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THE LOVELLS

A STORY OF THE DANISH WAR.

MRS. WEBB PEPLOE,

'NAOMI, OR THE LAST DAYS OF JERUSALEM,' ETC., ETC.



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Away went Ada, quite oblivious of her bruised knee and elbow; and soon Grace saw her and the younger members of the party in full course along the wonderful Causeway, while she, and Alfred, and Ellen Kinnaird commenced their search for shells and other curiosities, and made rough diagrams of the multiform portions of basaltic columns by which they were surrounded.

Their search was so careful that it was eminently successful. From a triangle to a nine-sided joint they found specimens, and Grace greatly regretted that she could not carry away at least one sample of every form, to adorn her rockery at her father's pretty parsonage.

Leaving her to her drawing, and her useless regret, we will introduce her and her companions rather more formally to our readers.

Grace was the eldest daughter of the Rev. Algernon Lovell, who had commenced his clerical career as chaplain to a man-of-war going out to the South American station. There he had become attached to a young and beautiful Spaniard, whose attractions made him forget that she held a different creed to his own; and that (as the Apostle warns us) "*two cannot walk together unless they be agreed,*" especially unless they be agreed on the one all-important subject of religion.

Isabella Rodriguez was amiable and affectionate: she was devoted to her husband, and ~~the~~ *was* only

wished her changed. But that was a point which became more and more important in his estimation, as he became more and more earnest in his Master's service. Many were his efforts to bring his beloved wife to share his own feelings, and his own opinions; and many were the prayers that arose from his heart for divine aid and guidance in this great work.

His prayers were answered, and the desire of his heart was accomplished; and after Mr. Lovell brought her to Ireland—where he was recalled to take possession of a living—she became an earnest Christian, and a member of her husband's congregation; and when she died he could find consolation for the bitter bereavement in the firm conviction that she had gone to the presence of her Saviour, and that he should rejoin her there.

Isabella Lovell died after the birth of her little son Robert, who, at the time at which our story commences, was five years of age, his eldest sister, Grace, being thirteen, and Ada nine.

The other boys and girls, whose names we have mentioned, were the children of Mr. Kinnaird, who resided on his own extensive property, near the foot of Sliebh Gullen, a mountain of considerable altitude in the County of Armagh. Croone Castle, Mr. Kinnaird's dwelling, was situated in the parish of which Mr. Lovell was the vicar; and the two gentlemen, and their respective families, became intimate friends. During Isabella Lovell's life, she and Mrs. Kinnaird were very frequent companions, and the

beautiful Spaniard created a deep interest in the breast of the English lady—for Mrs. Kinnaird was a native of the sister isle. From her the enthusiastic Isabella learnt much, both by precept and example. Next to her husband, she looked to her kind and Christian friend for guidance and advice; and when she died it was to Charlotte Kinnaird that she recommended her three young children, who were doomed to lose a mother's care and love.

Isabella Lovell's trust in her friend was not misplaced. Mrs. Kinnaird assumed the active superintendence of the orphans; and, while their only remaining parent was too much bowed down by grief to watch over them, she did all that an affectionate Christian spirit could dictate, or an energetic character accomplish, to supply to them what they had lost.

It naturally followed that her own children learnt to regard the young Lovells almost in the light of brothers and sisters. They shared each others pleasures, and frequently each others tasks. Their holidays were almost invariably spent together; and when, in course of time, Alfred and Edward Kinnaird were sent to school, some pleasant expedition was generally arranged for the summer vacation, in which the Lovells were always invited to share.

It was on one of these occasions, that, as we have seen, the united families found themselves at the Giant's Causeway; having taken up their abode in the neighbouring village of Portrush, with the intention

of thoroughly examining every part of the interesting basaltic formations which mark that part of the Irish coast ; and also of making excursions to every other spot that possessed either picturesque or historical attractions.

Alfred Kinnaird, and his brother Edward, better known by the abbreviation *Ned*, were now respectively sixteen and fourteen years of age. They were, therefore, both able and willing to undertake fatiguing and adventurous expeditions, and to enter into anything that partook of the nature of sport. In these pursuits they were joined and encouraged by their friend and guide, Charles Lovell, who was half-brother to the Vicar, and so much younger than he as to be looked on by all the young people as their companion and playfellow, rather than as one of "the elders."

Charles Lovell was an ensign in a Highland Regiment, then quartered in Scotland, and he had ingeniously contrived to make his leave of absence synchronize with the young Kinnairds' vacation, and so enable him to join the happy party at Portrush, where he was received with acclamations of joy and welcome.

At the precise moment at which our story opened, he was engaged with his brother and Mr. Kinnaird in examining that most striking part of the basaltic formations called, by the inhabitants of the neighbourhood, the Great Organ. This name is derived from the peculiar form and arrangement of the

columns, and it is very appropriate ; for at that spot they rise perpendicularly against the side of the steep hill, and are exposed to view for a considerable height, placed side by side in very apt resemblance to the pipes of a gigantic organ—such as might have been played on by the mighty race who trod the mysterious Causeway, and traced its course beneath the waters that divide the British Isles.

It was only by promising to accompany the boys after dinner to the summit of the rock that rises above this magnificent natural organ—and from which a fine view of the sea and the neighbouring islands can be obtained—that Charles Lovell had been excused from sharing in the occupations of his younger friends. It might, perhaps, have been as well, humanly speaking, if he had met with as little indulgence on this occasion as was generally accorded to him. But such was not to be the case—sad and unlooked for results were ordered, for good reasons, to arise from this party of pleasure ; and Charles Lovell could not foresee that his presence would be peculiarly needful among his young favourites.

Very busy were Grace, and Alfred, and Ellen Kinnaird in examining the disjointed columns, and observing the remarkable manner in which each was formed, and rendered secure, by the upper surface of the several pieces being concave, and that which rested on it being convex. Grace made several very accurate drawings and measurements ; and then she sat down on one of the ready-made seats, to attempt a

sketch of a fine specimen of the immense boulders that lie here and there among the basaltic ruins; and are objects of curiosity, not only from their size, and their circular form, but also from their being composed of an entirely different kind of stone from that which is found all around them.

"Where do they come from, and what power hewed them into their round shape, and rolled them here among these strange octagons and sexagons?" said Grace, thoughtfully, as she arranged her sketch book, and prepared to commence her drawing.

"Why, surely the giants did it all," replied Alfred, laughing. "You know we are now in the domain of the mighty men of old—the sons of Anak? The giants who sang to the tones of yonder organ, and washed their feet by walking along the Causeway to the Scottish coast, and back again—could easily have formed these boulders in some of the neighbouring quarries and rolled them down here to play bowls with. You may record this lucid and scientific explanation in your book, Grace."

"Well, Alfred," exclaimed his sister Ellen, "you have not talked to old Murphy for nothing. I suppose he put all these wise notions into your head."

"Not at all, Ellen; they are purely original, and I claim all the merit of the discovery, which I have no doubt the Archæological Societies have failed to hit upon. I shall communicate it to uncle, Charles."

"He is not your uncle, Alfred," said Grace, looking up smilingly from her drawing.

"He is everybody's uncle," replied the boy, with great animation. "Such a good fellow as Ensign Charles Lovell should be dubbed uncle by every boy and girl who has the honour of his acquaintance. I assure you he is Ned's and my uncle, as well as yours; so pray do not try to monopolize him."

"You are quite welcome to a share of him, Alfred. I only wish I had him here now to shew me how to make this great unmanageable ball look round."

"Let me help you, Grace," said Alfred; "and then I will go and look for all those young ones, and bring them back to dinner. I wonder where they are."

His remark was answered by a shout from the summit of the boulder—and, looking up, he and his companions beheld to their astonishment and dismay, Ada Lovell and Ned Kinnaird standing on the very apex of the mass of stone.

