gentleman began to move off who had been close to the bill, conning its every line, and to him Carlo addressed himself for information.

He with great politeness gave all the dates, and advised Carlo if he intended taking boxes for any of the nights, to secure them at once, for he believed there would be a great demand for them.

"Thank you, Sir, I think you are right; come along, Rosa."

"Shall we go now to take them? Oh, how good of you, dear Carlo, to think so much of my whims and fancies."

Away they went to the theatre, and found on arriving there that the gentleman had been right, for the box-office was surrounded by people work-

ing their way up to the door; they gained an entrance, and shortly afterwards came forth with a written paper, securing a good box for three different nights.

Rosa was quite radiant with happiness, first at her husband's kindness, and then at the idea of how much she should enjoy herself.

She talked and laughed all the way home, and when arrived there, ran to Antonio, and shook the valuable paper before him.

"Yes, I understand it all, you wild child! go into your room, there is something for you there."

"A domino! a domino!" she called out clapping her hands as she saw it, and a very pretty pink silk dress laid out upon the bed. "Dear me, that husband and brother of mine quite spoil me."

The time for the first ball drew near, and the town was becoming every day more gay and full of people.

"Do you know, Rosa," said Antonio looking out of the window, "that I think I shall go and take a little stroll—I have not been out since my illness, and I feel perfectly strong now."

"I must come with you then, dear brother."

"No, I shall go alone, I see you are doing some



work for Carlo, and there is not the least occasion to take you from it."

"Oh dear! oh dear! I wish Carlo had not been out, but I cannot let you go alone—your first walk and all! I can finish this to-night."

"Yes, and spoil your eyes; no, I intend to go alone, surely you do not think I cannot take care of myself!"

"No you seem strong again certainly—I suppose you must have your own way, Mr. Professor. Stay, take this with you," and she held out to him a great antique-looking walking stick, which might have suited one of Queen Elizabeth's beef-eaters, and had a large leaden top, all chased and worked with figures.

"Ah, give me the old friend, it has served the family well, it is one of the few relics we possess—there now, I look quite ancestral."

He went out, and Rosa returned to her work, humming tune after tune as gaily as a bird.

She sat by the fire thinking of the coming ball, and wondering if she should be able to play her part well enough to remain unrecognized. She works and sings, and time passes—the minutes slip on—the day is running fast away, and the light will soon be gone. She cannot see well now, so she puts her work away, and walks to the

window, to look out and watch for the return of her husband and her brother.

The street in which the college stood, was wide and long, the houses in it were mostly large ones, and the ground floors of these, with but very few exceptions, were used as shops.

All at once, as if the wand of harlequin had been at work, the shops which run upon castors, are all turned round, and in a few minutes, there is not an open door to be seen.

Rosa looked on in wonder ! what can it mean ? Windows on every floor, but the ground ones, open simultaneously, and heads peep out one after another, all looking down the street in the direction of the cathedral.

Rosa is still at a loss—but opens the window like her neighbours, and strains her eyes in the same direction with them.

The street during all this time has been empty, not even a solitary straggler could have been found in it.

It comes, whatever it is—a murmur—a buzz—a shuffling noise, wild with fury, civilians and soldiers, on they go all together, fighting and struggling with each other.

They are gone ! again the street is empty—but only for an instant. A man runs down it without

his hat ; his hair blown back from his face by the wind, leaving his white lofty brow uncovered. He is surrounded by soldiers, who form a circle about him with their swords drawn, the points presented to him ; he poor, unhappy wretch, tries to find an egress from his perilous position, and strikes out with a large stick, to endeavour to beat his way through.

Useless it is, the soldiers press around him, and he leaves the street as he entered it, a prisoner.

Much as he was taken up with his struggles to free himself, this man had raised his eyes once in his flight down the street—they rested on the college !

Could Rosa mistake that face ? no, that despairing look turned full upon her as she trembles in every limb, is that of her brother from whom she parted so short a time before !

“Antonio !” and she stretched her arms out with wild desperation—he was gone ! it might have been a dream, so quickly did it all happen.

She shudders—the street is empty—but alas ! it is all real !

She leaves the window—she runs hastily to her room and seized her bonnet and shawl—she hesitates—Carlo, her husband, what has become of him ?

She pauses but an instant, she can do no good to Carlo by standing there, an uncontrollable desire is in her to follow her brother—she goes—and would have been half down the street in a little time—for fear she had none, something had made her as brave as a lion—but at the door she met Carlo.

Then came a sudden revulsion of feeling, he at any rate was safe by her side—she flung herself upon his neck, and sobbed and laughed hysterically.

“Hush ! hush my poor darling—be calm—try and compose yourself !”

He endeavoured to sooth her—he prayed of her—he entreated—she sobbed—she trembled—and then she laughed again. Time at last brought her round to something like composure, and her first words were : “ You at least have returned to me dear Carlo, but Antonio ! poor Antonio ! ” the tears began to flow again.

“Hush, yes I know, I saw him—do not grieve so, he has done nothing, we know that, so they will leave him at liberty shortly.”

“Oh, do you think so ! or do you only say it to quiet my fears ?”

“No, indeed I feel persuaded that he must be

safe—why we can prove his innocence, and numbers besides can do the same.”

“Oh dear what a relief your words are! Oh if you only knew the agony I endured, when I saw his face turned towards me—and with a look—such a look! it entered into my very soul—it haunts me, I see it now!”

“There—there be calm—I tell you all will go well with him, he has done nothing; it is some mistake, they have taken him for some one else.”

“God grant it may be so! but tell me—how did it happen—what is it? I had just put my work away and had gone to the window to look for you both—everything was quiet then, and all at once, really my head seems quite confused, all took place in the street so quickly. I can remember nothing but Antonio.”

“Every one is as much surprised, as much confused about it as you are. I was in the café reading the papers, there were several other gentlemen there, and not one of them knew anything about the matter. I returned by the Piazza del Duomo and walked through the Cathedral, and there I saw a poor soldier, while on his knees, stabbed in the head by three brutes until he fell down dead at their feet. Another soldier who was keeping guard at the theatre was seized on by

half a dozen men, and stabbed in the same cowardly disgusting way. God knows, I have little love for the Austrians, and would be glad enough to see them driven out of Italy; but good God, such a movement as this! it is a mean, dastardly, brutal act—a handful of fanatics running about the streets, committing murder wherever they can.”

“How shocking! how dreadful!”

“Yes, and only makes matters worse; besides the brutality of it. Fight face to face, man to man, however wild and hopeless it might be, there is something manly in that; but to go and stab the poor soldiers in their backs—four, five, and six ruffians pressing upon one poor unfortunate fellow, this is too disgraceful—too barbarous a thing! This is not the rising of the people, however. I would almost stake my life that not a soul in Milan had the least idea of what was going to take place.”

“Well, but cannot we do something to try and find out what they have done with Antonio? let us go together.”

“Quite useless to-night, my poor child, the streets are filled with soldiers, and they will not allow man, woman, or child to pass.”

“So we must wait until to-morrow?”

“ Yes, there is nothing else to be done.”

“ Oh, poor Antonio ! then he must spend the night in prison—and he has been so ill—how will he bear it ?”

“ Take courage ! they may treat him kindly after all—and he is strong now you know. I trust in a day or two, we shall have him sitting here with us again.”

Thus he talked to her, thus he tried to comfort her during the evening, and when night came, she sunk to sleep on his breast, exhausted with anxiety and excitement.

He looked at her as she lay there, with a sweet expression on her face, all unconscious of her grief. He sighed, for the longer he thought about the matter, the less confidence he felt, and he shuddered to think that Antonio was in the hands of the Austrians.

The morning came, and Rosa awoke to sorrow.

When the breakfast table was cleared she wanted to go out with Carlo, to see what could be discovered of Antonio.

“ No, dear Rosa, I cannot allow you to do that moreover I shall get on faster by myself. God bless you ! cheer up, I shall soon be back.”

He went, and Rosa watched for him for severa

hours. At last he came, with the blood pouring down his arm.

Fortunately she did not see it, until he had prepared her for it, and had assured her that it was a mere scratch.

The wound was slight as he had said, and Rosa at last conquered her agitation, and bound it up.

The disturbance had begun again shortly after his leaving the house, and he had accidentally gone into the midst of it, receiving a cut on the arm, while trying to force his way back again.

Of Antonio he had not been able to discover anything—and although he contrived to reach as far as the prison gates, and begged the officials to tell him if one named Antonio Montara was there, the answer was always that they knew nothing about it, and not one of them heeded his entreaties that they would try to find out for him. So, disheartened, tired, and with his arm beginning to pain him, he returned home.

Another day—then another came to an end, but Antonio's fate remained still uncertain.

On the fourth day, all was quiet again in the town, and the people began to walk out as usual—quite changed though in appearance from the gay multitude they were before; now all grave



anxious faces, whispering together and looking eagerly for very different official announcements at the corners of the streets, from those they had sought four days before.

A large paper just pasted up on the wall, informed the public of the discovery of the late tumult having been raised by a band of peasants from different parts of the frontiers of the kingdom. These, it went on to say, had entered the gates, apparently to participate in the forthcoming gaieties, but in reality to commit outrages, in which it was satisfactorily proved the townspeople had taken no part. It went on to assure the citizens, that they had no cause for fear, that order and tranquillity had been restored, &c.

Altogether the whole announcement seemed very mild, just, and considerate.\*

Some few faces brightened as they read it, hopeful mortals, who in spite of Austria's continued hypocrisy, trusted that she would one day mean what she said, and act with more justice and liberality towards Lombardy. Others, by far the greater portion, curled their lips in scorn while

\* It will be understood that all that follows relating to the acts of the government in Milan during this time, are not fancies of the author's brain, but truthful records of what happened in the town during her stay there.

reading what they looked upon as a fore-runner of some new piece of tyranny.

Another day passed, there was a slight movement again, but very shortly all was once more tranquil.

A new official announcement made its appearance, it ran as follows :

“ In order to ensure public tranquillity, no person will be allowed to quit any house after nine in the evening, at which hour all cafés have orders to close, not more than three persons will be permitted to converse together in the streets.

“ No theatres will be opened, no walking sticks may be carried by the inhabitants beyond the dimensions of a slight cane, and a tax will be levied on the townspeople for the families of those soldiers who have been killed in the late outbreak. The transgressions of any of these laws will be visited with the severest judgment.

“ By order of the Governor,

“ BARON DURSTEIN.”

The new announcement drew numbers as before, and those who had curled their lips in scorn, now smiled strangely with a look which said, “ see how right we were in our suspicions.”

The people of course felt they were hardly used in being called upon to suffer for the sins of others. None, however, dared to raise a murmur, one word on the injustice of the order, and they would have been hurried off to prison immediately. Unwillingly enough, but quietly they had to put their hands in their pockets, to submit without a single remonstrance to the withdrawal of all their amusements, and to be kept prisoners in their own houses after a certain hour.

When this rigorous official communication made its appearance, it began to be noised about that Mazzini had been the great mover in the outbreak, and that the people who had perpetrated it, had been paid by him for the purpose, that he had promised to join them, but had prudently turned back after coming as far as Piedmont. It is impossible to say in cases like these how much might have been true, and how much false, in such a report it is always just to give the man thus accused the benefit of a doubt. Certainly it was a most cowardly, murderous, dastardly attack, which did not come from Italy ; and on which the instigator, whoever he might have been, can only look back with shame.

Certain it is besides that many lips in Milan cursed that desperate republican, to whom it

was generally believed, they owed their further loss of liberty.

Following the second placard which had caused so much silent ire, there came others of more fearful interest ; and day after day might be seen a list of five, six, or seven names of men who were to be hanged in four and twenty hours. Carlo was out early every morning, looking anxiously for these, and reading them down in fear and agitation. Two or three came forth without the name appearing which he so much dreaded to see ; but one morning, about the seventh day after the disturbance.

*“ Antonio Montara, to be hanged on Tuesday,”* met his eyes in black letters.

This was a fearful sight, and although he had been dreading it from day to day, he lost for a moment all self-possession.

“ Sir, you feel ill, I am afraid,” said a kind compassionate man by his side, who had watched him change colour.

“ Thank you, allow me to take your arm to the café yonder. I have been very much shocked, a glass of wine will be of service to me.”

The gentleman gave the assistance asked of him without a word of comment, feeling too great

delicacy to ask any questions, and Carlo was too much disturbed to speak on the subject.

Once in the café, the wine was soon procured, and then Carlo became composed again, and thanked the stranger.

“Can I be of any use to you?” was the reply.

“No, none I thank you,” and they parted.

Carlo’s first anxiety was to prevent the fearful order he had just read from reaching the ears of Rosa ; he therefore started off immediately to the college, to order that no one should be admitted to her ; and should any of the servants know it, to desire them to be careful not to speak of it in her presence.

He arrived too late. Her foolish maid had already told her everything.

Fortunately, the information had not had the violent effect upon her which Carlo had feared it would have, for her character was so hopeful, that her husband’s assurance of a few days back that they could prove Antonio’s innocence, buoyed her up, and all she could think of was what would be the quickest and best means of proceeding.

“Carlo, Carlo, what is to be done?” she exclaimed, trembling in every limb.

“Compose yourself, dear girl ; let me think, let

us look over his papers first, to see if there may be anything amongst them to assist us."

Every scrap they could find, they read through hastily, and after an hour or two of examination, they found a letter of one of the Austrian authorities addressed to him in terms of admiration for his quiet, moderate behaviour, and his obedience to the laws.

"This will do everything surely!" cried Rosa, "and then we—the servants—the boys, can all testify to his having only just recovered from a serious illness, that he went out only to take a walk."

"Yes, courage! be brave, dear; all will come right I trust, however, I must go down to this Austrian. I shall require him to declare that this letter is his, and either to stamp or seal it officially. It is of no use to content ourselves with half measures in such a cause, and without a proper attestation, they might say it was a forgery."

Carlo went; but as ill luck would have it, the door was closed; work was finished in the office for that day, and it would not open until the next morning at nine.

Carlo had now nothing left but to wait until then, and in the meantime procure as many testimonials in favour of Antonio as he could.

This was not a very difficult undertaking, for Antonio Montara was so well known, so much beloved, that half the town would have been ready to stand up for him. He therefore returned to Rosa, with a whole handful of papers which were most satisfactory in every way, and did his best to console her for their being obliged to wait until the morning, before they could endeavour to set her brother at liberty. Poor girl, it would be a close run, for the executions were given out for eleven o'clock; the knowledge of this, however, her husband had been able, fortunately, to keep from her.

## CHAPTER XI.

## AUSTRIAN JUSTICE.

ANTONIO felt, after having passed the college where he had seen his sister looking out of the window, that escape was hopeless, and that he must just give in to the men about him. Nevertheless he still struggled against them, to save her the additional grief of seeing him throw up the last faint hope of escape; but when he and the soldiers had turned the street, he dropped his stick, and allowed them to do with him and it as they might think fit; so they carried him away to prison.

Antonio when he had first left home, had wandered down one street and up another, enjoying the fresh air, after having been closed up so long in the house; on he went, heedless of time, until he found himself upon the ramparts. Here he seemed to derive a fresh pleasure, for although the



trees were nothing but black leafless branches, in some cases the ivy plant had twined itself about the roots, and the patches of grass which he met with every here and there were fresh and green. The distant mountains, also, were more than usually clear from the purity of the atmosphere, and their tops white with the snow which covered them, stood out in bold relief from the sky. Antonio stopped and looked about him, for nature even in her least luxuriant form was then wonderfully refreshing to him. Even the wind as it blew in his face seemed to invigorate him, keen and sharp though it was. Had he been a poet, he would have written a whole page of verses there, on the feelings of freedom which the body and mind enjoy, after being long pent up between four walls, the lungs breathing a heavy dense atmosphere, the languid frame stretched on a bed of sickness.

As he was not anything of the kind, he merely thought over the change in good honest prose; blessed God for having returned him to health; and believed he had never seen such bright green grass in all his life before.

But legs that have not been called upon for a considerable time to fulfil their office will become rusty, and a body weakened by medicines and

fever is quickly overtaken by fatigue. So Antonio found as he drew near another gate of the city, and therefore thought it would be better to turn homewards.

The sturdy old stick now did him good service, and helped him on famously. It had been his grandfather's, and his great-grandfather's before him ; and Count Ernesto had purchased it, in conjunction with a few other things, at the sale made by the government of the property of Victor Montara. These he had kept, intending to present them to the boy Antonio, when he should be old enough to receive them as relics of his family ; however he died before that time, and left them in the charge of a friend to deliver over to Antonio Montara, should he ever return to Milan. This is how Antonio became possessed of the old stick, which had served so many generations, and which he would take with him sometimes when he went out of the town for a long walk to refresh himself after some deep study, or a day spent in teaching.

When arrived at the *Piazza de' Mercanti*, Antonio was struck at finding many of the shops closed so early, and at seeing so few people moving about there. On he went towards the cathedral, and when arrived there, he unexpectedly found

himself in the midst of a great crowd, whose actions he understood with a glance of his eye.

There were men with knives, fighting with the soldiers, women screaming, and turning round to flee away ; drums were beating, and canons stood in the front of the multitude, ready to be fired on them if they did not lay down their arms.

Antonio was not a coward, but he was weakened by a late illness, and mixed up in such a scene, he knew he should have little chance of escaping scathless ; besides which, he feared being taken up by the soldiers in mistake for some riotous person ; so he turned away from the main street, and ran off as fast as he was able towards the college ; the anxiety to arrive at home, gave strength for the moment to his failing limbs ; and he went so swiftly along, he would have soon reached it in safety, but for a small party of soldiers in command of a young lieutenant who came full upon him. The young lieutenant thought this would be a nice opportunity for him to prove his zeal in his master's service, and so he ordered his men to arrest him.

Antonio was determined to fight for his liberty to the very last, for there was something galling to him in the young boy's word of command, and then he knew how much Rosa would suffer at his

not returning home, and what agony of mind it would be to her, to find that he had been arrested and put in prison. The good old stick served him for some time to keep his enemies at bay ; nevertheless it soon became clear, that such an unequal contest could end in nothing but the defeat of the single man dealing out blows in all directions.