"O, Ada—what have you done? how have you climbed up there? and how will you ever come down in safety?" exclaimed Grace, in great alarm.

"O, I shall get down as easily as I got up," replied the thoughtless child. "I wanted to startle you, Grace; so we crept silently to the back of this fine stone; and you were so busy that you did not hear us building a staircase. Come round and see how clever we have been."

Hastily Grace and her two companions passed round the enormous boulder, and her fears were by

no means dispelled by a sight of the "*staircase*" up which Ada had clambered and down which she proposed to descend. A few of the smallest basaltic stones had been piled one on another, by the united efforts of the children; and on this unstable pillar Ada and Ned had mounted, and then had clambered up the boulder, by means of the inequalities of its surface and the tufts of dry grass that had stuck their roots into the clefts.

"Stay where you are!" cried Grace. "Remain quite still, Ada, and Alfred will run for uncle Charles. He is so tall and so strong that perhaps he can help you down. O, I wish he had been with you—he would never have suffered you to climb to such a dangerous place."

"O no, Grace," exclaimed Ned, who suddenly became aware that he had been much to blame for leading Ada into a situation of so much peril. "Do not send for your uncle, he will be so angry with me, and with poor dear Ada also—and indeed it was my fault more than hers. I am sure that Alfred and I can get her down quite safe."

And instantly he threw himself on his face, on the slope of the boulder, and began to descend like a cat, clinging to the short projections, and calling to Alfred to give him a shoulder. His brother mounted on the tottering *staircase*, and succeeded in supporting him until he could spring to the ground, where he alighted with no other injury than scratched hands and a considerable shake.

"Now, Ada," he cried, "you must do as I did, and Alfred and I together will be ready to receive you, and lift you down. You need not jump as I have done. These stones are very hard to come down upon"

Quickly another heap of stones was made for Edward to stand upon; and then little Ada commenced the perilous descent. Her courage had now all evaporated, and she glanced fearfully down at her sister, whose anxious countenance did not tend to reassure her.

"Gently, Ada!" said Alfred. "Fix your foot firmly on that projecting stone—there—a little to the right. Now very carefully with the other foot. Well done, we shall soon be able to reach you, and then you will be quite safe."

One more step was taken—but the projection was not firm. Ada felt it giving way beneath her tread, terror overcame her, and she lost her hold above, and fell backwards with such force and suddenness that all the boys' efforts could not save her. Alfred caught her dress for a moment, and thus slightly broke the fall, which must otherwise have proved fatal, for her head would have come with dreadful force upon the hard sharp stones below. As it was she fell on her back, where she lay, stunned and motionless, and apparently without life.

The agony of the group may be better imagined than described. Her little brother Robert and Sophy Kinnaird burst out into wild cries and sobs, while the

elder ones raised up the inanimate form, and rested the head of the sufferer upon her sister's knees. Grace did not speak—with parted lips, and wild enquiring eyes, she looked from Ada's death-like countenance into Alfred's speaking face, as if to find there an answer of hope.

Alfred had his hand on her heart ; and, after a few seconds of fearful suspense, he exclaimed—

“It beats again—she is not dead!”

“God be praised!” murmured Grace, and then tears flowed from her eyes and relieved her bursting heart.

“Ned,” said Alfred, kindly, “take my place and help to support poor Ada, and gently rub one hand, while Ellen takes the other. You must not carry the sad news to Mr. Lovell and our parents. I will go, and bring help to carry Ada from this place.”

Poor Ned did as he was directed, almost mechanically. His quivering lips and pallid face shewed his deep distress at what had occurred, but he spoke not ; and, in mournful silence, the sad young friends remained, while Alfred ran, as swiftly as the nature of the ground would admit, to break the tidings to Ada's fond father.

He found all the elders of the party assembled together at the spot appointed for a general rendezvous ; and uncle Charles just starting to summon the younger members to share the repast which was spread beneath the shade of a great rock.

A few words sufficed to tell of the catastrophe ;

and a few minutes brought all the party to the spot where Ada still remained in the same unconscious and alarming state. Her face was deadly pale, and her features wore an appearance of rigidity, and an expression of suffering that was very distressing to behold. Her dark hair fell on her neck, and her long black eyelashes and marked eyebrows gave to her countenance a very striking aspect, and forcibly recalled to Mr. Lovell the last time that he had looked on his departed wife, before she was hidden for ever from his eyes.

Ada had always strongly resembled her mother—her features and complexion bore much more of the Spanish type than of the British; and in character and disposition she was also more like the quick impulsive Isabella Rodriguez, than was her graver and fairer sister Grace.

It was with a bitter pang that Algernon Lovell gazed upon his much-loved child, and thought that perhaps in a few short hours she would be removed from him, and taken to rejoin her whom he had never ceased to love and mourn.

But Algernon Lovell was a man and a Christian. He had been taught in the furnace of affliction, and he knew how to meet trials with fortitude and calmness.

Softly he placed his arms beneath the slight form that lay so still; and gently he raised it from Grace's knees. As he did so a spasm of evident pain contracted Ada's delicate features, and shewed that she was at least sensible to suffering.

"Grace, my child," said her father, in a low voice, "we must trust in God, and not despair." °

"I can bear anything now that you are with me, father," she replied. And driving back her tears she rose from the ground, and prepared to assist in bearing away her sister from the spot.

"Your uncle will help me," said Mr Lovell. "Great care must be taken to avoid the slightest shock. I much fear that the injury is very serious, and it is best to move her while she is still partially unconscious"

It was a sad procession that moved slowly over the broken and uneven surface ; and the countenances of all were a striking contrast to what they had been one hour previous. Perhaps of all the party, Ned Kinnaird looked the most hopelessly miserable. No one reproached him, but his own conscience upbraided him sharply for his thoughtless folly. Indeed all were too much absorbed in Ada's state to take any notice of the cause of her misfortune, except Mrs. Kinnaird. The mother's heart sympathised in her boy's sorrow and distress ; and she hung back to soothe and comfort him, and dry his bitter tears with words of hope and encouragement.

Thus they reached the spot where the untasted banquet was displayed, and near which the carriages were in waiting. The journey, though short, and performed with the greatest care, had evidently caused Ada very great suffering. Several times she had moaned piteously, and once she had opened her large dark eyes, and fixed them on her father's face with

such a touching look of appeal, and yet of unconsciousness as almost unmanned him.

The first object was to convey her where she could have medical aid, and very quickly a couch was made in one of the carriages, and her father and sister accompanied and supported her until they reached Portrush. Not until she was undressed and laid in her bed did she recover her senses, or attempt to speak. Then she looked up at Mr. Lovell with all her natural intelligence, and said in a faint voice,

"Will you forgive me, father? I did very wrong."

If tears fell then from that father's eyes, who would blame him? Very tenderly he kissed his penitent child, who was so severely suffering for her thoughtlessness; and very gently he tried to comfort her, and to assure her that no anger mingled with his sorrow.

"I will never be so foolish and disobedient again, papa," she said. But her father did not reply; he only turned away his face that she might not read in his countenance the sad foreboding which he felt that the lively agile child would never again have power to err in the same way.

The medical man, who arrived shortly, confirmed all his fears. Ada's spine was injured; a long and tedious confinement, and perfect rest must be resorted to, as the only means of effecting even a partial cure. More than that he did not hope for: and he urged Mr. Lovell to convey her, by easy stages, to her own comfortable home with as little delay as possible.

This was done; and to the poor suffering child, and

all her friends, it was an unspeakable blessing when they found themselves in the cheerful vicarage at Croone. A gloom was now indeed shed over that once happy home; but it did not long abide there. Ada's hitherto unfailing cheerfulness did not even now desert her although she suffered very severely, and her quick impetuous disposition caused the trial to be very keenly felt. There were times, we must own, when patience gave way, and her warm temper shewed itself in a manner that was very distressing to her sister Grace, and to her faithful and long-suffering nurse, Dinah Collins, who were her two most constant companions. But these were exceptions, and the little sufferer never failed to regret such signs of impatience.

As months and years passed by—and months and years did pass by, and leave poor Ada nearly as helpless as they found her—her character gradually softened. She became more gentle and thoughtful, and much more watchful over herself; so that scarcely a hasty or impatient word ever escaped her lips; even an expression of weariness was immediately checked, and pardon asked so humbly of her attendants, that they only loved her the more, and sought more anxiously to mitigate her sufferings.

Ada's was, at the best, a life of constant privation—but it was blessed to her. We will not dwell on the years that immediately followed her affliction; for it is with a later period that our story is more especially connected; and to that period we must now introduce our readers.



CHAPTER II.

SIX years passed away—years of joy and sorrow, of health and sickness, of prosperity and adversity, in various degrees to different individuals—but years of *trial* and *probation* to all.

This period had been one of great importance to several of the young people who have already been mentioned; for in those years they had passed from childhood to youth—from the discipline of the school-room to the liberty of intelligent members of society, and companions to their parents. Nor had these years been wasted. The hopes of Mr. and Mrs. Kinnaird, and of Mr. Lovell, with regard to their children had not yet been disappointed; and they had reason to believe that the good seed which they had sown in faith and prayer would eventually bring forth the fruit of holy and useful lives.

Alfred Kinnaird had reached the age of twenty. He had passed honourably through his college life with as few faults and follies as could reasonably be expected. His father willingly acceded to his wish to

travel for two or three years before settling at home, and taking upon himself the duties and the pleasures of a country gentleman. Ned had chosen the Navy as his profession, and was now on a cruise in the Mediterranean. He had never forgiven himself for the share he had had in poor Ada's sad accident. Before he went to sea the greatest part of his leisure time was spent by her side, either as she lay on her couch in-doors, or whilst she was gently drawn about the garden and lawn. His pocket-money was hoarded up to obtain for her books, or prints, or anything that could help to cheer her long hours of pain or weariness, and, when he left his native land, and entered on his active profession, his letters proved that he did not forget the past, and that the serious thoughts and gentle feelings which had been aroused by contrition and pity still marked his once wild and heedless character.

Ellen and Sophy Kinnaird were still too young to have shown any remarkable idiosyncrasy. The routine of education was still going on with them; and their conduct was as much marked by faults and virtues—by good resolves and partial failures—as that of most other well brought-up girls of their age. They continued to be the constant companions of Grace and Ada Lovell; and the companionship was profitable to them, and very pleasant to the invalid and her sister, whose lives were necessarily very monotonous.

At the time of which we are now speaking, Ada had so far recovered the use of her limbs, as to be

able to walk with the assistance of crutches. She had spent the previous summer and autumn at the sea-side, with Grace and her nurse Dinah. Not again at Port-rush, which place would have reminded them all so painfully of the commencement of her sufferings—but at a quiet bathing village, on the Western coast, where the air was both mild and bracing, and where her father could easily visit her whenever he could spare the time from his numerous parish duties.

This arrangement had proved very satisfactory. The change of air was greatly blessed to Ada; and from that time her health seemed much improved, and she was able to resume many of her former occupations. It was a source of great joy and gratitude to her, when she returned home, to find that she could join her sister in some of her parochial visitings; and very touching was the welcome she received from the poor inhabitants, who had known and loved her as a lively and kind-hearted child; but who had scarcely seen her during her years of utter helplessness, and could now hardly recognize her in the tall, slight, bending form, and pale earnest face that met their eyes.

The visits to Croone Castle were also now resumed. So constant and unwearied had been Grace's attendance on her sister, that hitherto Mrs. Kinnaird had seldom been able to induce her to leave her even for an evening; and the earnest solicitations of the younger members of the family had generally proved equally unsuccessful. The intercourse between the families

had therefore been almost entirely kept up by the Kinnairds, who never lost their interest in their young friends at the vicarage; and never ceased to regard them almost as members of their own family.

The summer which found poor Ada again able to leave her couch, was that which followed Alfred Kinnaird's leaving college.

Several of his vacations had been spent from home, as he had joined reading parties of his fellow-students, or he had remained in England to visit relations of his mother's. He had therefore seen comparatively little of his old play-fellows, Grace and Ada, and their young brother Robert—though he always heard much of them from his mother and sisters.

It was now nearly a year since he had met any of the Lovells, for his last Christmas vacation had been spent in England, where his parents had joined him after taking leave of Edward at Plymouth—from whence he had sailed for the Mediterranean—and the spring and summer he had passed among his English friends.

That last year had made a very marked change in Grace. Both in appearance and manners she was greatly improved, and her character had matured and strengthened in a way that might never have occurred if circumstances had not so specially drawn it out.

During the months that she resided at the sea-side, with no companions except her afflicted sister, and her nurse, Dinah Collins, and no variety except the

occasional visits of her father, Grace had read much and thought much. She had studied her own character and that of Ada, and she had made it her object to acquire such an influence over the mind of the suffering girl, as would enable her to lead her onward, step by step, in that heavenward road which she was resolved—by God's help—to tread herself. Together they studied—together they “searched the scriptures,”—and together they formed resolutions for their future mode of life and conduct, when Ada might be left to no other care and guardianship than that of her kind and devoted sister; which Grace had quite made up her mind should always be entirely dedicated to her.

But—“*L'homme propose, et Dieu dispose.*”

Well—as we have said—Alfred Kinnaird came home towards the end of the summer, and in the highest spirits. He had indeed felt a little sadness at taking leave of his friends and companions at Oxford, and breaking up his pleasant college life. But most of them were also leaving college, and some months had elapsed since that parting; and although their various callings and positions in life might carry them far from one another—there was every prospect of their meeting again, ever and anon, in these days of railroads, where men “run to and fro on the earth,” so rapidly and so incessantly—so the sadness was not either deep or lasting.

The joy of Ellen and Sophy at their brother's return, after his unusually long absence, was very great; and their pride in his tall stature, and manly aspect,

was unbounded. Their first thought was to exhibit him to their friends at the vicarage; and Alfred^o was quite willing to be escorted thither the very afternoon after his arrival from Dublin by the early train.

"I wonder whether Grace and Ada would know you, Alfred, if you were to appear without us. They did not know that we expected you this week, and you are so changed, and grown so handsome, that I think they would hardly recognize you."

"Why, Sophy, you have learnt to flatter since I last saw you," replied her brother, laughing. "I am not afraid of our old friends at the vicarage treating me as a stranger"

"There is much more chance of your requiring a fresh introduction to them," said Ellen. "Grace is quite beautiful since she returned from the sea-side—she is not so very slight as she was, and her eyes are so bright, and the colour on her cheeks is so lovely, that all the poor people do nothing but tell her how handsome she is grown"

"They will make her vain," said Alfred; much amused at his sister's enthusiastic description of her friend;—"and that would be a pity."

"O, no, Alfred—nothing could ever make dear Grace vain. She is as good as she is beautiful—and as wise as she is good. She thinks nothing of herself; and so everybody loves her."

"She must be quite a *rara avis*, Ellen. I am rather sorry she is grown so very perfect. I thought her quite charming enough a year ago; but now I fear

she will look down on me, with all my imperfections."

"Look down on you, indeed!" exclaimed Sophy, somewhat indignantly. "She can never do that; and I am sure she is not inclined to do so. But she is very good, Alfred. Sometimes I feel almost afraid of her—at least I should do so if she were not so kind and gentle that it makes me forget how much better she is than I am."

Alfred felt rather more interested in this conversation than he cared for his young sisters to observe, so he changed the course of it slightly by alluding to Ada.

"Is she also changed?" he asked. "Have her pale cheeks been freshened by the sea breezes?—and do her great dark eyes look less unearthly? She would have been very handsome if she had kept her health. Poor Ned!—he will never get over that sad accident. It is a pity that it preys so much upon his mind."