And so it was that Rosa saw him fighting his way past the college, and caught the look which he had raised up to the window, trusting that she would not be there, and so would remain in ignorance of his danger ; thus it was that his face looked full of love and grief, when he saw her large beautiful eyes stare at him in recognition and despair.

After having given up his stick, the men conducted Antonio quietly to prison, for he offered no further resistance, and consoled himself as best he could with the certainty of his innocence.

Closed up in a gloomy looking place, with large heavy bars across the windows, an uncovered stone floor, a wooden table, a mattress, and one rush bottom chair, was somewhat different to the nice warm fire, and well-furnished room he only a short time before very naturally concluded he should occupy at that hour.

Now there was no bright face to welcome him,

no kind hand to wheel a nice comfortable arm-chair to the fire for him, and ask him how he liked his walk, to do a thousand little tender things in fact, and talk on in merry strain the while. No, there he must sit alone, desolate and cold, and wrap his cloak about him as well as he could, to try and prevent the shivering sensations which came over him in that damp prison.

Antonio had thought whilst in the street, that his innocence, his well known character for tranquillity, and his never having mixed himself up with any conspiracies against the government, would be of great advantage to him should they try him for being supposed to have joined the fighting party. The fact also of his having no arms about him, he at one moment considered would render him quite secure of his safety in the end.

Martial law ! martial law ! however, now rung in his ear, as he glanced about his uncomfortable apartment.

He knew very well what that was in the Austrian dominions ; and a vague fear came over him that perhaps his life might be in some jeopardy.

Antonio, as we have said before, was not a coward ; but although the events of his early life, his having to act the part of a parent to his

sister, when little more than a boy, his studious habits, and his naturally quiet disposition had given an older appearance, and led him to care little for such amusement as young men of his age generally indulge in; although a thoughtful mind, and strong religious feeling made him often think of death, and at times believe that God would call him away early—still, the contemplation of it thus suddenly forced upon him, caused something like a cold shudder to run through him, and awe, if not fear, visited his heart.

He had been so happy! yes, he had been quite as happy in his way, as others more demonstrative, and of livelier disposition. Give him his books, let him search into the deep mystic paths of science, and he could enjoy himself for hours, and then when the mind had been somewhat overtasked, he would go and roam away and look on God's earth as simply as a child—remembering that with all his study, all his knowledge, his Maker still remained to him, as grand, as incomprehensible as before! Then his great brotherly love was well repaid, and Rosa's mirth, her beauty, and her warmth of heart, soothed the scholar when he was weary.

Life with him latterly had been running out its portion gently and pleasantly—he was both

young and healthy, beloved by many, respected by all.

Reader—do you wonder that he did not wish to leave the world as yet? are you surprised that he felt a pain at the idea of parting from his sister and his friends so soon?

Through all that night the prisoner watched for daylight, for as it may be naturally supposed he could not sleep.

It came! a pale white streak shot through the opening between the bars, and rising from the mattress on which he had passed the dark, still night, Antonio walked about the room. He watched the ray of light grow stronger and yellower, and then he knew the day was fully opened. A few movements in the street also helped him in this respect, and so he waited, hoping to be called and questioned, that he might learn his fate from the faces, if not the words of his judges.

He was however doomed to disappointment that day; and the only circumstance which broke its monotony, was the advent of a broad-faced, unintellectual looking Austrian soldier, who twice brought him food of a very coarse description.

The first time the unhappy man requested that it might be taken away, for the sight of it sickened him, he wanted to know when he was to be tried;

did he know anything about it? could he tell him?

The heavy-featured man shook his head unmoved, he either did not know, or had received orders not to say anything about it.

The door closed behind the unprepossessing attendant, carrying away the breakfast as he had been requested. Hours, long gloomy hours followed; nothing could Antonio see beyond the scantily and miserably furnished room in which he had been confined, for the window was placed too high up for any one to look out of it.

The frequent tramp of small parties of soldiers backwards and forwards, brought Antonio to the conclusion that they had not yet accomplished their work of tranquillizing the town. Then afterwards he heard fighting going on underneath the window, the clashing of swords intermixed with oaths and coarse language, then that passed away and all was quiet again.

Long and dreary was the day, the light at last began to wane: and now the sun was setting for a second time since Antonio had been shut up in that cold gloomy room. The heavy looking soldier came another time, and brought with him a fresh supply of coarse food.

Hunger cannot afford to be over fastidious, and



it was now so many hours that Antonio had fasted, that he felt the absolute need of eating something of however unpalatable a kind it might be, moreover it would be an employment to him, for a short period at least; for he whose habit it was to be so industrious at all times, longed more than he could express for something to do, anything by which he might strive to divert his mind (he it ever but so little), from those painful thoughts which had possession of him for so many hours.

He ate therefore such as had been placed before him with appetite, although not with relish.

That night, fatigued both in mind and body, he sunk to sleep; and thus gained a few hours respite from his troubles.

The following morning he awoke refreshed, and better able to look his danger in the face. He thought of the many friends he had, and that they would all be ready to serve him, and speak for his character—and so he looked forward with hope, prayed he might escape from danger, and live to embrace his sister again. The day wore on, again the ray of light which entered at the window grew warmer and brighter, and shortly after twelve o'clock a file of soldiers headed by a sergeant stopped at the prisoner's door.

They entered the room, and at once informed

him that they had come to conduct him to his trial.

He went with them calmly, his head raised with the confidence of innocence, and soon he stood before his judges.

It is needless to give a description of all the hard stern faces that were there, enough that we pause to say a few words respecting the chief one amongst them.

There he sits in the midst of many, with his light grey eye fixed keenly upon the prisoner, looking like that of a cat's when about to pounce upon her prey, the brows hang over them with a dark scowl; the head is thrown back hastily, and the broad chest glittering with orders, is expanded with a due knowledge of his importance.

Antonio stands in front guarded on each side by soldiers, his head erect, his fine intellectual eyes fixed firmly on his judges.

Reader, you will perhaps hardly recognise the jovial officer, Baron Durstein, in the man who directs his sharp enquiring looks on Antonio—and yet it was he.

“Prisoner, your name?” said the Baron.

“Antonio Montara.”

“Your profession?”

“Director of a college for the education of youths.”

“Prisoner,” said the Baron in a clear voice, “You are here on the supposition of having assisted in raising a disturbance in the town to the endangering of the lives of peaceful citizens—what have you to say?”

“Simply, that I am innocent.”

A slight curl of the lips, and a cynical smile from the Baron followed this answer of the prisoner, and he continued, “you were found with this implement of war in your hands, and you dared to raise it against his Imperial Majesty’s soldiers, whilst in performance of their duty.”

Antonio looked in surprise, as well he might do; for what had been designated as an implement of war, lay on a table before the Baron—*his old stick with its leaden-headed top!*

“That is an old relic that has been in my family through many generations.” Antonio raised his head proudly as he spoke, “and I have often taken it out with me before the other day, when I was unjustly arrested by your soldiers.”

“Silence, sir,” called out the Baron, growing purple with rage, “you are not here to give your opinion on the matter, but to hear our decision on your conduct.”

Antonio saw quite well the sort of person he had to deal with, so he strove to be as calm as possible, and keep himself from giving way to anger.

The examination proceeded much in the style it had commenced, the prisoner was asked several other questions respecting himself; and the Baron, in conclusion, reminded him that his late father had taken an active part in a conspiracy against the government many years before. Looking as he said it very much as if he thought that what the father had done, the son must of necessity do likewise.

A slight delay took place, then the several witnesses against him stepped forward by turns, consisting of the young lieutenant, and the soldiers who had arrested him.

Their evidence amounted to the fact that they had found him in the midst of the tumult with a large leaden-headed stick in his hand; that he had turned to run away, and when they closed round him, that he had offered resistance and had struck out with his stick, which he refused for some time to give up, and had dealt one or two blows with it at the soldiers.

To all this Antonio was now allowed to reply, and in a firm voice he said, "Gentlemen—it is

perfectly true that I was in the Piazza of the Cathedral during the disturbance, and that finding myself pressed upon by a mob in which I had no concern, and seeing soldiers come up at every instant I turned to run away—it is also true when the soldiers surrounded me, and called upon me to give myself up into custody, I fought as well as I could to liberate myself; but so far from having taken my old stick with the intention of using it for the purpose of helping a number of people to create a disturbance, so far from that, I had not the least idea that there were any people so disposed; and my wish to run away, proceeded from an anxiety not to become mixed up with the confusion, for I had but a short time before risen from a bed of sickness, it was the first day on which I had ventured out since my illness, and I had not strength to cope with an excited multitude.”

“Where are the proofs of all this, Sir?” said the Baron in his clear sharp voice, and with his cynical smile again on his lips.

Alas! where are they?

Antonio looked anxiously about him, hoping that one at least would step forward to speak for him.

Not a soul! dozens there were that would have

done so gladly, but they knew not then that he stood in need of such a thing—so after a few instants the prisoner turned round his head again disappointed, and waited his sentence from the unmerciful man before him.

The Baron, seeing that no one came forward to speak for the prisoner, turned to consult with the officers about him. There was silence for a few minutes, and then the Governor gave the sentence.

“Antonio Montara having been taken prisoner whilst trying to run away, with an implement of war in his hands, is therefore found guilty of aiding in the late disturbance, and sentenced to be garrotted on Tuesday at half-past eleven o’clock.”

Antonio heard the words, which were delivered in a clear vibrating tone, without a muscle changing on his face.

Not from great strength of mind ; although he could be brave enough, but from feeling perfectly stunned at the fearful sentence. With no real evidence whatever against him, he was to be sent out of the world in this hurried way—guilty or not guilty, it appeared that a certain number of victims were to be executed, and he was to be one of them.

He looked full in that stern man’s face, but

nothing like pity was there ; all was cold—hard—unrelenting.

“ Remove the prisoner,” said the Baron.

“ Stay, a few words before I go,” said Antonio, the eye flashing, a look of contempt upon his lips, “ do people call this a court for the administration of justice ! Oppressors of my country, you stand there now surrounded by wealth and power, a day of retribution will come, however ; if not on earth, when we stand before a judge far more merciful, but far more just, more awful than you are ; when the souls of innocent men will rise up as witnesses against you for murder, you will then wish this place *had* been a court of justice, and that you had given those men a fair and impartial trial.”

“ Take the prisoner away,” ordered the Baron a second time, biting his lips whilst his face flushed purple with passion.

Back to his gloomy prison Antonio was conducted by the soldiers ; and when once alone again the first thing he did was to fling himself upon his knees to pray for strength.

Twenty-four hours to live ; Rosa, the bright happy girl, and all her late care of him, returned to his mind over and over again. How little had he thought, when he had left her on

that unlucky day, that death was so soon to part them. How many things he would like to have said to her—some words to several others before parting from them for ever.

Then hope began to glimmer again, they could not have heard of his danger, four and twenty hours he had. No ! one was already gone—might they not hear of it before it was too late ? Yes, when executions were to take place, printed papers with the names of those going to be executed were posted on the walls, he remembered that ; one little ray of light to a man struggling in darkness, there was some hope, he might be saved then. He waited, the night came—and passed.

The small light of hope grows smaller as hour after hour wears away.

The light of day has come, but there is no light for him ; the last sunrise, before the doom which awaits him in a few hours !

Disappointed, gloomy, sad, he sits looking at the little squares of blue sky between the iron bars ; the untasted food of the early morning stands on the small deal table close by him. The streets are tranquil now, he hears no more fighting, no more oaths.

A man goes by whistling a merry tune.

Oh, how it jarred upon his heart, that mirth.



How strangely we are all mixed up in this world, one man is groaning in agony, while numbers are indulging in festivity within a few spaces ; the murderer plunges his knife into his enemy's heart, a wall only, perhaps, divides him from the little child who is saying its evening prayer to God ; the young beauty decked in jewels, stands looking at the lively image which her glass gives back to her, smiling in consciousness, thinking of the conquests she will make that night—at but a short distance away, a poor worn-out girl (may be she is younger than the one full of health and beauty) lies pale and gasping for breath, dying after long suffering.

Time goes on, and very quickly to him who has so little of it left.

Yes they are gone the hours, the four and twenty, all passed, but well passed ! in prayer to God !

No culprit, however guilty ever knelt before His throne in vain ; the bitterest trial ever given to man, may be softened by one word of earnest prayer.

Who knows how many countless angels smiled as Antonio fought the battle between the desire of an earthly life, and that of the spiritual and everlasting one.

Who knows what love there was in the Saviour's face, as Antonio rose from his knees and said, "Oh Lord, thy will be done."

The priest came, he found Antonio calm and collected; and shortly afterwards the soldiers arrived to take him away. They pass the citadel; and now they have reached the place of execution, which lies at a short distance beyond it. There are four other men besides Antonio to undergo the same fate, and five scaffolds have been prepared for the whole.

He is to be the last; one by one they are fetched away, they mount the scaffolding, and stand whilst an iron ring is tightened round their throat until it chokes them.

With the four all is over; Antonio only remains!

## CHAPTER XII.

## A GLIMMER OF HOPE.

TUESDAY morning, a little before nine, Carlo and Rosa took a carriage down to the office, where they hoped to find the Austrian employé. He came strictly to his time at nine o'clock; they found him an obliging good-hearted man, quite ready to listen to their request for his assistance, and willing to give it as far as lay in his power to help Antonio Montara.

"I have known him many years," he said, "and a better or more peaceful man does not live. Do not distress yourself, I beg," he continued, as he saw the agitation, under which poor Rosa was suffering. "All will be right in a short time I have no doubt, Count Durstein although a severe man, will not refuse to listen to reason, and I assure you when once he is certain of your brother's

innocence he will instantly give an order for his release."

Rosa's looks brightened at the comforting words.

"Oh bless you! may God bless you!" she said, "and will you write us something that we may take to Baron Durstein?"

"No, I will go with you myself, wait one instant and I shall be ready."

They went altogether, therefore, to the large palace occupied by the governor, and to their anxious inquiries for him found that fortunately he had not left the house.

They were shown into a large spacious apartment full of splendid furniture, the walls hung all round with portraits of the Baron's ancestors, his own finishing the line, and taken evidently when he had been in his jovial mood; the picture of a young and pretty lady in modern dress occupied the place by his side, that of his wife most likely, but Rosa looked not at it, the Baron's only drew her attention.

This she did look at, long and earnestly, to see what chance there might be of exciting his pity.

The bland smile told nothing, although it raised Rosa's hopes; it was a mask which hid the true nature of that hard, severe man.

The Austrian employé, Mr. Berger, sent in his

card to the great man, requesting that he would favour him with an interview as soon as possible, as it was a matter requiring the greatest speed and of the utmost importance about which he wished to consult him.

The servant brought him an answer that the Baron would be happy to receive Mr. Berger as soon as he should have finished signing some official documents.

So they sat together quite silent, Rosa and Carlo, feeling little inclination to carry on a conversation, and Mr. Berger, full of compassion for them both, thought it wisest and kindest not to disturb them.

They had not to wait very long, although it seemed an age to them.

The servant returned to the room to say, that the Baron was disengaged and would see Mr. Berger.

"Come with me both of you at once," said the kind employé, "there is no time to stand upon ceremony."

Rosa and Carlo rose, and they all followed the servant into Baron Durstein's private apartment.

He sat at a table covered with papers, and although there was not that cruel, unrelenting expression on his face, that it had worn when

Antonio Montara stood before him on his trial, still it was not the good-humoured man which his portrait had led Rosa to hope she should see, the face was severe and searching in its expression.

He bowed politely, requested them to be seated, and turning to Mr. Berger, "What can I do for you, Sir? We are much pleased with you, we have heard of your promptitude in helping to throw light upon this rascally affair that has happened."

Rosa's heart leapt as he spoke the latter words, her brother's cause was in good hands she felt.

"I am here my lord, to ask you to revoke the sentence of Antonio Montara, because I can prove to you that he is innocent of the charges brought against him."

The Baron frowned, "Sir, Mr. Antonio Montara was taken into custody with a large leaden-headed stick, which must have been used for the purpose of creating a disturbance, he also refused to deliver himself up when commanded to do so by one of his Majesty's officers."

"We must make a little allowance for a man who knew himself to be innocent, and who did not of course like the idea of being shut up in a

prison ; besides, for some time past he has been very ill, and that stick of which you speak, was taken out by him to be used as a means of assistance, should his strength give way on going out for the first time since his recovery."

"Do you know him? Are you prepared to prove this?"

"I am my lord."

The frown remained on the brow, the eye looked searchingly at the speaker.

Mr. Berger continued, "I have known Mr. Montara many years, I first became acquainted with him shortly after his arrival at Milan, when he founded a college for the education of a certain number of boys, and which he has so well directed ever since."

"Have you ever visited at Mr. Montara's Sir?"

"No, although there has been a great cordiality and friendship between us, I have never been inside his house. He informed me in the commencement of our acquaintance, that much as he would have liked to invite me to pay him a visit that he dared not do it, that his position as a director of a college for the education of Italian boys, obliged him to conform to the prejudices of their parents, and should he admit an Austrian to his house

that they would to a man withdraw their patronage from him."

"Very plausible," the cynical smile followed, "you were satisfied 'of course," the last words were spoken in a tone as if he the Baron should not have been.

"I was, my lord, nor have I ever had cause to withdraw my good opinion of Mr. Montara in any way. I can assure you that I know no more peaceful subject of the Emperor's than he is. Under all circumstances, I have ever found him disapprove of these disturbances, which at times have unsettled the country."

Mr. Berger paused, the Baron bowed his head to signify to him to proceed.

"I will now lay before your lordship the proofs of Mr. Montara's innocence, and this paper which I give into your hands contains a copy of the will of a certain Count Ernesto, who was a great friend of Mr. Montara's father, and who on the confiscation and sale of his friend's property bought numerous things to present to the son as remembrances of his family, I fortunately had this copy placed under my charge by one of Count Ernesto's executors on his leaving Italy for a long journey into the East. The leaden-headed stick which you have mentioned was amongst these articles, and I



am prepared to swear that it was the habit of Mr. Montara to use it in his walks in the country. Signora Romelli who is his sister, will be able to tell you more about it for she and her husband live at the college with Mr. Montara."