"Mamma says that it has been a great blessing to him in one way," said Ellen, "for it has made him so much more steady and thoughtful. He seemed a great deal happier when he was at home last autumn, for poor Ada came home so much better; and she was able to walk about the garden and lawn on one crutch, and leaning on his arm. Dear Ned—he looked so pleased and so proud—and Ada was even more cheerful and lively than usual; and she really looked almost handsome."

"Not *almost*, but *quite* handsome, Ellen," interrup-

ted Sophy eagerly. "I think that dear Ada's face is very often like an angel's—only that angels are never painted with shining black hair and eyes like hers. Alfred, I wish I could be like Ada. She is not so alarmingly wise and good as Grace. Indeed she says that she is passionate and impatient—and I remember that she used to be so. But if she ever has such feelings now, she contrives to hide them, for no one can ever discover anything of the kind, either in her words or looks."

"You are warm in the praises of your respective favourites," said Alfred, smiling. "But you must cease now; for I can look over this laurel hedge, and I perceive two ladies in the vicarage garden doubtless they are your paragons, and they must not hear us discussing their respective characters."

"O, they know what we think of them very well already," replied the lively girl; "but it does not make them think any more of themselves. Let us go into the garden by this little gate—I have got the key—and we will take them by surprise"

Quickly Sophy opened the wicket gate, by which she and her sister constantly gained access to the garden, where Grace and Ada spent much of their time when more important duties did not occupy them.

Ada was seated on the ground; and, in that position her weakness and infirmity were not perceptible. she was looking up at Grace, who was standing near her, busily engaged in pruning and training a luxuriant climbing rose. The bright rays of the declining sun

fell on Ada's upturned features, and lighted up her large dark eyes, and shed a rich glow on her pale cheeks, that gave her very much of that look which Sophy had described with such affectionate warmth as almost angelic. It was not her beauty that entitled her to such a comparison—for Ada was not beautiful. It was a certain depth of expression—a look that seemed to reach beyond this world, and to behold things unseen by other mortal eyes—a sort of expression that carried the thoughts of those who looked upon her, far beyond herself, even to that world where all believed she would ere long be an inhabitant. It was this look that made her beautiful—and Alfred no longer wondered at the enthusiasm of his young sisters for the interesting invalid.

The approach of the visitors caused both Grace and Ada to look towards them, and the contrast in the outward appearance of the sisters was very striking. Tall, well-formed, and graceful, beaming with health and animation, Grace came forward to greet her friends. Her fair face was shaded by a large hat, and her rich brown hair was parted from her open brow, and gathered in shining folds at the back of her head.

The smile and the blush that arose as she frankly extended her hand to her old play-fellow, were by no means unbecoming, and Alfred was quite ready to acknowledge to himself that Ellen's praises of her friend were not too highly coloured.

Very pleasant was the hour that was spent in the vicarage garden. The young friends had much to

discuss with reference to their future plans and prospects. Alfred's foreign tour was a very interesting topic, but it was not unmixed with pain; for he announced his intention of leaving his native land early in the autumn, and not returning until he had visited the South of Europe, and perhaps had extended his travels to Syria and Palestine. He only waited for a suitable companion in order to arrange his plans more definitely; and he added that he had great hopes of being able to persuade the individual whom he should prefer to all others, to accompany him.

"It is not certain yet," he said, "and therefore I shall not name him. But if he agrees to my father's proposal, he will come to Croone Castle next week; and then, when you see him, I think, Grace, that you will agree with me that I shall have secured a very desirable fellow-traveller."

"I hope it may prove so, Alfred; for it must be very difficult to find anyone so entirely suited to one's own taste and feelings, as to be a perfectly congenial companion for all those long months—I fear I might say years—that you propose to be wandering about. They say that fellow-travellers almost always quarrel and separate. Certainly they must often try one another's tempers. We shall see how yours stand the test"—added Grace more gaily.

"If I and the friend I allude to should quarrel, Grace, you may be sure that it will be all my fault. It certainly can never be his—he never quarrelled with anyone in his life."

"And when did you, Alfred?"

"O, very often. You know I used to quarrel with you, when we were young, and you would not leave Ada, and come up to the Castle as often as I wished, or allow me to spend as much time at the vicarage as I always wanted to do. Do you remember those days, Grace?"

"Yes, Alfred, I remember that you wished to make us very idle in those days that are past; but I do not think we quarrelled much about it. I am afraid I was as willing to be idle as you were to make me so. But I could not leave Ada, even to please you and your sisters."

"No, dear Grace," said Ada earnestly; and again she raised her eyes to her sister's face, with that deep and touching expression which was so peculiar to her—"No, you never have left me—you never have neglected or forgotten me during all the five years that I have been a burden and a trouble to you. You have been a prisoner for my sake; and you have given up every pleasure to make me happy. And you HAVE made me happy—in spite of all my pain and all my helplessness, no one has been happier than I have been. Now you will be rewarded. I am much better, Alfred; and if I cannot always go out with Grace, I need no longer keep her at home with me."

Ada spoke rapidly and vehemently; and the colour rose to her cheeks, and the light sparkled in her eyes, as she thus gave unwonted expressions to her warm feelings of affectionate gratitude towards her sister.

But Grace looked distressed ; and, stooping down, she kissed Ada's up-turned face, and assisted her to^a rise, saying,—

“Come, Ada, let Alfred see what progress you have made since he last saw you. He will give you his arm ; and then, with my assistance, I think you can walk to the house without your crutch.”

Alfred immediately lent his powerful aid, and poor Ada was raised from the ground. She stood alone for a moment, and smiled sweetly at her pitying companions. And then she took Alfred's offered arm, while Grace supported her on the other side, and Sophy carried the discarded crutch triumphantly over her shoulder.

Thus the young party proceeded to the house, and Ada was soon settled again on her easy couch in the pleasant sitting-room that opened on the garden, and all her friends sat around her.

Presently Mr. Lovell entered ; and he also welcomed Alfred with great cordiality. He was indeed a general favourite with all the family, and all felt an interest in his present and future well-doing. Again he repeated his plans for seeing something of foreign lands whilst his time was at his own disposal ; and Mr. Lovell offered many suggestions, and gave him much useful advice, especially with regard to the individual who might be selected as his travelling companion.

“I trust,” replied Alfred, “that you will entirely approve of the friend to whom I have applied. He possesses, I believe, all the qualifications that you have

mentioned as requisite for the office of *bear leader*. He is wise and good—cheerful and good-tempered—and withal a perfect gentleman, and an excellent fellow."

"If so, you will be very fortunate, Alfred; and I hope your tour may prove a great success"

"You are a very enviable being, Alfred," observed Ada; "to be able to wander over the earth, and see all the strange and beautiful things that I so often dream of. But I daresay that nothing *real* is half as beautiful as my fancies—and I should be disappointed if I were to see these things with my bodily eyes."

She smiled as she said this; and again those dreamy eyes of hers looked out as if into the dim far distance, and seemed to see things invisible.

"I do not think that my Ada need envy any one what they see with their mortal eyes," said her father, taking her thin white hand in his "Few of those who roam over the earth are able to appreciate what they do see; and fewer still have Ada's gift of clothing all she looks upon, and all she pictures to her mind, in rainbow colours, and an unearthly glow."

"Dear father, you are quite poetical upon the subject, and take a poet's licence in describing my idle fancies," replied Ada, laughing. "But, seriously, you know that I envy no one on earth—and I have no reason to do so; for I have every blessing that I can enjoy. Who has such a father, and such a sister as I have, to take care of me, and anticipate every thing that I can want or wish for? Or who," she added,

looking playfully at little Robert, who was busily engaged in deranging the order of her work box—who ever had such a dear little mischievous brother to tease them? I desire nothing more—now that I can move about again.”

“But you would like some change, Ada,” said her father; “and I propose to give it to you, now that you are well enough to enjoy it; and I hope it may be the means of quite restoring your strength. By the earnest desire of your medical advisers I have determined to take you to England for a few months, in the hope that you may find great benefit from the difference of climate. Should it prove so, I may then feel it desirable to try a still greater change; and you may perhaps be indulged with a sight of some foreign scenery.”

“O, how good you are!” exclaimed Ada, with sparkling eyes, and a look of great animation. “I shall be so delighted to see England—that great and glorious land—the land of my mother’s ancestors! But,” she added thoughtfully—“how can you leave Croone, father? What will all the people do without you, and without Grace also?”

“I have provided for all that, Ada; and I trust the friend who has agreed to take charge of my parish during my absence is one who will not suffer our poor people to miss us, either as regards their temporal or their spiritual welfare. I have long been anxiously endeavouring to effect this arrangement; but I did not mention it to you until I could tell you that all

was settled to my satisfaction. I have now heard that it is so; and I came to inform you and Grace of my plan, and to bid you prepare for its speedy accomplishment. In about a month I hope to take you to England. We must cross the waters before the autumnal winds set in."

"We shall be ready," said Grace. "I hope so much for Ada, from such an entire change, that I shall make our preparations all the more eagerly."

"We will all travel together, and make our voyage together," said Alfred promptly. "Your time, Mr. Lovell, will exactly suit me. You know I am an experienced traveller already, and I can be of use to Grace and Ada."

"We shall be glad to have you of our party," replied Mr. Lovell. "But how will your companion like to be hampered in this way?"

"My companion will like it almost as much as I shall," said Alfred, confidently. "He will like everything and every person that I do—especially Grace and Ada Lovell." And he bowed playfully to Grace, whose colour was by this time considerably heightened, and who was busying herself with some arrangement of Ada's couch.

"I think that Sophy and I are the two individuals who have cause to complain of all these pleasant schemes," said Ellen. "You are all going away; and we shall be '*left lamenting*.' You must get strong rapidly, Ada; and come back to Croone. We cannot live here without you and Grace."

"We will leave you plenty of occupation, Ellen," replied Ada. "You must take Grace's place in the parish, and Sophy must help you. The time will soon pass away."

"We shall not complain of anything that is for your good, dear Ada," said Sophy warmly. "Only return to us well and blooming, and all will be right."

The party then broke up, and Alfred and his sisters set out on their return to the Castle.

Of course the Lovells formed the subject of their conversation; and Alfred was appealed to for a confirmation of all that had been said with regard to Grace and Ada—a confirmation which he readily gave.

"There never was so good a sister as Grace!" exclaimed Ellen.

"So good a sister ought to make an excellent wife," observed Alfred, thoughtfully.

"But Grace never intends to be a wife at all," replied Sophy quickly. "She says that she shall take care of Ada as long as she lives; and I am sure she will never marry any one."

Alfred was amused. He had hardly been aware that he was uttering his thoughts aloud; and this sudden contradiction rather startled him. He only laughed however, and replied,—

"Then I think that Grace will be neglecting her vocation. Perhaps however she will change her mind by and bye; and not consider it her duty to devote all her manifold charms of mind and person exclusively to poor Ada. Time will shew."



CHAPTER III.

EARLY in the following week Mrs. Kinnaird walked down to the vicarage, and requested Mr. Lovell to bring his daughters to the Castle that afternoon, and to leave them there for a few days. "We wish to introduce you to Alfred's travelling companion," she said. "We expect him by dinner-time; and, as I find that you are all to join company, and go to England together, it is the more necessary that you should become well acquainted. How do you like the prospect of your voyage, Ada? I believe it will be your first."

"Yes, neither Grace or I have ever yet trusted ourselves on '*the open sea*.' I fancy we shall be very glad when the voyage is over, and we set our feet on dry land again."

"Alfred is impatient to be off. He is much more eager to commence his wanderings, now that he finds his old friends are also leaving Croone. I wish you could all return together before another summer comes round. Two years, and possibly more, seem

a long time to look forward to without seeing my dear boy."

Mrs. Kinnaird looked very sad as she said those words; and Ada was struck by the sympathetic expression which she observed on Grace's countenance. Had she been Alfred's sister, she could not have appeared more conscious that his long absence would cast a gloom over their little circle.

Ada hastened to change the subject, and spoke of her father's plans, and of the various places which he intended to visit during the autumn; and Grace drove away the cloud from her brow, and entered cheerfully into the conversation, so that her kind friend did not notice her momentary depression.

At the appointed time, the Lovells appeared at Croone Castle, and were ushered into the handsome and picturesque library, which formed the favourite sitting-room of the family, and was fitted up with great attention to comfort. The mullioned windows were opened to the terrace that ran along the south side of the house; and the roses and other creeping plants that clothed the old stone walls, hung in luxuriant growth, and checked the rays of the declining sun. Stands of fragrant flowers occupied various nooks and corners of the spacious apartment; musical instruments were conspicuous; and books and drawings covered every table. It was evidently the chosen place of meeting of a happy and intellectual family.

Mrs. Kinnaird was alone when the vicar and his daughters entered. But she had hardly greeted them,

and placed Ada in a comfortable seat near the open oriel-window, before the door which led to Mr. Kinnaid's private room opened, and he and his son, and another gentleman entered, followed by Ellen and Sophy.

"Allow me to introduce the friend who is so kind as to accompany Alfred on his travels," said the former; and Charles Lovell came forward to greet his astonished relatives.

"Why, Charles! how is this?" exclaimed his brother. "Have you deserted your colours, and taken to marching on your own account?"

"Before you hear uncle Charles's story, and all his good reasons for enlisting as my comrade," interrupted Alfred, "you must acknowledge to me that I was quite right in saying that I had selected a peerless travelling companion. Has he not all the qualities that I enumerated?"

"I must confess that he does possess all those qualities in a very respectable measure," replied Mr. Lovell, smiling kindly at his younger brother. "Indeed, I consider you both to be extremely fortunate in the arrangement you have made—so much so, that were I an independent man, with no incumbrances, I should be tempted to offer myself as a third. But now tell me, Charles, how have you contrived to escape from your responsibilities, and take to a wandering life?"

"My regiment is ordered to Canada, and the doctor says that the climate would kill me. You know I

was condemned to take care of myself all last winter, and I could not do so when on duty at Montréal or Toronto. He has ordered me to go to the south for the coming winter, which he hopes will quite set me up. I am tired of soldiering, and think it is nearly time for me to settle, and become steady and respectable. So I am going abroad with Alfred—we shall take care of each other—and I shall, I hope, bring back a stock of health, and he a stock of foreign languages, and foreign ideas—and then we will establish ourselves at Croone, and enlighten the neighbourhood.”

“A very wise determination, Charles—at least, we all think so,” said Mr. Kinnaird. “We congratulate ourselves, Lovell,” he added, turning to the vicar, “on having persuaded your brother to accompany Alfred. I am sure you will not regret his leaving the army, for I have often heard you express a wish that he could do so. He must turn farmer when he comes back to Ireland, and become our neighbour. I hope that Alfred will think of *settling himself*, as it is called, soon after he returns from his travels; and then we shall form quite a little colony at Croone.”

Mr. Kinnaird glanced towards Grace as he made this remark; but she was so attentively examining the flowers in a stand by her side, that he could not observe whether she even heard what he said.

“I shall be quite willing to do so,” replied Alfred, laughing, “always provided that I can persuade any one to settle with me. A lonely life would not do for me. I should die of melancholy, if I were to be

established at the Priory without some very congenial companion ; therefore, if you and I do not quarrel during our tour, uncle Charles, I think we had better pitch our tent together as two lively bachelors."