"Signora I shall be happy to hear what you have to say," said Baron Durstein, turning to Rosa with rather a softened face.

Poor Rosa, she was so anxious, so excited, her tongue almost refused to obey her will. Nevertheless in a hesitating tone, and while trembling violently, she contrived to bring forward as many circumstances as she could, to prove her brother's innocence. When speaking of his illness, and her having requested him herself to take the stick, she became very earnest, and as she finished and placed before the Baron the numerous testimonials to her brother's character which Carlo had procured, the tears were swimming in her eyes.

Baron Durstein took the papers, looked over them coolly and collectedly, without the least change of countenance; then as he laid them on the table before him, he said, "It would appear, although circumstances were very much against Mr. Montara, that he was innocent of having assisted in the

late attempt at a disturbance, I will therefore give an order for his release."

No word of sorrow for the mistake ; calmly and coldly he wrote out the order, and then gave it to Rosa.

She murmured her thanks, and took it.

Oh, how tight she held it, the little paper that was to snatch Antonio from the jaws of death ! Her breathing how quick and short it was, how flushed her cheek !

The carriage in which they had come was waiting at the door. Into it she bounded, the paper, the blessed paper, with her hand closed tightly over it. Carlo followed, after wringing the hand of Mr. Berger ; the steps are up ; the door is closed, away they dash, as fast as two fresh horses can carry them.

"Can he not go faster?" said Rosa. "Tell him we will pay him any money he likes to ask."

"My dear girl, he is going as fast as he can ; I have promised him a handsome reward ; we shall be in time, try to compose yourself."

The driver went on at a furious pace ; an old woman looked up in frightened wonder, as the wheels of his carriage brushed by her clothes ; and

little children left their toys to fate, and ran fast out of the way.

It was some distance to the citadel, but the horses were swift and strong.

On they tear along the road, the coachman lashing away when the animals seemed disposed to flag ; sharp round the corner they turn, and—

Crash goes the lamp of a carriage in front, and down falls one of the horses who had been dashing onward with Carlo and Rosa.

“ *Che Diavolo !* cannot you mind what you are after ?” roared the driver of the carriage with its broken lamp.

“ Never mind, never mind, my man, I will pay for your lamp,” cried Carlo, putting his head out of the window, “ lend us a helping hand to get the horse up as quickly as possibly, for it is a matter of life and death, which makes us go at this rapid pace.”

“ Oh well, that alters the matter a little ; here my boy,” he continued, placing his horses’ reins in the hands of one of the crowd, which had began to collect about them, as he got off his box, “ here, just look after my horses.”

“ Oh dear ! oh dear ! we cannot go on !” cried Rosa, from inside the carriage. “ Oh, we shall be too late ! too late ! take me out ! let me run there !

Oh, for pity sake do! what will become of Antonio!"

"Hush, poor dear, be tranquil; those two men understand their business well, the horses will soon be up. Courage, courage! in a few minutes we shall be off again, and then there is not very far to go."

The horse is on his legs again; the driver jumps upon his seat; Carlo flings a gold piece to the other man, and they are off once more.

Carlo tries all he can to soothe Rosa's agitation. He talks in vain, he cannot still the beating of that heart. He also begins to dread what may happen. Each minute is becoming precious; the time mentioned on the placard is drawing near. He longs to take out his watch and look, but he dare not for fear of Rosa.

Now they go on smoothly enough; the street is broad, and they meet with no further obstacles.

"The citadel, there! there it is! I thank God!" exclaimed Rosa, as she saw it.

They pass it; and now the carriage drives up to the door of the place in which we left Antonio.

"Let me out! let me out!" cries Rosa, shaking the door; people stare, and wonder what is the matter.

Before the coachman can get down, she has opened the door herself; and not even her husband, none can stop her in her eagerness.

She pushes past everyone. "My brother, the prisoner, Antonio Montara, where is he?" she exclaimed as she entered.

The soldiers look at her, and do not answer; they do not understand her.

Past them, she goes into the large waiting room.

Empty! he is not there!

On, out into the open air again; wild with desperation she proceeds, the paper held out, as if to speed its transit. She starts; there are five scaffoldings before her; one, two, three, four men hang there.

And a fifth, her brother! strangled, quite dead.

There she stands immoveable, her eyes seem starting from out their sockets, one hand still holds forth the paper.

"Rosa! Rosa!" calls out Carlo, as he reaches her. She takes no notice, she moves not, she remains with a stony look fixed on what had once been her brother.

"Rosa!" again he cries; he shakes her; oh it is too horrible! that young face to look like that.

She laughs, such a wild unearthly sound. She, that fresh happy young girl of a few days before, is raving mad !

With great difficulty they took her away from the frightful sight before which she had been standing ; and when they had induced her to go into the room again, and had seated her down upon a chair, Carlo took her hand, spoke softly to her, and tried to bring her back to reason.

She looked at him inquiringly ; she did not know him, and then she put her hand out, in which she still firmly held the paper.

For a time she became tranquil, and with a vacant stare asked one and then another, "where am I? what have you brought me here for?" Then she seemed to remember what had happened, and she raved in an incoherent manner, always however holding the paper tightly in her hand. Again she would change, and in the most piteous tones, intreat that they would save her brother.

It was a sight to bring tears to the stoutest heart.

Baron Durstein would he have stood by unmoved, could he have seen the wreck caused by his hasty judgment ?

So Carlo took her home, back to the college.

What a sad future for him.

“Will she recover?” he asks himself.

Time only can answer.

Thus ended one of those numerous tragedies which had their origin in Austria's tyranny. For many days they continued to execute five, six, and sometimes seven men daily; and those who walked past the citadel might see the bodies exposed there to view for several hours. The townspeople although entirely exculpated from having any hand in the late disturbance, were made to suffer just as if they had been guilty parties. Their town remained in a state of siege; the early closing of the cafés and private dwelling houses, still continued in force, the theatres were shut up, and altogether Milan was about as dull a place, full of as gloomy a population as could well be imagined.

So ended the carnival of the new year of 1853, which was to have been so gay—in dull silent discontent.

Carlo watches well and faithfully, that once bright happy girl. In vain he looks for some dawn of reason in that shattered mind; it comes not; and although poor Rosa is generally harmless, at times she has attacks of wild ravings, which wear out her bodily strength, and leave her fearfully exhausted.

The lovely face grows thin and pale, the sweet smile, once so gentle and so confiding, never does it light that vacant countenance. Day after day, by degrees, the footsteps of the poor afflicted girl become more languid ; the flower begins to droop, and in a short space of time its little life spins out its thread.

So calm, so quiet, like a baby going to rest did Rosa leave this lower world. Death claimed her as his own, and then only could she be at peace.

How well Carlo remembered the flower she had given him but a few months back, when she had been full of joy and health, how soon it had drooped its lovely head. How slight a thing will create great interest in us from its association. The little withered flower, he had kept it by mere chance between the leaves of a book, and now that she was dead, he took it out, looked on it almost lovingly, folded it carefully in clean white paper, and put it safely away.

That freedom for which he had panted was his ! but oh at what a dreadful cost ! Often there would rise up before him, his young wife as he had known her in her happy days, and then would follow all those fearful scenes which had brought her short life to such a painful close.



Milan, as can well be imagined, was now distasteful to Carlo, and he longed to leave it; but there were certain things connected with the affairs of his late brother-in-law, which required him still to remain there.

With all his sorrow at the recent tragedy, in which he had acted as a deeply interested spectator, Carlo could not help the rising of something like joy, as he felt himself free again. He rejoiced at the hopes of the future, even while he grieved over the fearful means by which they had risen within him.

Thoughts of Rachel filled his mind, which now no stern duty demanded, should be chased away. Hope grew with Carlo, for he nourished it; he made all things to agree with his wishes, and what he trusted he believed.

He saw himself painting with all his former spirit, and fame crowning him with laurels which he would lay at Rachel's feet. As time advanced, he fancied it brought with it wealth, which would enable him to present himself to her on more equal terms than when he had been the poor artist, and she the rich widow.

Oh man! man! when will you learn that the greatest riches you can offer to a true woman, is a

warm heart full of love for her, such as no gold can purchase.

Carlo mused, and built his castles in the air, like most such buildings, high and very rickety ; and as a stepping stone to begin to work out his fabric, he wrote to Rachel, giving her a full account of the late disastrous events. Mrs. Triebner was also remembered by him, and to her he penned a like epistle, winding up with many strong impressions of disapprobation at the severity and unjust treatment the Milanese had received at the hands of their rulers.

Foolish man ! Did he think his letters would pass the post without some official raising the seals, and taking a peep just to see their contents, to decide whether they were such as higher authorities might approve ? If he did, he made a strange mistake, for his closely written sheets went through the usual ordeal, and were afterwards consumed in the flames of a large fire, which had already performed the work of destruction on dozens of the like missives.

Lucky for him that they did not arrest him, for daring to find fault with Austria's hard cruel acts ; and then leave him in prison for months, nay perhaps for years, before they brought him to his trial, as had been done to many others.

The settlement of Antonio Montara's affairs being concluded, and the college given over into new hands, Carlo had nothing to keep him in Milan but the hope of receiving a letter from Rachel. So he waited, and waited, but the letter never came.

Finally, as length of time rendered the arrival of the longed-for epistle a very doubtful matter, Carlo determined that he would set off for Rome at once, leaving such directions at the post office for forwarding all letters which might be addressed to him there, as should ensure his not losing Rachel's letter, should it come at last. His glorious castle ! it began to tremble already ; and doubts of being able to win Rachel, even should he find where she was, crept in and threatened to destroy it.

In his disappointment, he even raved against women ; vowed they were all changeable alike, pretty butterflies, who passed their lives in fluttering about the world, thoughtless of the morrow, forgetful of the past, only living in the present.

He stops suddenly—how unjust he had been. Rachel, what a true kind friend she had been to him. How dare he liken her to that bright volatile insect ; (for man, when he condemns woman with one sweeping stroke of his tongue, is goaded to it by some real or imaginary neglect from some

one amongst them in particular.) Rachel so ready, so earnest in doing good, so thoroughly unselfish.

The blood rushed up to his face with shame at what he knew to be so unjust. His friend she had ever been, and that he felt she would still remain as long as he continued to deserve it, however hopeless any stronger tie might be. If she had received his letter, his heart—when left to its better feelings, the anger of disappointment no longer pressing upon it—told him she would reply to it.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## THE EXPULSION OF THE SWISS FROM MILAN.

THE time was drawing near for Carlo's departure from Milan. He had already left the college, and removed to the Hotel de Suisse for the few remaining days he was to pass in the town.

Milan was as gloomy as ever; each man looked distrustfully on his neighbour; and the bad weather helped to heighten the sombre aspect of affairs.

The Austrians, after much inquiry, discovered that the people who had entered Milan and had created the late disturbance, were chiefly natives of Switzerland belonging to the Canton of Ticino. In order, therefore, to have their full measure of revenge, it was determined by Austria that all Swiss residents in Lombardy, belonging to that Canton, should be expelled from the country; the poorer class having orders to quit in three

days, and any who had a business to dispose of, were given a few days longer for the final management of their affairs.

There were families who had lived so long in the country, that all their interests and their friends were there; yet innocent as they were individually, Austria called upon them to sacrifice all at a moment's notice, to satisfy her mean vindictive spirit.

How that strong sense of justice, which is so distinguishing a mark of the English character revolts from such acts—acts which make one doubt if some European governments, calling themselves civilized, have yet any right to do so. For to civilize, according to our understanding of the word, is associated with kindness and courteousness. How the thrusting of innocent people out of house and home, in an inclement season, to be robbed, or may be to perish on their journey, can be reconcileable with the profession of christianity, we leave our readers to judge!

Certain it is that such *was* the case; and some day this harsh treatment of the Austrian Government will stand in the pages of history, amongst the most diabolical acts of cruelty ever practised by man.

Carlo rose early on the morning which had

been fixed for the departure of the poorer people of the Swiss of Ticino ; with a feeling of pity he looked out on the broad road covered with snow, growing thicker every instant from the countless white flakes descending out of the grey looking expanse over head, by which the sky was hidden. The wind was piercingly cold, and blew round the corner of the street with a mournful wailing sound, as if it also sympathized with the afflicted.

Past the hotel they went, some in pairs, others in larger numbers, and some alone. There goes a poor old man, dragging with difficulty a well used portmanteau, which contains all he possesses ; how nipped up and frozen he seems ; the white flakes all come flying in his face, and almost blind him, He fixes a last fond lingering look around him, as he totters along ; poor fellow, Milan had been his home so long, that he has outlived all his relations and friends in Switzerland far away ; and now he is turned out, a houseless wanderer, to seek a resting place in his declining years amongst strangers. How is he to find his way across the mountains in such weather ; who knows, poor old half worn out body, if there be strength enough remaining to go through the hardships which most likely will befall him ?

“ Poor old man ! ” exclaimed Carlo, a tear of

compassion moistened his bright blue eye, as he watched the poor fellow toiling, and saw the lines of age and care upon his face.

A girl came by just then, fresh and young, sobbing as if her heart would break. She has probably just parted from her lover; but she stops and wipes her eyes, as she draws near to the old man, her heart is full of sympathy for those who are called upon to suffer with her. He smiles, as she speaks to him words of comfort, and lends a helping hand to the portmanteau; for the poor girl has nothing but a bundle; and so the two trudged off together. Now comes a mother with a family of children. They have a little truck with all their wealth collected together on it, which they wheel along by turns. A husband and a sickly wife next leave their footprints on the snow; how anxiously he watches her pale face, and tries to wrap her shawl more closely about her.

“My God! I can look no more!” exclaimed Carlo, rushing from the window, “alas, poor people, how unjustly, how cruelly they have been treated!”

Still, however, they continued to pass in large numbers all through that day, the snow falling continually, and the wind blowing bitterly the



while. So many people leaving the town at the same time, every available conveyance was quickly taken up, the owners being able to ask any price they liked, as the demand for places was so much greater than the accommodation to be found. Some poor people, who either had not money sufficient to pay the high sums asked, or who came too late in the field, were obliged to walk for many miles in that Siberian like weather. Along the bleak, unsheltered road, many of these unhappy creatures, toiling on their way hour after hour, were robbed of even the little they possessed ; and heart-rending it must have been to see the quantities of poor people re-entering their country perfectly destitute. Some there were who never reached the land of their birth, but died half way from the severity of the weather, the want of food, or extreme fatigue.

“ Well, glad enough I shall be to leave this place,” said Carlo, as some new tale of distress was related to him, “ really it makes one’s blood run cold, to see such barbarism practised—”

“ Take care !” replied his friend, to whom he had spoken. “ It is not impossible for you to lose your life for those words.”

“ Oh yes, I know what they are capable of, the tyrants ! but I shall soon be without their reach.

Directly I can get some of my orders finished, which I intend executing in Rome, then I shall strap my knapsack on my back, and start off for England. There a man can say his life is his own, there he will be protected by just laws, there he feels that he is a man, that he can walk along fearlessly, gives his opinions openly, breathe in fact the true air of freedom."

Dear little Isle, what other land is like unto thee throughout the entire globe! mountains may be higher, scenery more gorgeous, climates more salubrious, where balmy breezes play around; skies may hang overhead more transparent, more intense and brighter in colour; but (and that little but is everything) there is no land where so much goodness, real happiness and comfort is to be found, as lies within thy boundaries.

Carlo had heard this; and so with his desire to find out Rachel, his motives for going to England were very strong. He weighed well the greater expenses which he should have to incur, and the difficulties of making his way in a place already so full of talent; but he determined that nothing should daunt him, and left Milan firmly bent on accomplishing his purpose.

Spring had again returned, and Carlo Romelli sat in the same room in Rome, looking out as he

had done two years before, on the self same trees. Their foliage as green as ever, waved backwards and forwards with the wind; the rays of the sun, fell across them with as bright a light, and all looked as when he had left it long before.

How strange to Carlo, after such numerous changes, seemed the unaltered prospect before him. His mind went over the several events which had happened, one by one; and he marvelled to find himself sitting there as of old, the artist still struggling for fame.

He takes up the brushes once more, and now he paints with freedom's touch. He is changed; there are lines now about his face, which tell of suffering and of sorrow; yet to our taste this gives a beauty to his face, a something for sympathy to lay hold upon.

Again, as of old, Count Ferris comes to while away an hour with his friend. He is just the same as ever; nothing appears to damp his high spirits, or rob his laugh of its fresh mirthful tones.

"Well, Carlo, I am glad to see you so happy with your painting again," exclaimed the Count, on one of these occasions.

"Yes, Ferris, I am determined to make myself

a name if possible ; and to do it I must go to England."

"I have no doubt that is the best place to rise in anything, if you have but pluck enough to stand up against reverses, and fight on until you conquer them ; however, a fair lady helps to draw you there, I fancy, my friend."

"She does, and I am proud to own it ; for unrequited or not, no man need be ashamed of loving such a woman as Rachel Graham !"

"I quite agree with you ; but is it not strange that you have never had any answer to the letter you sent her from Milan ?"

"Yes, I have thought over it much ; and sometimes I tremble, for fear any misfortune should have befallen her ; however, Mrs. Triebner has not replied either, so I try and console myself with the hope that my style of writing did not sufficiently meet the approbation of the Government, consequently they did not think it worth while to forward my epistles."

"Perhaps so ; why do you not write again though ?"

"No, I would like first to be able to do something better than that failure I perpetrated at Milan ; something to raise, rather than lower my reputation ; and if this succeeds, as I venture

to trust it may do, I shall start at once for England, and see what I can do there. Come and tell me how I am going on, will you?"

Count Ferris obeyed the request of his friend, and walked in front of the picture on which he was at work. It certainly was the very strongest proof of talent which Carlo had yet displayed; and the Count looked on it full of admiration.

"Beautiful! all spirit and originality."

"Ah yes, but then you are partial," replied Carlo with a sigh.

"No, my good fellow, I assure you, I would not be guilty of such mistaken kindness, as to overpraise your work."

"Then you think I may be able to redeem my character with it; oh, if you had only known what I suffered, when I read all the severe remarks my Milan painting drew forth from the English critics, the more hard to bear, because I knew how just they were; and then how bitterly I grieved to think that *she* should see my failure. Really at one time I could have dashed my brains out."

"Stop, stop, you were never so desperate as that; ah, well you nod your head, never mind, it is all past now."

The picture received its last touches; shortly

after this conversation, many friends flocked to the studio to see it; and the universal admiration it created, led Carlo to look forward hopefully to its being exhibited in London. It was shipped, and arrived safely at its destination, it was exhibited, and soon the papers began to notice it.

Eagerly Carlo read them, and as he did so, a flush of triumph spread itself over his face, the joy of success of late unknown to him was his again. He smiled more brightly than he had done for a long while, as paper after paper held out such strong hopes of a bright future for the artist.

Count Ferris was amongst one of the first to come and offer his congratulations to Carlo, on his having regained his lost ground. Throughout the higher circles in Rome also, he was beginning to be much sought after, becoming in fact what is called "the rage;" about the worst thing a young artist can become, just at the opening of his career. For he is apt to allow himself to be carried away by the praise he meets on all sides; and thus forgets that he is barely half way up the hill, and must toil on still for a much longer time, ere he can plant his flag securely on the top and call out victory.

Carlo's modesty, however, proved his safe-guard

in the present instance ; and all the praises which rung in his ear, only made him determined to work the more diligently. Count Ferris would have liked his friend to remain in Rome, and did his best to persuade him to do so ; he represented to him that in London, his would be a very different position from the one he now enjoyed ; that in the midst of such numbers of talented men, long established there, he might have greater difficulties to encounter in his profession than he could even imagine.

“Never mind, Ferris,” replied Carlo, “I am prepared to meet them all. To England I must go, I have set my heart upon it, so nothing will alter my intention, besides I cannot live here any longer ; where a man dare not say his life is his own ; but you will come also after I shall be settled and see how I succeed.”

“Yes, that I will promise you ; and I shall hope to see you prime friends with a certain charming little widow.”

“Ah, Ferris ! that is the one grief which clouds all my good fortune, the non-appearance of that letter.”

“Then why in the name of fortune don’t you write again ; as I have often urged you to do ?”

"No, not until I can appear before her in a better position than my present one."

"Oh pride ! pride ! have you not suffered enough already from that mistaken feeling ? Mrs. Graham is the last person in the world, I am sure, to care about such distinctions."

"Yes I know she is ; I allowed pride to stand in the way of my happiness, misery to myself, was the result, and now I think of it soberly, injustice also to that poor girl who is dead, although she never knew it ; and yet, with all my prospects, I am but the poor artist still, and she the rich widow, and of course she will have numerous admirers about her—already she may have seen one among them, more her equal than I am, who may have power to win her heart, ah well," a deep sigh, "I am born to be unfortunate I suppose."

"What, desponding again ! born to be unfortunate indeed ! many would give a good deal to stand in your position just now."

"Yes in my profession, I ought to be very grateful, very happy, yet if I lose her after all !"

"Write to her then."

"No, but I will go to England at once, endeavour to make myself a name worthy if possible of



her acceptance ; and then I will seek her, and be bold enough to offer it to her."

Numerous were the tempting offers made to Carlo Romelli to induce him to remain in Rome ; but firm to his purpose, he refused them all, and prepared himself for a final departure from his country to go and establish himself in a foreign land.

Letters of introduction to English people of rank and interest were given him in abundance, so that he should not be quite a friendless stranger in the country to which he was going ; and all his acquaintances who had ever been in England, spoke so loudly of the generosity of its people, of their truthfulness, and their thoroughly honest way of dealing with each other, and with strangers, that he longed to live amongst them. Then the liberty that every man enjoys there ; what a blessing *that* would be ! After all the troubles he had witnessed from tyranny, nothing could be more inviting.

So he went ; Count Ferris took leave of him at Civita Vecchia, where he embarked in a steamer which would take him as far as Marseilles.

He is in England prepared to fight for fame.

His means at first only permitted him to engage very poor apartments, in an out of the way part

of the town; there he worked and worked, from the first ray of light faintly ushering in the day, until the very last of them melted away in twilight.

Many a sigh had passed the lips of Carlo, when his eye wandered round the meanly furnished room, and when he sought relief from out the window, the prospect being composed of the grey roofs of the houses, the red chimney pots pouring out their volumes of smoke, ascending up into a sky of the same neutral tint, he found there only change, but nothing more enlivening than those objects about him. To an Italian also, the grave faces of the Englishmen, as they hasten through the streets, as if they had all the cares of the nation on their shoulders, present a great contrast to their own way of loitering along laughing, and just taking things as they come, with that easy indolence they owe in a great measure to their climate.

Carlo at first thought that some great event was on the eve of taking place, when he watched crowds of people hastening on, and saw men, when they met, so intent upon their conversation. By degrees, however, he began to find that this was the everyday manner of the people, and then he for

the first time learnt what was the meaning of doing things in earnest.

At first he pined after the deep blue sky, the pure atmosphere, and all the objects of beauty in which Italy abounds : but habits get rusty, and wear out for want of using, so soon the heavier air began to suit him as well as his native light one, and the customs of the people became by slow degrees his own.

Industry, which will always meet with its reward in the long run, in Carlo's case, backed by very superior talent, brought him up that hill of difficulty which ever forms part of the road to the mastery of the arts, at a much more rapid rate than he had ventured to anticipate.

The letters of introduction which he had presented, had in the first instance paved the way for him ; and after some months of labour, he found his circumstances so much improved, that he changed his abode to more comfortable quarters. His studio now became quite an elegant reception room, where he contrived to cluster together numerous kinds of valuable and beautiful articles ; here he could work with pleasure, and when tired with his occupations, rest his looks on pleasant combinations, offering nothing distasteful to his artist's eye.

Fortune favoured him ; yet still that old feeling of pride prevented him from seeking Rachel ; the warning voice of the past seemed hushed to silence. Some would say that this was a proof of want of love on his part ; and yet, in his disposition, it helped to show how highly he valued her ; nothing in his eyes was good enough to offer her, and so he waited and waited.

Summer again, an English summer broke suddenly upon Carlo and the rest of London. The exhibition at the National Gallery threw open its doors ; and, as is often the case, one picture gained the admiration of the town before all others, and was declared the gem of the season.

There it is in the second room, facing the entrance, a crowd round it eagerly discussing its merits. It is a highly finished and beautiful female figure of " Italia," striving to touch the tree of liberty, which hangs above her reach ; there are a few broken steps before her, but she hesitates to attempt them, for they are covered in many places with the marks of blood. On one side, some wild ferocious spirits are trying to urge her to mount them, whilst on the other, a little boy with his upturned cherub face, is drawing her away, and pointing to a path longer, yet more secure and free from stains. The two parties who have sought to

draw Italy from its bondage, are thus expressed. The one, desiring nothing but the consummation of its wishes, caring little what bloodshed or injustice might have procured it ; the other, truly patriotic, and therefore noble, disdaining anything unjust, mean, or cruel to gain its end. Italia's face in the picture, looks with something approaching to horror on the malignant spirit by her side, whilst her attitude shews that she has allowed the sweet innocent child to draw her slightly towards him.

The catalogue contains no such description of the picture as we have given. Against the number is merely written, "Italia"—by Carlo Romelli.

So he became the star of the season ; was sought after, and soon sold the picture which had done him this good service, for many hundreds of pounds.

"Now I will seek Rachel !" he exclaimed, "night and day until I find her ; oh, if she will but love me, how richly I shall be rewarded for all my sufferings."

He sought, he asked, and after much trouble, he discovered all that he required to know, her history during the past two years and a half ; and her present abode.

The night following the day on which he had

been given all this information, was past in feverish anxiety for the morrow. That morrow! how he longed for daylight, how he wished that time would move more quickly, that he might go to Rachel and know his fate.

The morrow came—it was bright and fair—he took it as a good omen, and he walked forth radiant with hope, with pride, with love.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## F R I E N D S   O F   O L D .

A FEW months before the success of the "Italia," in a large, handsomely furnished dining-room of a house in Harley Street, there sat a party of three—a lady, and two little girls.

The lady read out, in a clear but sweet voice, a short portion of the life of Alfred the Great, from Mrs. Markham's History of England; and the little girls of about seven and eight years old, listened attentively. The voice stopped, the book was closed, "And now, my dears, bring me your sums," said the lady.

"Oh, dear me, I hate sums! do let us hear some more about Alfred; so interesting it was, how he went into the camp of the Danes. Edith, were you not afraid that he would be discovered?"

"No, child!" (Edith had one year's advantage of the little girl who had just spoken, and so of

course she thought herself a woman) "I knew all about it; for I read on beyond that to myself last Saturday, when the lessons were finished, and you were busy in the court-yard teaching Charlie to stand on his hind legs."

"Come, my dears, bring me your sums, or dinner time will be here before the lessons are done."

"Oh, dear, kind govey, just a little more about Alfred," pleaded again the younger child.

"No, my dear, there has been enough of history for to-day; and the sums must not be neglected, they are just as necessary for you to know, you must endeavour to learn what you do not like, when it is for your good, as cheerfully and as thoroughly as you do that which pleases you."

The little girl submitted, and the lady patted her kindly on the head, smiling the while with a benevolent gentle look, in approbation of her obedience.

The small fingers were soon spread out on the table, counting out the numbers, and a little whispering voice followed along with them.

The unpleasant task was done, and slates and books all cleared away; the table laid, and all three sat down to dinner together.

"Dear me, see, it rains quite hard," exclaimed



the younger little girl, before she had eaten many mouthfuls ; “ and now we cannot go to the Polytechnic this afternoon. Edith appears to care very little about it, she eats her dinner just as usual.”

“ To be sure, Annie ; for I know if we don’t go to-day, we shall to-morrow, or the first fine day, and all the things they do there are the same every day.”

“ Yes, but I want to go at once, is it not provoking, govey ?”

“ I think, my child, that Edith’s way of viewing the matter is much the wisest ; so try and be less impatient, darling.”

She looked so kindly on the child as she spoke, for if the elder one was far easier to manage, and less likely to get into trouble, the impulsive, warm nature of the younger found its way soonest to her heart. Not that she ever shewed this preference, she was too just for that, and too well aware what an injury such a thing might be to both of them.

The dinner finished, the table was cleared ; and then the lady, with a child on each side of her, sat down to tell them little stories, so as to endeavour to make up to them for their deferred pleasure. Still it rained, and the light of the short day (for it was winter) faded away unusually early. Then

the lady rose, tied on a plain straw bonnet, and folding round her small figure a large warm cloak, she kissed them and said good-bye.

“Oh, Mrs. Graham, pray do not go in the rain,” said Edith, “papa will soon be home, and then he will take you in a coach.”

“No thank you, dear, I am well covered, and I have strong boots ; learn your lessons well both of you for to-morrow, and I hope it may turn out fine enough to go to the Polytechnic.”

She went, the rain all pattering down upon her umbrella ; thus Rachel Graham returned to her home.

And what kind of home was it? Two little rooms on a second floor of a house in a short street turning out of Oxford Street. Clean and neat enough they were, but much of the furniture was of that worn threadbare kind, so usual to lodging houses, and to which one or two new articles gave a still greater appearance of shabbiness. Rachel removed her wet clothes, hung them up to dry, and then seated herself down to work.

There is the same calm gentle face ; the slight figure is maybe a little thinner, but otherwise, Rachel Graham is unchanged in outward appearance from the time when we last left her two years ago.

In dress, however, there is a change; for while everything she wears becomes her, and is of scrupulous neatness, the materials are of the most unpretending kind, such as Mrs. Graham, the rich widow, could hardly have worn.

But Rachel Graham is the rich widow no longer, she is only a solitary woman earning her daily bread; known by very few; and living her quiet life unheeded by the thousands who would have willingly followed and thronged about her in the days of her prosperity.

Alas! with a few exceptions such is the power of wealth, that it draws the multitude even if they do not benefit by it, only that they may feast their eyes upon it; take it from the hands in which it rested, and they drop away one by one, leaving the dispossessed to the consolation of a little band of true friends.

And surely these are enough to comfort anyone whom sudden reverses have overtaken. Who would regret the loss of those, whose professions of friendship had no true foundation.

So thought Rachel as she worked quietly by the fire with a smooth brow, and a look of contentment which a good conscience had ever kept undisturbed.

Yet Rachel had felt the desertion of some in her

changed circumstances ; and had grieved over the ruin of the good opinion she had formed of them. Still there were those who clung to her more closely than ever ; those who were ready and anxious to give her those comforts she could no longer enjoy. But that gentle enduring nature was full of independance as well ; and when her agent had suddenly failed and left her almost penniless, she had made up her mind to work for her livelihood, and accept pecuniary favours from no one.

Mr. Hartley had come forward in the kindest way, on the first knowledge of the bad state of the affairs of Mrs. Graham's agent, to offer his advice and assistance. This was gladly accepted by Rachel, for when the discovery had been made of how matters stood—after a brilliant entertainment given by the agent, when he took the opportunity of absconding and leaving numbers in poverty from his dishonesty and extravagance—she was so stunned by the unexpected change, that she stood in need of a kind adviser.

Every effort was made by Mr. Hartley, in conjunction with some of her other friends, for Mrs. Graham's interest ; but the greater part of her husband's large fortune was gone, and all they could save from the wreck, had been a paltry

thirty pounds a year. The agent had been putting her off from day to day about her property, until the crisis of his unjust prosperity came upon him ; and when he found himself obliged to seek safety in flight, her affairs still remained unsettled. Rachel Graham with only thirty pounds a year had now to put down all those luxuries which she had before innocently enjoyed. More than this, she had to look out for some means by which she might increase her income sufficiently to live in a quiet humble way. Many offered her those pecuniary means which she needed, in the kindest and most delicate way, but all received a grateful though decided refusal.

Mr. Hartley at last hit upon a plan by which he might be useful to Mrs. Graham, without her being under painful obligations to himself ; it was a proposition that she should become the governess of his little girls.

This Rachel joyfully accepted, for pride had no part in her character beyond that noble kind which makes people rely upon their own efforts for support, in preference to a dependance on others.

So the thing was speedily arranged, and Rachel became the daily governess of Mr. Hartley's

children. Thus it is that we found her fulfilling the office of instructress in Harley Street.

"Will you have your tea, ma'am?" said a voice at Rachel's elbow, the possessor of which had walked quietly into the room.

"Is it late? yes, if you please, Mrs. Jones, I am quite ready."

The landlady brought in the tray with one cup and saucer, the teapot, the bread and butter and a small bright kettle which she placed on the fire.

"There!" she exclaimed, as she finished her preparations for her lodger's meal. "See, here is a letter for you which I hope may give you an appetite, the postman gavé it to me just as I was wondering why you had not rung for the tea things."

"Thank you," then to herself in a low tone, "why dear me, yes surely it must be from Mrs. Triebner."

Rachel trembled a little as she opened it, and her cheek flushed slightly; for she had had no news of any of her friends at Milan, since she had received Carlo's and Rosa's wedding cards; a long silence for which she had been unable to account, and which had brought a sigh at times, and pain-

ful thoughts that the old adage "out of sight out of mind," was working in their case.

The letter, which to Rachel's unspeakable delight was dated from St. John's Wood, ran as follows :—

" My dear Rachel,

" You will not wonder at the long interval which you have passed without receiving even a line from me, when I explain to you how it has happened. I left Milan very suddenly ; at the call of a sick brother at Madeira, shortly after Rosa's marriage with Mr. Romelli. When arrived in the island, I found my poor brother in a sad state, and requiring all my attention. Still I did contrive to snatch a few moments from his bed-side to write you a few lines, which I directed to the care of your agent. I rather wondered why I had not received an answer from you, and had I thought of writing to Mrs. C— to make inquiries, I might have been enlightened at once ; but my poor brother grew so rapidly worse, that I could not leave him an instant, and at last I had the pain of seeing him sink completely. Then came a host of preparations for leaving Madeira, which took up my time so entirely, that it prevented me from trying the chance of another epistle. Mrs.

C— has now explained to me the reason of my letter to you not having been received ; she, at the same time, has acquainted me with all the misfortunes you have gone through, and with what strength of mind and cheerful resignation you stood up against them. I always knew that you had a fund of this sort of thing for an emergency, and so what I heard only pleased, but did not surprise me—I intend coming to see you the day after to-morrow, when I hope you will obtain a release from your occupations, so that I may have you all to myself ; till then I reserve everything I have to say to you.

“ Your very sincere friend,

“ JANE TRIEBNER.”

A pleasant letter was this to Rachel, nevertheless it filled her with all kinds of conjectures. Not a word about the whereabouts of Carlo and Rosa. Were they still in Italy ? or were they—her heart beat quicker she could not help it—perhaps in London ? A little more than a day and then she would know, so she must wait patiently.

The tea remained untasted, so busy had Rachel been with her thoughts ; and thus the landlady found her on entering to clear away.



“Lor! why you have not taken anything, maam! I hope the letter aint a sad one?”

“No, Mrs. Jones,” and Rachel smiled, “it is on the contrary a very pleasant one—a communication from an old friend, about whose long silence I had felt very anxious. And now she is coming to see me the day after to-morrow; I must get a holiday to receive her, and you must use your cooking talents in honour of the occasion.”

“To be sure, maam, when does she come?”

“She has not mentioned the hour, but it will be early I have no doubt, now mind you try to excel yourself with the dinner, for my friend is a foreigner, a German lady who is a very good judge of all these sort of things.”

“Oh if she be a foreigner, I suppose she will expect frogs and snails, and such like nastiness.”

“No, my good Mrs. Jones, she will be better pleased with a plain wholesome English repast, such as I know you can well prepare for her; although frogs are not to be despised, and are anything but nasty let me tell you. For the goodness of the snails, however, I cannot vouch, a dish patronised in Italy rather than in Germany I believe.

"God bless you my dear!" exclaimed Mrs. Triebner, as she seized Rachel Graham round the waist, and gave her a hearty kiss, early on the morning of the day she had fixed for her visit.

"Dear, good friend, I am so delighted to see you! the time of absence has been long—very long to me."

"Ah yes, poor child, I know, I have heard it all, never mind, Rachel, you are a brave little woman, I admire you."

"Why," said Mrs. Graham, laughing, "I have done nothing to call forth such high encomiums; only just what necessity obliged me—found a means of support."