"I suspect that I should very soon be turned out, to make room for a still more congenial companion," replied Charles Lovell. "The possessor of Croone Priory, and the heir of Croone Castle, is not likely to be left long as a bachelor No, no, Alfred ; I shall have a lowly cottage of my own, and never subject myself to such an indignity."

The announcement of dinner was a welcome interruption to some of the party ; and in the pleasant conversation that enlivened it, any little awkwardness that had been felt was quite forgotten.

It was true that both Mr Kinnaird and his wife had long observed the growing attachment of their son for Grace Lovell ; and they had neither attempted nor desired to check it Their own affection for Grace, and their knowledge of her character, led them to regard her as a more desirable wife for Alfred than any others of their acquaintance, however more richly they might be endowed with rank, or wealth, or accomplishments. They had learnt the worth of true Christian principles ; and they had marked how such holy principles had governed and beautified all Grace's conduct, and made her a blessing in her own home, and in her father's parish. Therefore, they felt the most entire confidence in her ; and they looked forward with satisfaction to the time when, they

hoped, she would be united to them in still closer ties than those which had hitherto existed between the families.

Still, they were very anxious that Alfred should not hastily attempt to bind either himself or Grace by any engagement. They feared a mere boyish, and almost brotherly affection, being mistaken for that far deeper and more absorbing attachment which they well knew could alone ensure his future happiness. Therefore they had, of late years, encouraged him to spend much of his vacation time from home, that so the old habit of looking on Grace as his special companion might be broken through, and that when they met again, it might be on rather different terms, which would enable Alfred to form a more unprejudiced judgment with regard to his old favourite and playfellow.

This plan had evidently succeeded ; for Alfred expressed so much surprise at the change in Grace, and so much admiration of her manners and appearance, that they had no fear of his not duly appreciating her : neither did they fear that his preference would not be fully returned, whenever it was declared to the object of it.

The Kinnairds had, however, a very strong objection to long engagements ; and they considered Alfred much too young to think of marrying. They also wished him to see something of the world, and something of foreign manners, and foreign scenery, before he took possession of the Priory—a small, but very

comfortable old place, to which, by the will of his grandfather, he became entitled on attaining the age of twenty-one.

Therefore they had so arranged that he should not pass any length of time at Croone Castle before he commenced his peregrinations. They soon saw enough to convince them, as we have already said, that he had by no means become indifferent to Grace Lovell; and they were not at all surprised when he confessed to his father that his affections were irrevocably fixed on the vicar's daughter, and asked for his and his mother's consent to his making a declaration of his feelings, and seeking for a return.

This interesting confession took place on the night previous to the Lovells leaving the Castle, after Grace and her sisters had retired to rest.

Each day that Alfred had spent in her society, had convinced him more firmly that his future happiness depended upon her, and had made him more anxious to ascertain whether she could regard him in any other light than that of a brother; and he laid his case before his parents with the strongest hope that they would view it exactly as he did, and would consider it highly desirable that he should plight his faith to their young favourite.

It was, therefore, with some surprise, and no little chagrin, that the enthusiastic young man listened to his father's reasons for desiring that he should go forth in perfect freedom from any such engagement; and should test the strength and durability of his

attachment, uninfluenced by any ties of honour, or of old association. Alfred would not believe it possible that he could ever change—he could not fall into the view that it was better for Grace that he should still have full liberty of choice, and should voluntarily return to her, guided only by inclination, and not by vows which his parents suggested might possibly have become irksome.

It was a sore trial of Alfred's dutiful regard to his parents' wishes, and his confidence in their judgment, to be called to make the required promise. But he did make it; and though afterwards much tempted to forget it, his high principles did not fail him, and he spoke not a word that could be in any way binding on either himself or Grace.

The day for the combined party to set out on their various travels soon arrived. The journey to Dublin, and the voyage to Holyhead, were only too quickly performed, at least, in the opinion of some of the party. Grace thoroughly enjoyed her first experience of the sea. With Alfred by her side she walked the deck, and examined every part of the fine vessel, while he was never weary of answering her questions, and enlightening her on all such nautical matters as his own experience had made familiar to him. Poor Ada suffered a good deal; but she was laid on the deck, and her father and uncle devoted themselves to her comfort—to say nothing of Dinah, who, between every paroxysm of the *mal de mer* with which she was afflicted, came tottering up to in-

quire into the state and condition of her dear young mistress.

Grace would have resigned all her own privileges as a good sailor, and taken her accustomed seat by her sister's couch; but this Ada would not permit. She knew how soon Grace and Alfred must part—she saw by the light in Grace's eye, and the bright colour on her cheek, how much she was enjoying these few last hours of happy converse, and she would not suffer her to forego a pleasure which she might not know again for years. Ada knew, and felt, and pondered on all this intuitively. Grace had made no confessions, not even to her sister. Perhaps she did not yet know that she had any to make. She spoke of Alfred with strong regard and admiration, as she had always done from childhood; but she never made any allusion to the future, as connected with him, and she was quite unconscious that Ada, or any one else, had detected any warmer interest, or any difference in her manner, since those days of childhood had passed away.

But sisters are peculiarly quick-sighted; and strong affection had sharpened Ada's perceptions, which were naturally keen and intelligent. She had long watched the growth of Alfred's love for Grace, and she was well assured that it was returned; therefore, she hoped and believed that before they parted, a mutual understanding would be established between them, and that all the doubt and anxiety which she had recently suspected were

preying on her sister's spirits, might be set at rest.

In this hope she was doomed to be disappointed. Alfred kept his promise, and when the party landed at Holyhead, where it was necessary for Ada to rest, he bade farewell to Grace and her sister, with an assumed composure that would have been much more satisfactory to his parents, than it was to either of their young friends.

Alfred and his friend Charles Lovell pursued their way to Chester and London; and, after a few days spent in the metropolis in making preparations for their journey, they crossed the Channel, and the younger of the travellers found himself, for the first time, in a foreign land.

We will not follow them along the beaten track to Paris, and thence to Switzerland, which *land of beauty* they were desirous of exploring before the year should be too much advanced. Charles had travelled much in Europe, having spent most of his longer periods of leave of absence from his regiment in some rapid excursions on the Continent. He was, therefore, quite familiar with the language, and the manners and customs of the people among whom they found themselves, and quite able to appreciate the amusement that Alfred derived from every strange or grotesque sight or sound that met his eyes or ears.

Charles was as full of life and animation as he had been in his youth, and he also possessed a highly intelligent and cultivated mind. He never even sus-

pected that his young friend's heart and thoughts were in any way pre-occupied, and he kept him so fully engaged in sight-seeing, and in reading and conversation, that it is no wonder if Alfred found less time to think of the past, and to indulge in dreams for the future, than Grace did.

It is true that all was new to her in Wales and in England; and nothing that she saw escaped her notice, or her intelligent observation. But her life, though new, was very quiet. Ada was unequal to any lengthened journeys, or fatigue of any kind; and a few days were spent at every place which they reached, and which promised tolerable accommodation for the invalid, as well as something of interest which she could, even partially, enjoy.

From Holyhead they proceeded to Bangor, and thence along the coast of North Wales to Conway, where they remained for several days, and from whence they made some short excursions. The change of air, and the excitement of novelty, produced a decidedly good effect on Ada's health, and even brought a tinge of colour to her usually pallid cheek; and this greatly cheered Grace, and helped to dispel a certain gloom which very frequently sat on her features, and pervaded her whole air and manner, after the departure of her uncle Charles and his young companion.

Grace was too sensible, and too high-spirited, to wish that any one should discover her unwonted depression, and she made great efforts to overcome

it, for her father's and sister's sake, as well as for her own. Nevertheless, they were both of them very conscious of the change which had come over her, and they more than suspected the cause, though they never alluded to it; and Grace believed her secret to be locked up in her own heart, and, ere long, she again spoke of Alfred in the same natural and unconstrained manner that she had always done. Mr. Lovell therefore supposed that any impression that might have been made upon her mind, during their recent meeting, had soon faded away, and that Grace's peace was no longer disturbed by visions which might never be realized.