"Oh, yes, I know you, you will underrate the strength of mind you have shewn of course—really though, it was very lucky that you fell in with that Mr. Hartley, the night of the fire at Mayence; from what Mrs. C— says, he is a very good sort of a man, and not the least inclined to interfere between you and his children; thus making your office a less unpleasant one than is often the case."

"Oh yes, he is a really kind good-hearted person, and never disapproves of any of my plans for his little girls. I am sure I ought to be very glad and happy at having so little to contend

against, in my changed circumstances ; and you, during this time, you have suffered misfortune in the loss of your brother, poor Mrs. Triebner how it must have grieved you, watching by him so long in vain."

" Yes, it was hard, dear, to bear ; I had hoped he would outlive me, but I have no right to repine. God's will is always for the best, although sometimes our earthly natures prevent us from seeing it."

" Well, I am glad to find you feel thus, for it cannot fail to bring peace to you, as it does to all who are impressed in the like manner, when under any trial—but Rosa and Carlo, where are they ?"

" Really I can tell you nothing more about them than you already know. I wrote to them shortly after my arrival in Madeira, and although I have been looking ever since for a reply, none has ever come ; however I do not wish to condemn them, for perhaps they wrote, and foolishly made some angry remarks about the Government, in which case their letter would be stopped very likely. Then there was some kind of a disturbance after I left, which made the authorities stricter than ever, they tell me."

" Yes, it was just slightly mentioned in the papers here, without any particulars ; for the

Austrians always endeavour to keep those things as secret as possible."

"I wish to goodness they were all three of them safe out of the place; for Antonio, however, there is no hope, for nothing would move him from Milan; but Rosa and her husband might be persuaded perhaps, and this is a much better field for his efforts in his art than Italy. Really the despotism under which they have suffered so long, those poor Italians, seems to have damped their ardour for those arts in which they were formerly so great, and it is only their natural cheerfulness which keeps from the eye of the stranger that discontent which is universally felt throughout the country."

"Indeed you are right, they are in a most unfortunate condition."

"Well, let us talk no more of them—I want to make some enquiries about this Mr. Hartley, do you often see him?"

"Yes, frequently, he sometimes comes home early to take a walk with the children and myself. I find him full of information, and a very agreeable companion."

"Rachel don't be angry with me, and think me an inquisitive old woman, but is there any tender feeling hatching between you?"

Rachel laughed, blushed slightly, and said, "Who could have put such a thing into your head?"

"Never mind who did it—tell me if it is the case; it would be an excellent thing, he is well off, the children are known to you and like you, and you find him pleasant."

"Dear Mrs. Triebner do not go match-making, I have no intention of aspiring to the title of Mrs. Hartley."

"Well, you know best my dear, they say though that he has made you an offer."

"I have never said so, therefore your informants must have only guessed it, for as I should certainly have refused him, he would hardly have been likely to talk about it."

"Rachel, that man has asked you to marry him; I see it in your face, hard as you strive to hide it. Now I think you are very silly—excuse an old friend—think of the advantage it will be to all parties. You may not love him, and all that romantic stuff! but if you do not, why you care for no one else I suppose," Rachel winced—"and with an honest friendship for each other, you may live very happily together."

Rachel was not a high flown enthusiast; but there was that beating in her heart which could

not agree with Mrs. Triebner's ideas. Good soul, she might have loved strongly in her days, at times even, she gave a glimpse of such a thing having once been ; but after a moment it would be lost again in her usual matter of fact bustling ways.

But Rachel had not lived long enough to bid little Cupid be quiet in her heart. He would roam about there, and make a void that wanted filling up ; and she had not at present felt that Mr. Hartley had power to fill it—so there was something of embarrassment in her answer.

“I think, dear friend, this is a subject on which no two people think alike. My first marriage you know was one of esteem only on my part, and as its duration was a period of peaceful contentment to me, you perhaps have a right to think me inconsistent in not venturing the trial once more. Still I would rather remain as I am, living in the imagination of love ; then marry again without feeling it, and thus crush my sweet illusion.”

“Why I really begin to think you must have had some old and unfortunate attachment long ago, which has made you believe that you can never love again.”

“You are mistaken in supposing that I hold such opinions ; on the contrary, I consider second love very possible. It is the fashion to talk of

first love and its superior strength over all others ; but I am much inclined to doubt this. I am apt even to believe that a second attachment often stands a chance of being far stronger than its forerunner, why ? because as years move on, while we are still in the prime of life, our feelings though they may shew themselves with less demonstration, are yet deeper and more lasting ; and fix themselves perhaps on more worthy objects from a maturer judgment."

"Brava, Rachel ! you are a little woman after my own heart after all, and for that piece of sense you have just spoken, I will leave you in the enjoyment of your dreams for the present. Still as I intend to remain with you some time, if your landlady can accommodate me with two rooms, I shall be able to watch Mr. Hartley and yourself ; and if I find him what he has been represented to me with regard to his personal character, and his feelings for you, why I shall do all in my power to persuade you to give up your dream and turn to the real."

"Well, there will be plenty of time for that Let us now think of the rooms ; I am so glad that you intend staying here, you will be such a comfort, dear friend, in my moments of loneliness, let us ring and hear what Mrs. Jones says about

it. No, stay, Mrs. Jones will be busy with the dinner, and will send up the girl who does the house work; we will wait therefore until we have finished that meal, when she will be able to come and talk to us herself."

The little dinner passed off very well, although poor Mrs. Jones had been in a great fluster, and had burnt her fingers several times, in her anxiety to please Mrs. Graham's friend, the foreign lady.

Rachel afterwards rung for the landlady, whose heart Mrs. Triebner gained at once, by her well-merited praise of the dinner, and when Mrs. Graham asked her about her vacant rooms, informing her of Mrs. Triebner's wish to occupy two of them; she was quite delighted at the prospect of having such a nice lodger.

"Two rooms, maam," Mrs. Jones replied, "on the first floor have just been vacated by a single lady; and they are at Mrs. Triebner's service should she approve of them."

They all went down together to look at them, and proving cheerful, clean and airy, Mrs. Triebner fixed at once on taking them, much to the satisfaction of both Rachel and the landlady.

Thus Mrs. Triebner became domiciled in the same house with Rachel Graham, and most of their evenings they spent together.



Wonders and conjectures were formed with reference to their friends at Milan, and Mrs. Triebner at last decided on writing again to them.

It was done, and they looked for some reply ; but in vain, the letter lay, perhaps lies now at the dead letter office at Milan.

The months flew fast away, the sun's rays became more frequent, and the busy bustle of the West end, the countless handsome carriages which rolled down the street in lines, told that the season had commenced, and that the Parliament of England was settling the affairs of the nation.

But in Harley Street, and the lodging house of Mrs. Jones, things went on just as usual. The little girls read Mrs. Markham, did their sums, and various other lessons just as before ; in play hours Rachel might still be seen, with one on each side of her telling them little stories, and only the absence of the fire, the lighter and brighter look of everything, told of the advance of time.

Mr. Hartley, whom the reader will by this time understand had already made an offer to Rachel, and had been refused, took courage at the cordiality of Mrs. Triebner towards himself, and began to premeditate a second attempt.

His evening visits to the two ladies became more frequent : Mrs. Triebner admired his strong

good sense, so she never failed to sound his praise in Rachel's ear each time his departing footsteps became faint in the distance, as they carried him away from them down the stairs.

Rachel listened quietly for some time, yet still unchanged in her determination. But as Mrs. Triebner began to work upon her kind feelings, to represent the unprotected state of those two little children, and the misfortune it would be to them should they fall into unkind and neglectful hands, her determination began to waver.

She communed with herself, and thought over all the obstacles which had separated her from the object of her deepest love. A sin to love there now, why refuse to add to the comfort and happiness of others?

Besides, according to her ideas, she might some day love Mr. Hartley. Rachel shook her head as this last thought entered her mind; Carlo had been, not the lover of her extreme youth, but of her full-matured judgment, her girlish fancies had been long forgotten when she met him, moreover he had done nothing to prove himself unworthy of her love, his pride was a failing, but one which did not affect his character in any way.

This is a great thing with a woman, She may love, and love on without any hope of being

united to the object of her attachment; even knowing also that he returns it not, there are some who can do this, life gives us instances occasionally of this woman's devotion. But (and remember we speak of a lover, not a husband, for there a woman's love clings through anything) pull down all the beautiful qualities with which fancy had decked her idol; shew it in its naked unworthiness plainly to her eyes, leave her no possibility of respect for it, and there are very few true women who do not suddenly feel a coldness creep over them. An instantaneous death of the fire of love, whose ashes can never be rekindled, at the bidding of that one, who before held an all powerful central position in the heart.

## CHAPTER XV.

## RACHEL'S DECISION.

RACHEL still remained wavering, hard pressed by Mrs. Triebner, who was anxious to see her the wife of Mr. Hartley before returning to Mayence; and that gentleman shewed, by degrees, a rising hope that a second hearing of his cause might obtain for him a more fortunate verdict.

Thus stood matters, when one day Mrs. Triebner signified her intention of going out for that one evening, begging Rachel to excuse her, and hoping she would not feel dull alone.

Alone and dull! hypocritical Mrs. Triebner, she knew it would be nothing of the kind; she was well aware that for many nights Mr. Hartley had never missed his evening visits to them; this was just what she wanted, to bring her first and what she quite intended to be her last speculation in match-making to a climax. In

general she did not approve of such things ; but she had made excuses to herself for what she considered the peculiarities of the case. Poor Mrs. Triebner ! she was only like the generality of mortals, who, when they do something contrary to reason, search high and low for extenuating circumstances ; something out of the way in *their* case, to hush their conscience.

The evening came ; and Mrs. Triebner dressed herself for her visit, kissed Rachel even more affectionately than usual, and left the house chuckling to herself, and wondering if on her return matters would have taken the course she wished ; she even went as far as an arrangement, in her own mind, of the wedding breakfast, and how she and Mrs. Jones would busy themselves about it. So much, in fact, was she taken up with the scheme, (which to do her justice, good woman, she believed to be greatly for Rachel's comfort and happiness) that many remarks addressed to her during the evening, received such strange and unlooked for answers, that her hearers smiled in wonder. Had she been many years younger ; she would have been at once set down for a young lady in love, so full of her bliss, that she could not even withdraw her thoughts from its remembrance.

Rachel, when her friend was gone, went rambling in imagination over her life from childhood. Many scenes long since swept away by time as records of the past, came each in turn clearly and brightly before her; and as she mused over them, she almost fancied herself a girl again; from which she quickly returned with a start to her present life and womanhood, as Mr. Hartleystood before her.

"Did I frighten you, coming up to you so unawares, Mrs. Graham?"

"No, I was only deep in the thoughts of past days, and forgot almost where I was."

"The recollections were pleasant ones, I hope?"

"Some were, others not so. Very few are those whose remembrances are all bright and happy ones—quite right it should be so—for all light and no shade, makes neither a fine picture nor a good character."

"True—I have known those from whom better things might have been expected, become, through their butterfly existence, thoughtless, volatile creatures. This is what I used to fear might some day be the fate of my little girls; but since they have found so kind a friend to guide and improve them I have become quite easy on that head."

A smile of thanks repaid him for his words; for Rachel knew he was a man who paid no

compliments, but told the honest truth, just what he thought without any embellishment.

For a little they talked in this way ; and then Mr. Hartley, observing that Mrs. Triebner did not make her appearance, inquired after her.

“ Oh, she has gone to some friends this evening,” replied Rachel, “ you must try and do without her cheerful conversation for one night ; and when you come again, you will most likely find her here, for it is seldom she leaves home of an evening.”

Mr. Hartley appeared as if he could easily do as he was bid ; nay, even a look of pleasure stole over his face at the communication ; not that he did not like Mrs. Triebner, on the contrary, he had a very friendly feeling towards her for many reasons. Her character also had in some respects a sympathy with his own ; and he had been quick-sighted enough to see that his addresses to Mrs. Graham would meet with the approbation of her German friend.

Now, however, as days and days passed away, the idea of venturing his chance again constantly intruded itself upon him ; and at last a feverish kind of anxiety to know what might be his fate a second time took possession of him. He had therefore determined to avail himself of the first

opportunity to speak again on the subject to Mrs. Graham. But this came not so soon as he had wished, Mrs. Triebner having been always present until this evening; that he almost blessed her for her absence, when he was informed of it by Rachel.

Glad, however, as was Mr. Hartley of this means of fulfilling his intentions, a kind of nervousness took possession of him as he looked at Rachel's figure, quiet, unruffled, unconscious.

"It must be though," said he to himself, "as I have made up my mind to try again, better the present time than any other; delay will only make me more anxious, perhaps more fearful of the result."

Then, without any preparation, he came bluntly to his object, and said aloud, "My dear Mrs. Graham, I once before made propositions to you, which met with a refusal, and perhaps you may think me bold and troublesome in pressing the subject on your notice again; but after a vain struggle to overcome the deep affection for you which has taken root in my heart, I venture, unworthy as I am, to beg you to reconsider the matter; to try if you cannot give me just some little shadow of hope? Stay," Rachel had looked as if about to speak, "do not reply until I have



fully explained myself. In your first answer, kindly and delicately you told me the reason of your refusal was the absence of that love which you considered requisite to form a happy union. Nevertheless, you gave me to understand, at the same time, that you should always look upon me with a sincere friendship; this feeling, I endeavoured to assure you might grow into love at last; but still your decision remained unchanged. This time I would urge again this friendship, and beg you to let it plead for me. I am a matter of fact man, living amidst people like myself, whose daily occupations lead, as do my own, to the real, and offer a strong barrier to the poetical, the imaginative; I am therefore unable to woo you with those passionate appeals which poets have clothed in such touching language. I am but a plain man, and with plain words only can I plead my cause. Yet, there are no feelings more genuine, more full of strength, than those now spoken to you in this simple language. Rachel, I love you! I can say no more—my happiness depends on you!" He took her hand—the passive little hand, there it lay; but very white it was, far more so than usual.

There was a dead silence, she remained quite quiet, she spoke not; and yet there was a strong

internal battle going on, a fight with desperate feelings, although accompanied with no fierce outward contest.

He let her be, he remained tranquil, watching for her answer. At last she slightly raised her head, and in a voice very low, but very sweet, she said the following words :

“Mr. Hartley, I have to thank you for this second compliment you have paid me ; for every woman is complimented when a good man speaks to her as you have done to me ; but in my first reply, I gave not all my reasons for giving you the answer which I did, there remains still another. It is perfectly true that my objections arose from the want of that feeling which I considered ought to fill the hearts of any two people, who are desirous of being one in all things until death may divide them ; but I suppressed the reason, why I was unable to feel thus towards you—I think now you have a right to know it, painful as it may be for me to tell it—I have loved another—deeply—a barrier was raised up between us, it became wrong to indulge in the feeling any longer. Friendship I have to offer strong, enduring—cheerfulness and contentment have not forsaken me—if such can make you happy, take them ! but love, I have it not to give ! it lies buried with the past !”

“ Rachel, I accept it, I shall always hope that some day the flame may rise again, not perhaps so ardent as it has been, but a steady tranquil little light—if not, why your friendship will be a blessing, and we shall be happy, believe me. My little girls also, how I rejoice for them ! such a mother does not fall to the lot of many !”

So it was fixed, she had bound herself to become the wife of Mr. Hartley, and when he left her that night, a sigh followed the destruction of that dream of love which had clung to her in spite of all its hopelessness.

Not long after the departure of Mr. Hartley, Mrs. Triebner returned from the friends where she had spent the evening.

Up the stairs she went, as quickly as her legs would carry her, all burning with anxiety to know the news, for a kind of presentiment caused her to feel sure that Mr. Hartley had made his second offer, although it did not go far enough to leave any certainty as to the results.

“ Well ?” said the good lady, hastening up to Rachel when she had entered the room.

“ Well !” said Rachel, as she tried to smile.

“ What have you said to him ?”

“ What about ! and who is *he* ?”

“ Oh yes, that is all very fine ; you know no

other *he* ever comes here ; and your blush tells me that you understand what about."

"Well, my dear Mrs. Triebner, you look so very knowing, that I must just answer you, I suppose, by informing you that I have accepted Mr. Hartley."

"That's right ! there now, there's a good hearty kiss for you, I am so delighted ! such a nice little wedding breakfast we will have. I wonder whether that Mrs. Jones understands anything about such things ? ah well, never mind, I can manage it ; the children I will look after them, whilst you are both away, and—"

"My dear friend, you are going on at railway speed ! why you would not even give me breathing time."

"To be sure not, so much the better. I hate long engagements ; and what is the use, if both your minds are made up."

"Yes," Rachel sighed, "I suppose it is quite fixed now."

"Dear me, my dear, don't be so doleful about it ; I declare your face looks more fit for a funeral than a wedding ; come, brighten up a little."

"I do not know how it is, I have taken the last step with the best intentions ; and yet, somehow,

I feel as if I had been wrong, that no good will come of it."

"Pooh! pooh! what stuff! every good will come of it I tell you, so chase away all those gloomy doubts. For my part, I cannot express to you how pleased I am that it is all arranged. He is a downright sensible, good man, and will take great care of you, and treat you very kindly; and he has plenty of means for the purpose; what more can you want in the name of fortune?"

Rachel was not disposed to explain to Mrs. Triebner what she had wanted; so they parted for the night, the one to think over the change a few hours had made to her, and the other to sleep contentedly in the accomplishment of her scheme.

Mr. Hartley returned home full of happiness, and kissed his two sleeping children with increased tenderness.

Still he was a man such as he had represented himself, quite free from any romance; and the following morning he might have been seen quite as busy, and as much engaged with his account books, and bills of lading, as if nothing out of the common had happened to him.

The outward appearance of things still remained unchanged; Rachel went every morning to her little pupils, and all the lessons went on as usual.

Mr. Hartley's evening visits to Mrs. Jones' lodgings, of course continued without interruption. The only difference was in the arrival of certain beautiful and costly presents, addressed to Mrs. Graham ; Mrs. Triebner took great interest in these, admired them, and discussed their merits ; while Rachel smiled quietly over the choice articles, which had no value in her eyes beyond the kindness which had assisted at their selection.

As summer began to approach, Mr. Hartley, backed by Mrs. Triebner, proposed that a time should be fixed for his marriage with Mrs. Graham. It is strange, although Rachel had cheerfully conformed herself to circumstances, with what dread she looked forward to the day which was to make her again a wife. However, having given her consent, she felt she should appear foolish and wavering if she threw any obstacle in the way of its completion.

Rachel thus became a passive agent in the hands of Mr. Hartley and Mrs. Triebner ; the former attending to the drawing up of a handsome settlement for his intended bride, and looking after the refurnishing of his house ; whilst the latter visited half a dozen shops a day, to procure the necessary articles for her friend's wardrobe.

Glad enough was Rachel to be left undisturbed ;

and when Mrs. Triebner, although it wanted two months to the day which had been fixed for the wedding, would call up Mrs. Jones to give her a host of directions for the making of certain sweets, which were to appear on the auspicious occasion ; she quietly slipped away, so that she might hear nothing about it.

May, bright smiling May, came in like a happy child, with a few passing tears sparkling on its fresh young face. The different exhibitions, one by one, opened their rooms to the critic, the amateur, and the artist.

“ Won’t you come with us to the Royal Academy ? ” said Mrs. Triebner to Mr. Hartley one evening, just as he was taking his leave for the night.

“ Certainly I will if you wish it. Is Rachel very fond of pictures ? ”

“ To be sure she is ! why she was the patroness of quite a little colony of half starved artists in Rome ; does she never talk to you about her fondness for paintings ? ”

“ No ; perhaps because she knows I neither understand, or care much about them ; so you like pictures, eh, Rachel ? ”

“ Yes, very much, Mr. Hartley. ”

“ Then I am sure I will see about purchasing

some at once ; thank you, Mrs. Triebner, for having given me the hint ; we will go to this exhibition to-morrow, and buy whatever pleases Rachel the best."

"Stop, Mr. Hartley, do not let Mrs. Triebner's remark induce you to purchase expensive things in which you are not interested."

"But I may some day learn their value. I have had no chance at present, you know ; for my life has been spent so entirely in a counting house, that I have had no time to think of works of art. Now, however, I intend to cultivate the taste a little, and then, may be, I shall love them as you do ; so we will go to-morrow, provided there is nothing to interfere."

"No nothing, I can tell you, your little girls will not even miss Rachel, for they are going to have a game of romps with their young friends in Cambridge Terrace."

"Yes, I remember, good bye then until to-morrow."

The morrow saw Mr. Hartley turning his steps away from his usual road, and about eleven o'clock he arrived at Mrs. Jones', where he found both the ladies ready waiting.

"I hope I have not kept you long," he said on shaking hands with both.



The two ladies assured him that they had only just put their things on, and then all three by mutual consent walked off to Trafalgar Square.

The rooms when they arrived were filling pretty fast, and in some places, round the chief objects of attraction, it was no easy matter to get a glimpse of the pictures.

"Let us go into the first room," said Mrs. Triebner, "I always like to begin at the right end of a thing, and then you do not get confused."

So they walked on and began at number one, and worked their way by slow degrees, sometimes standing before a picture for a long time, not always on account of its attractions, but to wait until some of the crowd had made way and had enabled them to proceed.

This took some time, but with patience they managed to get a tolerable idea of the works contained in the first room; from whence they proceeded to the second, and here Mr. Hartley drew their attention to a greater crowd than usual round one of the pictures.

"What can it be, pray do look, Mrs. Triebner, for every one seems trying to get a sight of it?"

"No use in looking at the catalogue, my dear Sir, because there are many in that spot, and ten

chances to one if you pitched upon the right—rather let us try and get a peep at the picture.”

Mrs. Triebner's advice was taken, and so they wedged themselves into the cluster of people pressed tightly together, moving forward every now and then, until they came very close to the object of attraction.

The people just in front were speaking in raptures of the picture, and this rendered them all more eager to obtain a glance, even Mr. Hartley became interested, in what appeared to call forth such general admiration.

A little more space gained by the advancement of those in front, and our party filled the desired place for which every one was striving, in front of the picture.

It has already been described to our readers, therefore it is only necessary to note the impression it makes upon them.

Mr. Hartley, in spite of his want of knowledge and his confessed lukewarmness about such things, is struck by the beauty of what he sees; Mrs. Triebner liking paintings, although knowing very little more about them than Mr. Hartley, thinks that she never saw a picture she admired so much.

And Rachel? Rachel stands spell bound! for she, with her knowledge of art, recognises the

touch, the style, the colouring, just as anyone knows the handwriting of his friend. Only it far surpasses any former work of Carlo's, and is quite different from the picture which came from Milan, and caused her to sigh over a lost hope.

Here hope was more than confirmed, and the heart of Rachel beat quickly with the most contending feelings, pride at his conquest, regret at the fate which had separated them, wonder as to where he was—a thought half of pain, half of pleasure, that he might even be in that very room—the sadness of memory, all were confused in her mind together. Yet the conviction that it was *his* work, was clear and unwavering; she needed not to ask to assure herself, she was as certain of it as if he had stood there and told her so himself.

Not so Mrs. Triebner, who neither had Rachel's knowledge, nor the deep interest which she felt in Carlo Romelli, she was some time before she learnt the fact, and when she did, it was the catalogue which disclosed it to her. "Why!" she exclaimed, "goodness me! Italia, by Carlo Romelli, there Rachel do you hear that?"

"Yes, I know," replied a quiet voice.

"How in the name of fortune?"

"Oh by the touch."

“Ah, I know nothing about touch, but who would have thought of coming here to-day and finding the picture most admired amongst the whole to be the production of Carlo. I wonder where he is? and Rosa, how proud she must be of him; we must try and find out something about them Rachel, for I never believe they intended to neglect us, there must have been some mistake.”

“Pray may I ask who this Carlo is, with whom you both seem acquainted, and whom it appears has just astonished the London world?” said Mr. Hartley, as they moved on to make way for other people.

“To be sure, he was one of Rachel’s protégés at Rome I believe; at any rate she knew him there, and when she was staying with me at Mayence, he happened to come to the town with a friend of his. So in a roundabout way which is too long to tell just now, I became acquainted with him, and he afterwards robbed me of a young charge of mine who was almost like a daughter to me.”

“Dear me, did he run away with her?”

“Oh no, everything right and proper, her brother who lived at Milan gave his consent, and I accompanied them there, where they were married.

Shortly after, I received a summons to the death-bed of a brother in Madeira ; and since that time I have quite lost sight of them."

"And Rachel, has she not heard from them either?"

"No, she is just as ignorant about their whereabouts as myself."

"What an ungrateful fellow!"

"No," interrupted Rachel warmly, who now took part in the conversation for the first time, "that I would stake my life on he is not!"

"Rachel is right," continued Mrs. Triebner, "any one who knew him would doubt his being that; but affairs have been so unsettled in Milan, and perhaps his letters were stopped by the rigorous Austrians."

"Ah, that might account for his silence, for I have a friend who was there not long ago, and who was very bitter about some of his letters, which he wrote home, never having reached their destination, on account, he supposed, of his having given a description of the sad state of affairs at Milan."

The walk home was chiefly enlivened by Mrs. Triebner's conversation, for both Mr. Hartley and Rachel were disposed to be silent.

The gentleman, quicksighted at all times, had

\*not failed to remark the sudden way in which Rachel had defended the artist; and wondered why she could be so interested in him.

And Rachel it will not be wondered at, felt all her truant thoughts directing themselves where her duty told her they ought not.

By degrees, Mrs. Triebner began to notice the silence of both her companions, and joked Rachel about her friend Carlo; even ventured to ask Mr. Hartley if he were jealous.

Little did she know what home thrusts she was making; nevertheless they were to a certain degree advantageous; for they made Mr. Hartley ashamed of himself, for disliking to hear his future bride speak so warmly about this unknown, and caused Rachel so far to exert herself, that even the shadow of a jealous feeling passed away from her intended husband's mind.

After Mr. Hartley had left the two friends, Mrs. Triebner could speak of nothing but Carlo, and was in a perfect fever to find out more about him. She took up the catalogue, and looked at the line on which his name and his production, stood side by side in black and white:—then all at once the thought struck her, that the residences of the contributors were all placed one after another in a long column at the end of the book.

Rachel knew this also, had thought of it besides.

She dared not look! she dreaded to find him near her!

“Why, Rachel!” exclaimed Mrs. Triebner, “he is absolutely here in London! see, there is the name of the street and all; I wonder if Rosa is with him? Of course she must be, she never would have allowed him to come away without her—we must go and hunt them up. Why, Rachel, you do not shew the least interest about them, why what is come to you?”

“Oh I am tired, dear friend, and so much staring at the pictures has given me a headache. I think I will go to bed—good-night.”

“Well you do look tired I must say—there go to bed and have a good sleep—I will tell Mr. Hartley that you are not well when he comes.”

“Oh no, I forgot—I had better not—he will think I am very ill perhaps, I will just go and bathe my head with some cold water.”

Rachel exerted herself so much during the evening, that never had she appeared more cheerful, and Mr. Hartley felt quite relieved and happy, and vowed he would not be so foolishly jealous again.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## THE POWER OF LOVE.

“ONE would suppose,” said the widower, as he returned that night on foot to Harley Street, “that I was a young boy to go and work myself up into a fit of jealousy, because she defended this unknown artist so warmly! and yet, she did say she had loved some one else—pshaw! now I am going to fall into a romancing mood. Ah Rachel—” a sigh—“will you ever love me I wonder? people may think that I am too much of an everyday, matter of fact man to know what love is, but people know nothing about it. Am I selfish to marry her I wonder, when she does not care for—love me I mean? No, not that I trust, surely if I were tried I could give her back her promise, were it for her happiness, and did not I think—hope—long to make her love me!”

That night Mr. Hartley was guilty of what



was a very rare occurrence with him, he looked at himself in the glass!

Love, how it makes us try to please in every way. Here was a person who for years had never given a single thought towards his outward man, beyond that neatness of dress so characteristic of his countrymen; scanning every feature, eyes, nose, mouth, to try and decide what Rachel might think of them.

Mr. Hartley was not a bad-looking man, and there was an open honest manly look about him, which even had he been such, would have caused pleasure to the beholder. However, he was anything but satisfied with his survey; he wanted flowing locks, large wondrous eyes, and the faultless Grecian outline; instead of the close cut hair, the small keen bright eyes and a certain square massive form in the upper part of the head, denoting strength of intellect more valuable (did he not know it?) than mere beauty, only pleasant to look upon.

Yes, he knew it, for he was what is called a sensible man, he was wont even to curl his lips at the idea of beauty in a man being requisite. But love! love, reader, strangely changes us all. That potent little God, makes heroes of the weakest; and causes failings and inconsistencies.

in the strongest. Thus Mr. Hartley must not be sneered at for his weakness, although he did feel half ashamed at it himself.

Good sense, however, soon gained its mastery over him, and he thought more how he might win the love he craved after, by good qualities. He considered how when the prize was his, how tenderly he would watch over it.

“Love begets love—she must love me!” he exclaimed, “surely I shall prevail at last! what is this old fancy—did she not tell me that it would be a sin now to indulge in it, and do I not know enough of Rachel Graham to feel sure that duty is too strongly impressed in her, to do what is wrong, though it be but in thought. Away with all these doubts and fancies, let me be a man.”

Thus reasoning with himself, he recovered his spirits. The picture and its painter were almost forgotten; and he thought chiefly of the near approach of the wedding. He even premeditated informing the little girls that he was going to bring home a new mamma; not altogether new either, for his children almost loved her as such already.

## CHAPTER XVII.

## AN UNEXPECTED MEETING.

NOTHING would suit Mrs. Triebner the next morning, but that she must go and find out Carlo. She tried hard to persuade Rachel to accompany her, as she was not going to give her pupils any lessons that day at their father's request, to let them have time to recover from their game of romps ; but no persuasion could induce Mrs. Graham to leave the house, and therefore the good lady was obliged to go alone.

"A gentleman wishes to speak to you, maam, if you please," said Mrs. Jones, some short time after Mrs. Triebner had started off to go and pay her visit to Carlo.

"Indeed !" and Rachel roused herself from deep thought, "who is he ?"

"He wont give any name, maam."

"I cannot see a gentleman whom I do not know, ask him what he wants, Mrs. Jones."

The landlady departed, and brought back with her a card with a few words written on it in a small foreign-looking handwriting.

A blush spread itself all over the face of Rachel, and with an effort she said, "Beg the gentleman to walk in."

But a moment had she to gain self-possession ; so suddenly to meet him without any preparation, she swallowed down her rising emotion, and the next instant put her hand calmly into Carlo's.

What it cost her to do this, how fast the heart beat in that tranquil body, he knew not ; he only saw the outward unmoved figure, and his heart sunk within him.

Carlo's manner was quite the opposite to that of Rachel's, for he was fearfully agitated ; and at first it was with difficulty he made his words intelligible.

She helped him in his trouble, and spoke about his picture they had seen at the exhibition the day before, and how Mrs. Triebner had gone off to look after him.

"What ! she is with you then ? I am glad of that, for I have heard, Rachel, of your misfortunes, and I have been hunting the town over

to find you." He was not able to attempt to express sorrow for her loss of money, when he almost gloried in the happiness of thinking that it had helped to equalize, nay almost to reverse their conditions.

Rachel could not help it, struggle as she would, a smile of pleasure lighted up her face as he spoke of his search after herself. The ready eye of love saw directly the opening to hope, and with more courage Carlo continued, "Rachel, you will think that I have sadly neglected you, if you have never received the letters I have addressed to you ; tell me, did you get them ?"

"No, I did not ; and Mrs. Triebner has not received any from you either."

"And I wrote to her also ; ah, I was very stupid to write so much about that disturbance at Milan, that was the reason, I suppose, why my letters never reached their destinations."

"Most likely ; Mrs. Triebner and I both thought the non-arrival of communications from you must have originated in something of the kind ; all this time though, I have asked nothing about Rosa ; how is she ? where is she ?"

"Ah, there is a sad history to tell you ! about that outbreak in Milan ; where is she indeed, poor child !"

Then Carlo went through all the long account of the Milan outbreak, Antonio's fearful end, and Rosa's equally distressing death.

Rachel sat watching him as he spoke, shocked and bewildered at the startling tragic tale, and when Carlo finished by saying,

"Yes, it is nearly two years since I became a widower," his companion hardly knew whether it was all a dream, a vision of an excited imagination, or a strange truth.

"Poor Rosa, what an unhappy end! so young and beautiful! I can hardly believe my senses."

"Yes, I grieved deeply at first, although I had not loved her. Rachel, this may surprise you; but man is a strange being sometimes, and I dared to love one far above me in every respect, so in my utter hopelessness I turned to Rosa; and then she loved me; the die was cast, and there was nothing left for me in honour, but to ask her to be the partner of my life. Rachel, dear Rachel, you it was whom I loved, with all the strength of a deep earnest passion; and God forgive me, I kept away from you because of pride. Oh, say if I had then fallen at your feet, and asked for one glance to give me hope, that when I had fought my way up the ladder of fame, I might perhaps have won the greatest prize of all—your love! Oh, Rachel, my

beloved, I am free now again ! Oh, will you forgive me, dare I hope ?”

“Hush, say no more, I must not listen to you.”

“Rachel !” he seized her hand, “you love me, I see it in those eyes, you will forgive me, tell me—tell me !”

“Alas, Carlo !” the look was sad though soft ; for love at last would brook no trammels, and filled the glances of those melting eyes. “Alas, why have you come too late !”

Now she was the weak, loving woman. Her strength was gone ; and bending her head down into her hands, she sobbed with all the uncontrolled feelings of a child.

He disturbed her not ; he felt almost awed, for he had never seen the gentle tranquil being, by his side, thus moved.

As suddenly as Rachel’s tears had burst forth from their long pent-up cisterns, so did they stop, and leave her calm again. She raised her head ; a sad, white, gentle face met Carlo’s, whose eyes were glowing with love, mixed with fears awakened by her words. She spoke with a low but steady voice.

“Carlo, you must leave me, forget me ; we must never meet again !”

“Rachel, for heaven’s sake, speak not thus. Surely I have not mistaken those looks ; then why those tears ? oh, tell me, say, am I dear to you as I had hoped, unworthy though I be ?”

“Carlo, it is of little avail to tell you that I love you, and yet—this last time that I may ever speak to you ; there is something which has laid long closed up in my heart, that fain would burst, where it denied relief in words. So there is a sweet pain in saying that I do love you ; have loved you long and faithfully. Nor was I unaware of your feelings towards me ; for during that time at Mayence, when I watched by your bedside, and sleep came over you, I learnt it then from your incoherent words.”

“Oh, why did I not know it ! why did you conceal your feelings for me ?”

“Because,” the slight figure became quite erect, and the eyes sparkled and seemed to expand, with a proud enthusiastic look, “because I gloried in your honour, equally as in your love ; I would not make the straight path more difficult for you to tread.”

“Oh, Rachel, what a glorious woman you are ! I have never been, never can be worthy of the heart which was mine unknown to me. Yet—and oh what bliss to know it, you did love me, will



you not love me still? forgive me all the pain I caused you by my foolish feelings."

"Carlo, I have nothing to forgive; if you allowed a feeling to conquer you, which works in different ways upon so many of us, you have made up for it by a noble sacrifice; my friend, let us both ask God for strength, for there is nothing left for us but to part."

"Oh why? why may we not take the happiness which seems within our reach?"

"Because the same duty that was formerly yours, is now mine. Carlo, I am the promised bride of another! the very time even is fixed for the ceremony."

"Rachel! Rachel!" he strained her hand in his, while he looked almost wildly upon her. "No! no! it is not true! you cannot mean that; say it is not true!"

"I cannot! for it is all as I have said."

"And do you love the man?"

"I esteem him."

"But you love me still! Rachel you are mine in heart!" hope kindled, and brightened up his face, "tell me, is it not so?"

"Carlo, do not let us prolong this suffering to both of us. Of what use is it for me to speak of a feeling every spark of which duty calls upon me to

smother. I was brought to consent but a few weeks ago to a union with another, because I believed that an irrevocable barrier still stood between us; but the present knowledge that it had ceased, cannot now avail us anything."