Ada was not, however, so deceived. She penetrated deeper into her sister's real feelings and sentiments than her father had any opportunity of doing. She felt instinctively that Grace was suffering from unacknowledged disappointment; and she indulged in a little bitterness of spirit towards him who had caused her beloved sister to experience so painful and so humbling a sensation. Had she known the truth, she would have transferred her anger from Alfred to his parents; and she would have rejoiced in the knowledge that Grace was loved with a pure and steadfast affection that was worthy of her, and that was never likely either to change or fade away.

Whether Mr. and Mrs. Kinnaird judged rightly in forbidding an open declaration on the part of their son, may admit of a doubt. Certainly they put his attachment to a very severe test, and they condemned

Grace to all the anxiety of doubt and uncertainty. Indeed, as time passed on, and the impression which Alfred's manner had unavoidably conveyed, both to her and her sister, became less vivid, she persuaded herself that she had been deceived, and that her old friend, and favourite companion, still regarded her in the same light as he had ever done, and that the change which had seemed so striking and so flattering, was merely the result of his having mixed in general society, and acquired the courteous but unmeaning manners of the world. This was a painful conviction, but Grace tried to accustom herself to it; and she also tried to exonerate Alfred from all blame, and to lay it on her own too great readiness to believe that her image was as much connected with all his hopes for the future, as his was with hers.

How Grace succeeded in driving from her mind all pleasant visions connected with this interesting subject, we shall not too closely inquire. Suffice it to say, that she never allowed any vain thoughts, or useless regrets, to interfere with her duty. She was the same cheerful and intelligent companion to her father, and the same kind and watchful attendant on Ada, that she had ever been. She strove to make them happy, and in so doing, she became happy herself, and reaped the unfailing fruit of good efforts, made on right and holy principles. "He that watereth others shall be watered also himself," is a comforting promise, and Grace now proved the truth of it. Her spirit was abundantly watered during this

period of inward and secret trial. Her character was strengthened by the discipline to which she submitted herself; and her thoughts became more elevated above the things of this world, as the bright visions of earthly felicity, which had lately presented themselves so powerfully, began to fade away.

Again Grace repeated her playful assertion that she should remain single all her days, and devote herself to Ada, and to her poor neighbours; and now her sister could detect a shade of sadness in her tone, and a look of earnestness on her countenance as she did so, that told a tale of sorrow to Ada's watchful and sympathising heart.

Such was just now the *inner* history of the Lovells, in which little Robert had no share. He however took his part in all the *outward* and visible circumstances which surrounded them; and he contributed not a little towards cheering his eldest sister, and distracting her mind from painful subjects.

Robert was still his father's pupil, and he accompanied his family to England, as a means of enlightening his mind, and strengthening his powers of perception, and his habits of inquiry, before he should commence his school career at the well-known seminary at Armagh. He was a handsome and high-spirited boy; well brought up by his father, but not a little indulged and petted by his sisters, who regarded him as their special property ever since the death of their mother, and made him the recipient of all their superfluous

kindness and affection. It was at their request that his domestic education was prolonged, and that he was allowed to be of the travelling party ; and Dinah Collins was almost as well pleased as were Grace and Ada when she found that her mischievous young charge was not yet to be taken from her.

When Mr. Lovell had shewn his daughters and Robert as much of the beauties of North Wales as Ada's state of health would permit, he proceeded with his family to one of the Western counties of England, with which he was himself well acquainted, and where some of his early friends resided. - These friends had secured for him a small but very comfortable house, in a sheltered and picturesque situation, and here he proposed to pass the winter, provided that Ada continued to improve in health as much as she had done since she left the North of Ireland.

The little party were soon settled in their new abode ; and, ere long, they found themselves as full of occupations and interests as they always had been at Croone vicarage.

The clergyman of the parish was one of Mr. Lovell's former friends ; and, as they were like-minded in their zeal for their Master's service, and for the good of their fellow creatures, Mr. Severne, the rector, gladly availed himself of his friend's offer to assist him in his parish work. This he did the more readily because his only daughter had lately married, and he was left a lonely widower. To Grace and Ada he also gave

a hearty welcome ; and he told them how thankful his poor parishioners would be if they would endeavour, during their residence at G——, to supply to them the vacant place of his daughter.

To Grace and her sister this was a very welcome proposition ; for they loved to serve the Lord by ministering to the relief and instruction of those whom He was not ashamed to call His “brethren.” And very soon they might be seen going from house to house—Grace supporting her sister’s feeble steps, and Robert often carrying such things as they saw needful for the sick or the destitute. They were hailed with smiles, and followed with blessings ; and many a wish was expressed that the two lovely young ladies were to be permanent residents in the parish.

Ada was an object of peculiar interest to the simple people of G——. Her infirmity—her gentleness—and her strange unearthly beauty—seemed to make a deep impression on old and young. The rudest boys were civil and obliging to her ; and the most disorderly inhabitants of the village became quiet if she approached, and fixed those earnest, far-seeing eyes of hers upon their countenances. It was—some said—as if an angel were looking at them, and they were forced to keep still.



CHAPTER IV.

“**W**HAT is that sound that I hear on the other side of the hedge?” said Robert Lovell to his sisters one fine autumnal day, when they were pursuing their accustomed way to the village. “I am sure it is someone coming”

They paused and listened a moment, and could not doubt that some person was in great distress. Therefore they hastened round towards the spot, and saw at a little distance a boy of about Robert's age—but, alas—the resemblance went no further. Instead of young Lovell's healthy, joyous, manly appearance and bearing, this child was pale, and wan, and dejected. His spirit seemed broken down; and there was something in his aspect that instantly gave the impression that he knew nothing of a mother's care and love—that no gentle female hand was ever laid upon his shaggy head, or ever ministered to his wants, or dried his childish tears. His clothes hung upon him in rags, shewing his wasted limbs through the many rents, and suggesting the necessity of his never parting company

with them by night or by day, lest he should find it impossible again to resume them.

But it was not his spare form, nor his dilapidated attire, that most keenly called forth the sympathy of our young friends. It was the countenance of the child that went to their hearts—it was the expression of mental suffering beyond his years that looked so strange on those young features, and told a tale of woe deeper than that of poverty and want alone.

The boy did not see the sisters and Robert approaching him—he was absorbed in his own thoughts and feelings, and his eyes were cast downwards, while he stood leaning against the stem of a tree. He was sobbing convulsively; and, between each gasping breath, he took a large mouthful of bread from a piece which he held in his hand—as if he craved for the food which yet almost choked him—while his tears ran down on the dry crust and moistened it,—thus literally “mingling his bread with weeping.” No loving voice was near to whisper peace to the little desolate heart—no strong arm to give aid and protection. He was a *friendless child*—the saddest sight on all God’s earth!

Grace could not bear it. She left Ada to follow slowly with Robert, and ran forward to the spot where this child of sorrow stood. He lifted up his head as she approached, and looked wonderingly in her face, while his sobs were involuntarily checked, and he ceased to devour the bread.

"My poor boy," exclaimed Grace in pitying accents, "why do you cry so bitterly—and why are you standing here all alone?"

"He beat me, and cursed me," faltered out the boy; and then his tears flowed afresh.

"Who beat you—who was so cruel and so wicked?" enquired Ada, who now joined her sister.

Again the boy looked up, and met the gaze of Ada's eyes. He did not speak, but he looked earnestly at her and almost a smile passed over his wan features.

"Tell me," she continued, very gently, "tell me who has ill-used you? Perhaps we can do something to comfort you."

"I have never had any comfort since mother died, and left me to the workhouse," he replied in a low voice.

"And do you live in the workhouse now?" asked Grace. "And, if so, why are you here—and why do you look so starved and so ragged?"