"Ah, I am indeed rightly punished! not contented with the trouble and suffering my foolish pride brought on me in the first instance, I yet allowed it to take possession of me again. If I had sought for you at once instead of waiting, I should have found you free. Alas, what does all this fame benefit me; that I thought I was going to lay with such delight at your feet—nothing! all is disappointment, and henceforth I shall turn with loathing, from all the praises that may meet me."

"No, Carlo dearest, rather let it console you; if prudence demands that we meet no more, think not that my deep interest in your welfare can ever be weakened—and—it would pain me more than I can express, were I obliged to accuse myself, as the means of robbing you of your bright future. Some day when you are a great man—when time has helped to heal that pain now fresh and sharp; I shall watch your career with a sweet pleasure, and bless Providence that has left you something to mitigate your sufferings."

"Ah, Rachel, I fear I cannot learn your resigna-

tion, my heart is full of bitter sorrow, this is the end of all my hopes. Why had I worked and fought up against poverty, and my unknown position?—but to gain your love, the only treasure my heart craved for; and now, what is the result? Despair, every bright thought buried in gloom. Added to which, there will be a gnawing feeling at my heart, that had I been wiser, had I taken warning from my past lesson, instead of the dark picture for the future, a very Eden of bliss would lay stretched before me.”

The words just uttered were sad enough, but grief so poignant shewed itself in the speaker's face, that Rachel with difficulty restrained a second burst of tears. She felt, however, that all her forced composure was fast giving way, and so she hastened the parting as much as possible. She begged him also, when he might see Mrs. Triebner, to make any excuse sooner than accept her invitations to visit them; and with a blessing for his future welfare, she closed the painful scene.

Mrs. Triebner remained away some time after the departure of Carlo; fortunately for Rachel that it was so, for when he was gone, she gave way to all the bitterness of her grief. How hard it appeared to her, that just when all things seemed

propitious, that she should be separated from her lover, by a promise but shortly before given to another. For a time, repinings even visited her lips; and she was disposed to accuse Mrs. Triebner and Mr. Hartley as the cause of her unhappiness.

Not long, however, did Rachel thus forget herself. She was too generous to be unjust to others, and therefore felt something like a blush of shame succeed to those momentary feelings, which had been unworthy of her.

Late in the day Mrs. Triebner came home full of her disappointment at having missed Carlo, for although she had waited at his lodgings long past the time when he had left Rachel, he did not return there.

The dinner of the two friends passed off with great silence on the part of Rachel, which Mrs. Triebner did not at first observe, in her anxiety to repeat all the grand things the people of the lodgings had told her about the wonderful talents of the foreign artist; and her conjectures and wonderings as to why Rosa was not with him, which she had also gleaned from them.

Soon, however with her quick-sightedness, she began to see a kind of listless grave manner about

Rachel, which she thought fit to account for in her own way.

“Dear me, Rachel,” said the worthy lady, when the girl who had waited at table left them. “I wish your wedding was over, you are wearing yourself to death, teaching those children, you are not strong enough for it, and I will tell Mr. Hartley so.”

“No, pray do not, I am quite well.”

“What a piece of hypocrisy now to say that, why you look as ill as you can be. The fact is you must come to Mayence on your wedding trip—that will set you up I know, in that letter from Marie, which I received the other day, she says Dr. Greuser and Hanz are both agreed that it is the healthiest spot in the world.”

“Yes, I believe the air of Mayence is very good,” replied Rachel, glad that the subject had diverged a little from herself.

“To be sure it is,” Mrs. Triebner was right proud of her birth-place, and therefore quite ready to talk about it. “Nothing like those hills at the back of the town; I wish I had you on them now, I would soon bring some colour into your cheeks—and then a run down that brave old river in one of the steamers

would help the matter. Hanz, Marie says, often takes her for a short distance when he has time to spare."

"They seem to be a very happy couple from what you say, Mrs. Felten must often rejoice at having been induced by Dr. Greuser to consent to their marriage."

"Yes, they get on remarkably well together. Hanz never thinks of being jealous now; and Marie's household duties, and the baby which made its appearance last year, seem to have made quite a matron of the little flirt."

"Oh no, not a flirt. I am sure she never meant to encourage any attentions but those of Hanz. A merry girl, however exuberant be her spirits, must not be confounded with one who cruelly satisfies her love of admiration by wounding the heart of another."

"Well, perhaps, considered in the light you take it, Marie was not a flirt, but really the word has such an extended meaning, that one hardly knows what is really intended by it"

"You are right, and it is a great misfortune that it should be so; for when harmless mirth comes to be confounded with what is a falsehood in action, though words still may be wanting, they each are affected by the contact. So the mirth is

robbed of its innocence, and the falsehood losing somewhat of its bad name, finds at last toleration."

In this strain the conversation continued; the evening came, and brought with it Mr. Hartley. Two or three hours more, and then Rachel was alone.

Alone! yes alone she almost felt, in every sense of the word.

Hope was gone! Carlo was gone! she had parted from him in sorrow and despair. Confidence in her capability to fulfil her duty to Mr. Hartley was gone, cheerfulness for her task of instruction was gone—nay even the taste, the relish for life seemed gone!

But there remained one thing which was not gone—trust.

In what?

In God!

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## A CHAPTER OF TROUBLES.

CARLO after his interview with Rachel, hurried on through the streets hardly knowing where he went, quite without a purpose.

Everything had so favoured him of late, the blow struck him with a deep and sudden force—his triumphs, his changed circumstances, how he had walked up to the door, flushed and anxious, but hopeful; now all was over! and he was left with the maddening thought, that had he but sought her earlier, she might have then been his.

He bit his lips until the blood came with the agony of his grief—and on—on he went, with long strides, seeing nothing, feeling nothing, but his own misery.

Many a passer by turned round in wonder, some thought from his wild appearance that he was mad, and made way for him; others did the same,



believing that life or death might depend on his obtaining a quick and free passage.

On—on—he never slackened his pace, his brain seemed like a burning furnace, while his hands were cold as death, a wet clammy cold.

He reached one of the bridges—he partly crossed it, and on his face was written some stern resolve of a momentary madness. One hand was placed upon the parapet!

The cold water below wooed its victim unto death with a smile; yes, with a smile, for on the gentle ripple of its face, the sun's rays danced gaily. Yet what peril lay beneath that bright playful surface, perhaps a cold grave, a sudden annihilation of one of God's great works!

Watch! for he is about to spring.

He springs!

But backwards!

A white figure had seemed to rise up before him with hands spread out to stop his progress.

Thus had the workings of imagination saved him, for during a moment a vision of Rachel had appeared to him standing between him and destruction, and while the cold air from the water calmed the excitement of his heated brain, he shuddered as his thoughts grew clear.

“Thank God ! I have been kept from such an end !” exclaimed Carlo, as he turned away sobered, from the unaccomplished resolution of a troubled brain.

All the horror of such an act now came distinctly before him. He saw himself hurried into the awful majesty of His Maker, while in the very act of sin, sin perhaps unrepented of ; for had he taken the fatal step, who knows how much of conscience there might have been left to him, while struggling between life and eternity to murmur a prayer to be forgiven !”

Humbled and ashamed, did Carlo retrace his footsteps ! grave, unhappy, miserable he was ; still a kind of wild joy filled his heart at that moment ; such as only those can know, whom providence has snatched from self-destruction.

Carlo remained until the day began to close, and then tired, worn-out in mind and body, he returned to his lodgings.

The excitement of his mind had passed away, and had left a dull heavy pain, a sort of quiet grief which he appeared hardly able to fight up against.

Thus Mrs. Triebner saw him on the following morning when she called again ; determined to persevere in her visits, until she should find him at home.

The conversation naturally turned upon Rosa and Antonio, and why the former was not in London. Then Carlo had to relate the shocking tale again; and endeavour to console poor Mrs. Triebner, to whom the shock was very great, for the brother and sister (particularly the latter) had occupied much of her honest heart.

Rachel saw by Mrs. Triebner's face on her return, that she had met Carlo, nor did the good lady long delay relating the painful communication she had received from him. She was one of those people whose grief relieves itself by words; and thus it was a kind of ease to her mind, to go over all those melancholy circumstances as they had been told to her.

"Poor Carlo!" said Mrs. Triebner, as she finished her narrative, "appears still to suffer from the blow, for I never saw any one looking so thoroughly wretched—a sort of despair seems written on his face, an utter hopelessness, which quite made my heart bleed for him, he will not even come here, although I tried to persuade him, and told him how glad you would be to offer him consolation."

"Alas poor Carlo!" said Rachel with difficulty restraining her feelings; for Mrs. Triebner's words had pierced her heart! Too well she had understood that bitter smile! and very hard was this new trial.

"However," said Mrs. Triebner, again speaking, "you must go to him with me soon, and see what you can do to rouse him from his grief."

"Oh no—oh no!"

"No—and why not pray?"

"Because it is best to leave him to himself, without forcing him—that is to say, leave him to time—it is better he should not come here."

"Well, I really cannot agree with you, I should fancy now, that you would be just the person to do him good; and you were always such friends you know."

"Yes, we were—but you are quite mistaken, I could not console him in the least—in fact, I do not feel equal to it. Leave him as he is—leave him to time."

"I declare I do not know what to make of you sometimes Rachel."

"Oh, we are all enigmas in our way, my dear friend, do not therefore seek for an explanation of anything strange about me—and now let us try to dismiss this painful subject from our minds for a

time, for Mr. Hartley has promised to bring his little girls to tea this evening."

"Oh, I am very glad of that, anything that can in the least draw one's thoughts from the mournful tragedy will be acceptable; they will be here soon, I suppose?"

"Very shortly I should think; see here," and Rachel opened a little cupboard, "look, these are my preparations, the cakes want cutting open, and must be sent down stairs with the muffins to be toasted."

So both ladies set to work, first cutting and then buttering; and when the children arrived with their father, they found a well supplied table awaiting them.

Rachel Graham amused the children, while Mrs. Triebner again sought relief to her distressed feelings, by giving Mr. Hartley a detailed account of the painful story of the morning. Her listener sympathised with her; and asked many questions about Carlo, to know if he could be of use to him in any way, while Rachel, although playing games with the children, strove to catch some words of their conversation.

This was the kind of life led by Rachel for the next month and a half; it was a constant effort to keep up the outward semblance of a

cheerfulness and composure, which inwardly she was far from feeling. Nor was her principal sorrow on her own account, had she been the only one to suffer, Rachel Graham would have done it bravely enough; nay, perhaps have conquered in the end. There was another, however, whose face was constantly presenting itself to her mind, with the large blue eyes fixed despairingly upon her.

Carlo happy in the love of another, she had so far mastered her feelings, as to look upon him as a dear past remembrance—a dream! But Carlo—free—loving her still with passionate earnestness, having loved her in absence, in hopelessness; and then, just when hope rose up, that she should have destroyed it all by her acceptance of Mr. Hartley, this was almost beyond her spirit of endurance. She thought not how he had brought it all on himself; she only remembered the bare fact, that her plighted troth to another had sent him away from her broken-hearted.

The day slipped away, and the time was now rapidly approaching which was to see Rachel a bride again. Every necessary preparation had been concluded, and all was ready for the ceremony.

But Rachel during all this time, although

unchanged in manner, had visibly altered in appearance. The inward struggle which she was always undergoing told its tale in the thin lengthened face which could not pass unheeded.

Mrs. Triebner saw it, and began to wonder; Mr. Hartley saw it, and began to doubt; the former, in consequence, determined to find out the mystery; while the latter made every effort to blind his eyes to the fact.

Mrs. Triebner during all her wonderings, began to remember that she had surprised Rachel every now and then sitting unoccupied except with her thoughts, wearing a grave and anxious face. Then recollections of a half stifled sigh followed; her first objections to accept Mr. Hartley's offer of marriage; the good lady began to see clearly, and determined that Rachel must have given her heart to some other than her future husband.

Now she began to wish she had never interfered between Mr. Hartley and her young friend; now she felt that perhaps she had been the cause of mischief. Poor woman! she certainly determined to atone for it if possible; and in order to do so, she first set her wits to consider what might be the best means of finding out who was the object of Rachel's attachment. Thinking much over the matter, her young friend's evident objection to

see Carlo became apparent to her : and thus, at the end of some days' work of her imagination, he presented himself to her mind as the object of Rachel's secret love. Never for a moment did she suppose that the feeling was anything but a hopeless attachment on one side, for as Carlo had chosen and married Rosa of his own free will, the idea that he loved another woman seemed to her preposterous. Nevertheless, she determined to make an experiment upon him, to try and find out whether he was aware of Rachel's partiality towards himself.

The good lady felt it was a delicate matter which she had to handle, for every care must be taken on her part not to betray Rachel ; then the remembrance of Mr. Hartley followed, and she wished with all her heart that she had never attempted matchmaking.

However the worst was done, and Mrs. Triebner was not a person to waste time in repinings ; so she availed herself of the first opportunity to call on Carlo, that she might begin her tactics.

It is needless to go through the conversation which ensued between herself and the artist ; suffice it to say that the keen-sighted lady discovered from it, that Carlo absolutely *did* love Rachel, although he had had no intention, neither could he



have had an idea that his observations would lead her to such conclusions.

This point became settled in her mind, nor did she endeavour to find an explanation of what to her seemed so strange a case, but turned all her energies to the consideration of what could best be done to prevent that unhappiness, of which she considered herself in some measure the cause.

Poor woman ! she was nearly beside herself, for Mr. Hartley seemed her only hope to rest upon, and then he loved Rachel also ; what was to be done ? was she quite certain of the attachment between Carlo and Rachel ?

Certain or not, she finally determined that Mr. Hartley should be made acquainted with her suppositions ; and for this purpose she walked up at the close of the day to Harley Street, just when she thought he would have finished his dinner, before he might have set out to come and pay his usual evening visit to Mrs. Jones's.

The time had been well chosen, and Mrs. Triebner found the merchant sipping his wine, with one child on his knee, while the other was going through the operation of twisting his short strong hair about, to make papa look nice for his visit, as the knowing little witch observed.

Something like pain shot through Mrs. Triebner's heart, as she looked at the open happy countenance of the man whom she had come to grieve and distress; but Rachel being an object of far greater interest to her than he was, she put aside her pity, determined on the accomplishment of her object.

"Good evening, Mrs. Triebner; what brings you here at this unusual hour? Nothing the matter with Rachel, I trust?" said Mr. Hartley, as he came forward to receive that lady, after placing one little girl off his knee, and disengaging himself from the hands of the other, the youthful hair-dresser, at the same time.

"Oh no, I left her just as usual. My visit, I feel, must seem an untimely one; only wishing to speak with you alone, I hardly knew how to do otherwise."

"Now, little girls, run away, this lady and I have something to talk about."

"Will you let me finish your hair then afterwards, before you go to see Mrs. Graham?" exclaimed Annie.

"Who told you I was going to see Mrs. Graham, you little rogue?" asked the father, with a pleased smile.

"Oh, I know nothing about it, only Edith says

so ; Edith says you go there every evening : do you, papa ?”

“ Edith, my dear, appears a very good informant, so I shall leave you to her ; now go, dears ; run ; yes the hair ; very well, if there is time.”

Both little children kissed their father, and the youngest whispered in his ear as she did so, “ I wonder if you will give Mrs. Graham a kiss for me, papa, will you ?”

The happy father laughed. “ Come go, you naughty child, I am quite ashamed of you !”

Off they ran, both of them together ; and then Mrs. Triebner and Mr. Hartley were left alone.

The lady felt some embarrassment, but she spoke immediately as the door had closed upon them ; for she was one who if she had a disagreeable thing to do, she liked to set about it at once, and have the thing over.

“ My dear Sir, I fear I have unknowingly been partly the cause of much unhappiness ; and now I have come to you to explain the matter, for you are nearly concerned in it.”

“ Indeed ! ah, something about Rachel then ?”

“ Yes, I am sorry to say it is, and much grieved that I must pain you in my communication ; when I first discovered that Rachel Graham had become dear to you, I did all in my power to favour your

cause from strong conviction of your worth, and the likelihood that you would make her happy. It is true that I was aware that her feelings for you were rather those of esteem than love, but I was perfectly ignorant of what I am now going to confide to you."

"You mean Mrs. Graham having formed an attachment from which circumstances afterwards separated her."

"What, you know it then?"

"So far I do; I had understood that an insurmountable barrier now existed between them; and that she had conquered her former feelings from a matter of duty."

Every word spoken by Mr. Hartley in a calm, deliberate voice, showed Mrs. Triebner the correctness of her surmises.

"Did Rachel mention to you who was the object of her attachment?" asked the lady.

"No, nor did I seek to know. I had perfect confidence in her then as I have now, although I am yet at a loss to understand to what your words tend."

"They will be at once explained to you when I tell you that this person is no other than the artist, Mr. Carlo Romelli."

What a wonderfully strong mastery over his

feelings Mr. Hartley must have possessed, when he replied to this with an unchanged countenance and in a steady voice, "Indeed ; did you receive this information from Mrs. Graham ?"

"No, she has not the least idea that it is known to me ; I merely discovered it from my own observations ; made with an intent to find out the cause of the unhappiness which she is evidently struggling to suppress, but which shews itself to me in the visible failure of her health."

"Is Mr. Romelli aware of your opinions ? is—in fact this visit—is it made at his request ?"

"No, indeed ; he is equally ignorant of my discovery, although his manner and his words have sufficed to shew me that Rachel is very dear to him."

"This is very strange. What was the cause then of the separation between them ? why did he marry another woman if he loved her ?"

"Really that is the strange part of the business which I cannot explain to you, neither do I understand how, or why, this came to pass. However they certainly love each other ; Rachel is perhaps dying in consequence, and I have to reproach myself for having helped to place things in this wretched state. You are a sufferer also ; I cannot forget your feelings, or lose sight of the unpleasantness which must

attend the breaking off of a union, which from its nearness towards completion, must have been already communicated to many of your friends. Nevertheless I ask you to perform an act of generosity by renouncing all claims upon Mrs. Graham. Thus you will make two young people happy, and ease the mind of an old woman from remorse."

"And—for myself, what do I do?"

Poor Mrs. Triebner, she felt the difficulty of an answer; half ashamed also, that she had all at once lost sight of the great sacrifice she was asking of Mr. Hartley.

But she summoned up courage and said, "It may seem unkind of me to have apparently forgotten you. It is a great sacrifice, I know, to call upon you to make; yet I trusted to the nobler feelings of your nature; let me hope that I have not been mistaken."

"My dear Madam, I can give you no answer in this matter, I cannot even leave you to suppose that I can meet your request. This sudden communication requires time for consideration; I must be quite assured that Mrs. Graham's affections are yet in the possession of Mr. Romelli, for the present then, matters must stand as they are, and if—however, the future must be left to time—

I shall not be able to come this evening to visit you ; make any excuse you like for me to Mrs. Graham—oh, I remember, yes I forgot, she does not know of your visit.”

These words spoken without the least agitation, were followed by a leave taking, remarkable for its composure on the part of the merchant ; and as Mrs. Triebner quitted the house, her disappointment found vent in exclamations against the obstinacy of a man, whose cool manner had persuaded her that his love was of that moderate kind, which might have made the sacrifice without much suffering of the heart.

Oh, Mrs. Triebner, if you could have gone back, and could have seen that man after you left him alone with none to look upon him, how changed would have been your opinions. Shut up by himself, away from every eye but that of God's, sits that cold man, who has listened and replied so quietly to the late conversation with tears dropping from his eyes. Not that ready flow which brings relief, but tears wrung out in bitter agony, that cannot quench the burning fire consuming the choking heart—tears such as come only from the strongest and deepest of natures.

## CHAPTER XIX.

## THE SACRIFICE DRAWS NEAR.

MRS. TRIEBNER watched anxiously for some communication from Mr. Hartley which might lead her to believe that he intended to give up Rachel. None came, otherwise than a short note to excuse himself from his evening visits for the present, as he had just then many calls upon his time.

Poor Mrs. Triebner, she bustled about as usual, but feeling sadly down-hearted; and when she looked upon Rachel, so statue-like, awaiting her doom with such calmness, she with difficulty restrained her tears.

"She will never go through it," exclaimed she to herself, as she was preparing for another day of hopes deferred, "never, selfish man he will kill her, and I am the cause of all this. Much good I have done by interfering in the busi-



ness. Ah ! I see an old woman like me had better have nothing to do with these kind of things, and let young people settle their own love affairs. Too late to talk about it now, there is Rachel dying by inches, and Carlo meets me every time I see him with such a woe-begone face, there he sits eternally, with his hands before him doing nothing, alas ! how is it all to end ?”

So Mrs. Triebner communed with herself, time passed and all was still the same.

Rachel determined to accomplish her sacrifice, and perfectly ignorant of the efforts which had been made to save her from it, had no anxious hopes or doubts besetting her mind, everything seemed very clear and certain to her, although very sad. All her thoughts were busy, not with wild fancies of a means of escape from her present state, but in consideration as to how she might strengthen herself for her duty.

If she had plunged into gaieties, they could but for a time have stilled the voice of remembrance, only to return with redoubled vigour when excitement had ceased. If she had sought to forget the past in the deep and wondrous pages of science, the mind must at some time have rest from study, and then her sorrows would have

risen up again before her. No, her task demanded the help of a Higher Power.

She asked it, and none ever ask there but they receive ; Rachel, therefore, in spite of her failing health, bore up against her misfortunes with fortitude. Such fortitude as enables us to perform all our ordinary duties while under the severest trials with cheerfulness, in opposition to despairing inaction, such as had taken possession of Carlo Romelli.

And this inaction of her lover's was the suffering point with Rachel. Certainly she had not seen him since that last wretched day, and none had told her how he bore the blow. Yet something made her fear it might be such, a kind of instinct had brought him before her just as he was in reality, a hopeless man brooding over his despair.

This was the bitterest of all, and she had been so proud of his genius, had thought it would console her in after days. Must all these great capacities, just bursting forth to shew how wondrous is the intellect which God has given to man, must this example of His glory be lost ? Must it be a talent buried in the earth ? She hoped not, she would pray that it might not be so.

But two days now remain before the wedding, and Mrs. Triebner begins to relinquish hope. She and Rachel are sitting together in her nice cheerful little room, busy over preparations which now cause her pain to look on; Mrs. Jones, the landlady, comes in, and in her hand she holds a letter; that letter is for Rachel, and soon she has it open before her.

Mrs. Triebner watches with the anxiety of re-kindled hope. She looks anxiously at Rachel's face to find some change. A flush of colour, a lighting up of the eyes with joy, a start, an exclamation of delight.

She looks, but looks in vain; Rachel reads through her letter quietly without a smile, and then putting it down before Mrs. Triebner, says,

"Mr. Hartley writes, that having so much to do at home, and wishing to see us (for it is many days since he was here) he begs us to come and take tea with him this evening, and to send a reply. You have no other engagement I believe—we can go?"

"Yes, I suppose we can," replied Mrs. Triebner, turning away disappointed.

Rachel fetched her desk, and after writing to Mr. Hartley to tell him that they would come

that evening, she placed the folded paper in Mrs. Jones' hands, for the messenger who was waiting.

The interruption over, the ladies returned to their occupations, Mrs. Triebner while she felt enraged with Mr. Hartley, could nevertheless hardly help making allowances for him. The breaking off of a marriage so near completion, would have been an awkward and unpleasant business, "And," murmured the good lady to herself, "who knows, perhaps he might have tried to do it and have found he had not courage to attempt it. Yes, we all have our weakness, and this has been his I suppose," then aloud to Rachel, "so in two days more you are to be Mrs. Hartley."

"Yes, I suppose so, but you appear to have lost much of your interest in the matter. I never see you asking Mrs. Jones about the little breakfast, which is to be given to those six or seven friends who are to witness the ceremony; Mr. Hartley was very kind and considerate to accommodate himself to my wishes on the subject."

"Oh as for that, my dear, anything that he does not much mind about, he may easily concede to you; but don't fancy you are going to have it all your own way."

"Why, Mrs. Triebner, what has come to you

now? I do not expect to have all my own way, it would hardly be right that I should do so, however you seem angry with poor Mr. Hartley; what has he done? He was such a favourite of yours."

"Yes, yes, so he is, there now, never mind about me, an old woman will croak a little sometimes."

After these words, Mrs. Triebner tried consoling herself with the thought that as matters could not be mended, she had better put on as cheerful a face as possible, trusting that Rachel's health would improve after the marriage had taken place. New duties and an entire change might aid very materially in this, and with these ideas she brightened up and appeared something like herself again.

Rachel when left for a short time alone, thought of the last sacrifice there yet remained for her to perform before she gave herself up for life to Mr. Hartley. She went quietly to a round table in the middle of the room, and took from it a small album. With this in her hand, she sat down in a corner and began turning the leaves over one by one. She turned them slowly, very slowly, as if she would delay, though but for an instant, the final parting with a long cherished object. Soon

though, too soon ! she paused, for she had reached the leaf where was pasted the drawing which Carlo had given her at Rome."

Fain would she have kept it ; the heart whispered, " Just one little drawing, only that !"

But reason said, if the heart beats quickly, as the fingers touch it and the eyes swim with tears, when looking on it, then it must go, prudence nay duty demands it.

She restrained the tears, which yet had not fallen. She took the drawing from out the book, and when her eyes became clear again, she fixed upon it a long, sad, last loving look ; then in her hands she tore it quietly into pieces, she hesitated, for the wish to keep the fragments was very strong.

Might she not do this ? She held them tenderly.

No—and then with firmness she went and lit a candle. In its flames she burnt piece by piece until every atom was reduced to a soft grey downy substance, which a breath of air might blow—did blow away.

So there is nothing outward left, to steal the heart from its right allegiance. Rachel has done her utmost, as far as that goes. Yes, that drawing the destruction of which she had often

determined on, but which she had left wavering ; just a little longer, it was now nothing, that is to say, had assumed a form unrecognisable to her eye.

Smile not, reader, at the power which this little drawing had exercised. Wonder not that Rachel had attached so much importance to it. There are some with whom a simple piece of paper, touched by those dear to them, has power to move with strong emotion ; there are others who cannot understand such feelings, yet let not the latter sneer at the nature of the former. No two beings feel exactly alike, amidst the vast populations of the earth, it behoves all therefore to make allowance for each other, in the infinite shades and varieties of character that exist amongst them.

## CHAPTER XX.

## THE CONCLUSION.

MR. HARTLEY sits waiting for his guests in his handsome and comfortable dining-room.

Come stranger, you who know him not, and can only consider him outwardly—how does he look ?”

Contented—prosperous, and you will say happy.

There is nothing in his face to make you think otherwise ; and he waits also for his future bride !

Reader, you who have followed us thus far through these pages ; look not for remorse at the part he appears to have taken, it is not there—no, not even the shadow of it.

Mrs. Triebner and Rachel arrive, and find a smiling host to welcome them.

Shawls and bonnets are soon disposed of, and then the ladies are about to seat themselves.

“ Stay,” Mr. Hartley speaks to Rachel, “ there



is something I would wish you to look at in the drawing-room, just go up there, will you, and I will talk to Mrs. Triebner in the meantime."

"Ah," says that lady to herself, "he wants to still his conscience, and so has purchased some splendid things of some kind or other; does he believe that they will satisfy a heart like Rachel's?"

Reader—shall we go and see?

Step by step she quietly walks up, prepared like Mrs. Triebner for some change or other.

There is not a piece of furniture different from what she had seen days before; there is not one jewel or piece of luxury laid out as a new offering.

But oh, there must be something!

The change in Rachel is more than can be described. Such a look of wonder—half of doubt—then of joy—such a radiant face it was!

If Rachel had been one of those who exclaim at a great and unexpected happiness which seems to them unintelligible; she would have done so, as she felt her slight figure folded in the close embrace of Carlo.

But speech seemed gone with her, not a word would come; and when her lover loosened the arms that had clasped, had strained her to his throbbing

heart, she looked up inquiringly into his face for explanation.

“Yes, Rachel, dearest you are mine—all mine now ; thanks to that generous Mr. Hartley.”

Then followed a description from Carlo, of how the merchant had called one day, when he was more than usually desponding ; how from one thing to another Mrs. Triebner’s discovery was brought forward, and Mr. Hartley declared his intention of giving up all claims to Mrs. Graham. Carlo had, however, been bound over to secrecy by him ; as he wished to do the thing in his own way, and at his own time.

Mr. Hartley when left alone with Mrs. Triebner fixed on her a look of searching inquiry.

Quite well he was able to read the face of his companion, and with a meaning smile he said to her,

“You are mistaken, Mrs. Triebner.”

“What do you mean?”

“Oh you know quite well ; you think me a selfish, heartless brute ; you know nothing about Englishmen, Mrs. Triebner.”

“I am sure I never said anything that might—”

“No, but you looked it. Eyes you know are dangerous sometimes to their possessor ; it is wonderful how they betray what is intended to

be secret. Well, I will puzzle you no longer—Mr. Romelli is up-stairs.

“No! really! there is my hand. God bless you! forgive me for having wronged you, though it was in thought only.”

“My good friend, I can make every allowance for the anxiety which I have lately caused you; perhaps I ought even to excuse myself for having waited so long before making my decision known—for my intentions were fixed upon, shortly after hearing what you had to tell me. Nevertheless I shall not do so, you must just be satisfied with the fact, and think me an eccentric man if you like.”

“I think you a very noble one! nor am I disposed to worry myself at having had to wait until the last moment for the good news—Rachel though, what will she say? perhaps even now she will not consent.”

“Oh, I have thought of that, so when she returns here give her this letter for me. Now I am going to leave you, I have business to transact, so I must beg you to do without a host this evening. Ring for the tea when they join you. Some day I shall bear to look upon their happiness; and rejoice that I was the means of procuring it to them.”

He shook Mrs. Triebner's hand warmly, left the room, and hastened away from his home ;— that happy home it was to have been to him.

That evening was at once the bitterest and the sweetest of his life !

Rachel, as Mrs. Triebner had foreseen, was not to be so easily persuaded to avail herself of the freedom thus suddenly and generously given to her by Mr. Hartley. It required her to peruse his letter which he had placed in Mrs. Triebner's hands, before she would entirely consent to her happiness. The epistle, however, had the desired effect ; Mr. Hartley performed his sacrifice nobly ; for Rachel finished reading with an easy mind, persuaded that he had found his feelings towards her to be more those of esteem than love. Still she was not the less grateful to him ; and his last request, that she would continue a friend to his little girls, was not only remembered in after life but well executed.

Of course a long explanation took place between Mrs. Triebner and the lovers, which caused her many a look of wonder. To think that they should have had an attachment for each other for years, without her even having the slightest idea of it !

Shrewd, quick-sighted woman as she was in

some things, Cupid's mysterious maze had been too much for her; nor did she ever afterwards attempt to meddle with his peculiar province.

The wicked boy, he laughed no doubt at her expense.

They were a cheerful trio that night. Who could have looked upon that young couple, sitting side by side, happy at last after long and bitter sufferings; who, I say, could have looked upon them, and not have rejoiced to see their bliss.

And love—true love is worth its weight in gold! The man or woman whilst under its influence, feels his heart expand to all mankind. Its utter unselfishness brings generous feelings; its humbleness opens our eyes to the merits of others, and prevents us from being too great in our own conceits; and its forbearance teaches us to judge others with lenity.

Yes, love ennobles the character, be it fortunate or otherwise. Its name is given too many fictions—but for the real—think not lightly of it!

Thus closed the trials of Rachel Graham, who soon became the artist's happy bride.

To Mayence they went to pass the honeymoon; that town in which so much that had interested them, had taken place. It was there too, that they had parted they remembered, both hopeless—

and now ! joy filled their hearts to overflowing ! doubts—fears—all were gone ! the present was bright and clear ; the future looked so likewise.

Yet in their joy, that fresh young girl whose life had opened there, was not forgotten. A holy calm came over both, when memory touched the chord of those past days, in which she had been there with them, a gay bright being.

Thus Rachel spoke to Carlo. “So changeful are the scenes of life, little do we know the part destined for us to represent on the world’s great stage. On some, happiness is showered down through long years of continuance ; while others are often visited with grief, bitter and hard to bear. We have had much of the latter, dearest, for our trials have been many, and yet we ought not to repine ; for God, who loves his children, far more than any earthly love can do, chastises them for their good.”

“True, dearest, misfortune blesses while it wounds, it teaches much that we have need to learn. Through it I feel my pride humbled, and I know how vain and empty a thing it was. Neither shall I ever despair again, for you have taught me to place my hopes beyond this world, to look high up where a bright light shines for ever, and there to place my trust.”

So out of much sorrow, they have reaped a golden harvest for the future.

Let those who mourn remember this ; and may it be to them a cause of joy at last !

Our tale now draws fast to a conclusion, and there remain but a few words to say, of those who have played their part in it.

The young doctor and his wife, Hanz and Marie Felten live a tranquil happy life together. They have at present one little child, a fat round ball of white flesh, that tumbles about and crows when his mother takes him up and shakes him at his admiring father. To the grandmother, Mrs. Felten, he is an object of extreme delight, and she declares, not only that he will be a great professor some day, but that she traces in him a decided likeness to his grandfather. Poor little babe, with his round soft face, no one else ever sees it ! But for that never mind, it pleases Mrs. Felten, so when she speaks on the matter, people never contradict her.

Dr. Greuser is just the same clever man, and as anxious as he ever was to be of service, and to do good to others. His body, however, cannot keep pace with his intellect, for the limbs of the good old man begin to be stiff and weak. He is no longer able to make his usual round of visits to

the sick, for the gout has obliged him to stay at home, and receive his patients there.

But Hanz is quite like his right hand to him, and does all the hard work cheerfully, as a young man ought to do, to assist the aged; and Doctor Greuser is quite pleased to see his protégé turn out so well.

Mrs. Triebner returned to Mayence, after seeing the happiness of Carlo and Rachel completed; and if the sad death of Rosa and her poor brother Antonio, at times created a gloomy feeling, it would very soon give way to the natural cheerfulness of her nature. Her house was as it always had been, a pattern of order; and the best cakes eaten at Mayence are still compounded by her hands.

Count Ferris paid Carlo his promised visit, shortly after the artist and his wife established themselves in London. He was the same gay, and somewhat volatile being as ever; but as time moved on, he sobered down, took a wife, and became a useful member of society.

The generous act of Rachel towards Marie and Hanz Felten, remained for ever a secret between Dr. Greuser, herself, and her husband. The good Doctor when he at first heard of her loss of fortune, had proposed to mention the affair to



Hanz, so that he might by degrees repay the obligation. But Rachel and her husband set their faces entirely against it; and bound over the Doctor to keep his former promise.

Mr. Hartley never married again. He lived for his two little girls, and was prosperous and happy. Time, as he had imagined, so far softened his disappointment, that he could bear to look with a contented heart on the joy which had originated from it; often of a night he might be seen sitting in a comfortable arm-chair by the artist's fire-side, enjoying some pleasant peaceful hours, after the troubles of business were over.

And Carlo became a great artist, and sent out wondrous pictures to the world, yet he remained ever humble; and in the long prosperity which he enjoyed, forgot not the lessons which he had learnt by tribulation.

Rachel was unto the end the loving companion of her husband, the partakers of his joys, as she had been of his sorrows. She became the mother of many children, to whom she strove to impart what had been the golden rule of her life—first her duty to God, and then that to man.

“It is an ill wind that blows nobody good.”

Out of Austrian tyranny had proceeded the happiness of Carlo and Rachel.

But when we think of the thousands who have suffered. When we remember that the trials depicted here are but as drops of water in the Ocean, when compared with the countless horrors which have been perpetrated by the rulers of that land, where beneath the sunny radiance of its outward appearance, a canker has been gnawing through long years of bitter misery. When we remember all this, English justice, English generosity rises up with indignation, and gives its whole sympathy to the oppressed.

Let us hope that the beam of sunshine which has burst from the clouds and shed its light on Italy, may expand and gain strength until the people of that land shall enjoy perfect freedom—and never may she return to that unhappy state in which she was

BEFORE THE DAWN.

THE END.

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