"I wish I were there again," said the boy sadly. "I thought it bad enough when I was taken there; but it is much worse to be with uncle James."

"It is then your uncle who beats you?" asked Robert. "He must be very different to our uncle Charles," he added in a whisper to Ada.

"My uncle came home from what they call the docks; and he took me out of the workhouse six months ago. He had earned some money, and he said I should live with him because I was his sister

Sarah's son. He was good to me as long as his money lasted, and he got work. And I worked with him, and the neighbours said he had grown quite steady. But sometime back he took to drinking again, and he left off work; and what I got would not buy bread for us both, so I have had but little to eat. And he often beat me because I could not earn more; and he used language that mother always told me never to use. He did so to-day, and when I told him what mother said, he cursed her and he kicked me out of the house. I had not had a mouthful since yesterday afternoon, and I was very hungry, so I went up to a cottage and begged—I had never begged before. The woman was very poor, but she gave me this bread," and he held up the half-eaten crust.

Already Robert had uncovered his basket, and was looking up at Grace for permission to give the contents to the poor starved boy. She nodded assent, and Robert joyfully proceeded to fill the child's ready hands with better food than he had tasted for many a long day.

He smiled brightly, and expressed his thanks in a few words; but he was evidently restrained from commencing his unwonted feast by the presence of his benefactors.

"Stay here," said Grace, "and eat your dinner. We are going on to the village, and will soon return, and direct you where we wish you to go. But first tell me your name."

"My name is Harry, and my mother's name was Sarah Fraser."

"Is your father living?"

"No, I never saw him. Mother told me that he died soon after I was born, and that was the reason why she was so poor."

While the boy answered Grace, he was busily stowing away part of his provisions in a dirty little bag or wallet, which hung by a string at his side. As he did so something jingled in the bag, and attracted Robert's attention.

"Have you any money in your bag?" he asked.

"O no, sir," replied Harry; "I never have any money there. These are my 'chinas.'"

"Your 'chinas!' What are they?" asked Robert, leaning forward curiously.

"My 'chinas'—that I play with," said the child. And with a smile of real pleasure he drew from his wallet a few pieces of broken crockery, which were partially rounded by constant handling.

"Are those your only playthings?" enquired Robert with much sympathy.

"What do you do with them?"

"I and the other boys play with them by the river side, when we are not at work. The river runs close to my home away there on the other side of the village. I often stand by myself and look down into it, and wish I were lying there quietly, and my spirit were with my mother?"

All the desolate sadness of the child's countenance

had returned at this thought ; and now tears again flowed from his eyes.

"You must try not to wish that, Harry," said Grace. "You must pray to God to help you, and hope for happier days."

"Yes, miss, I know I ought not to wish to die, and I know I am not fit to die. But I am very miserable ; and to-day when uncle James kicked me and abused me—and mother too—I thought I would go and throw myself into the river, and let him find me there. But as I was going I thought what mother would have said to me—and then I asked God to forgive me, and I ran away as fast as I could and went and begged for some food."

"You must not be exposed to such a temptation any more," said Ada in a tone of deep sympathy, while tears filled her eyes, and she laid her long white hand on the boy's arm.

The action startled him—he was not accustomed to such a gentle touch—and, as he looked up gratefully into her expressive eyes, her heart was drawn towards the orphan boy ; and she resolved that, if possible, he should become her especial charge.

"Wait for us here," she said. "Do not leave this place on any account until we return." And, so saying, she and her sister and brother turned away, and resumed their walk, with their thoughts occupied with the sorrows of the orphan child.

Grace and Ada were laying their plans for his rescue from misery and temptation ; but little Robert's mind

was bent on supplying the place of the "chinas" with more costly and elaborate toys.

"I will give Harry Fraser something better than those old bits of cups and saucers to play with," he said resolutely. "He shall have my top and marbles, and I will buy him a nice toy now in the village."

"It certainly is pitious, Robert," replied Grace, "to see that poor little fellow finding his pleasure in those worthless bits of crockery. It shews how little can afford amusement to those who are deprived of all the luxuries, and almost of the necessities of life. Happily the sorrows of children are easily forgotten, at least for a time—and they find comfort in trifles. Were it not so, their little tender hearts would break. Poor Harry seems to have very deep feelings, and to have suffered much; and yet, you see, his 'chinas' give him pleasure. We must speak to Mr. Severne about him, and I am sure he will do something for his real good. We can relieve his present wants, and you may provide him with toys."

"I should like to take him back with us to Ireland," said Ada. "I think papa would consent to it—and then we could educate him, Grace, and provide for him."

"My father will say you are as hasty as usual in your feelings and judgments, dear Ada," replied Grace, smiling. "But I will gladly join with you in any plan for poor Harry's benefit. Such a case must always be pitiable, but there is something unusually interesting in that child. I should fancy that he had

seen better days, and lived with more civilized persons before he lost his mother."

"Certainly there is nothing coarse or vulgar in his voice and manner," said Ada, "notwithstanding his ragged raiment, and his starved appearance. I wish we knew more of his early history."

While thus conversing, they reached the village; and, having performed their errands, they turned to retrace their steps, Robert carrying a bat and ball, which he had purchased for Harry, and which he felt sure would give him unbounded delight.

Before they had left the village, they met Mr. Severne; and they immediately related to him all that had so greatly interested them, and begged that he would return with them and question the boy for himself. He readily consented; and, with his assistance Ada was able to quicken her steps.

"I think I know who this child's uncle must be," he observed as they proceeded. "I believe that he is a man who once belonged to this parish—but who left it long before I came here—and has lived I am told, a very disorderly life. He returned to this neighbourhood some months ago from the docks, where he had been suffering the punishment of his offence. This was not his first visit to the docks as a prisoner. He has worked in chains at Chatham, and at other places; and when under restraint, he has conducted himself so well, and been so industrious, as not only to earn considerable sums of money, but also to win the good opinion of the chaplains and the

governors of the convicts. He has consequently been released, more than once, with a *ticket-of-leave*. But his old propensities have returned with freedom, and he has again and again committed thefts, and been again and again sent back to some place of hard labour and severe discipline. Until this year he never returned to this parish, but to a neighbouring one in which his mother formerly resided. He once actually robbed the poor old woman of everything which he could carry off—he was convicted, and sent to the docks. From thence he sent letters—which he dictated to the chaplain—full of affectionate messages to his wretched mother, and of expressions of penitence. Again he was released; and, his mother being dead, he took up his abode with a brother. Very soon, however, he robbed him of a coat, which he pretended he had only borrowed—and for this act he again became a convict.”

“And is it possible that such a man is again released on leave?” asked Grace.

“Yes, strange as it may appear, he is again at liberty—though under the surveillance of the police. And, stranger still, he told me sometime ago that he had brought home fourteen pounds which he had earned; and that he had taken a cottage on the borders of this parish, where he, and the brother whom he robbed were living together.”*

“I should not have expected so much charity and forgiveness among such people,” said Grace. “Your

* The above are facts.

friend the convict hardly deserved it from his injured brother."

"So I told him, and he very humbly agreed with me, and then referred to the scriptural exhortation to forgiveness of injuries. He is evidently a strange man, who possesses some knowledge of what is right, but is in no way guided by it."

"And what kind of life does he now lead? I should fear, from his poor little nephew's account, that he is falling again into his bad ways, and is very likely once more to be a convict."

"I hope not," replied Mr. Severne; "but I know very little of him. He was employed by a farmer in the next parish, where his brother also works. I never see him at church, but he has assured me that he attends in the neighbouring parish, where his mother was buried. I fear he is not to be depended on."

Just then Mr. Severne and his young companions turned out of the lane that led from the village, into the meadow in which Harry had been left to the free enjoyment of his repast.

The boy was there, but he was no longer alone or free. A rough-looking man was standing beside him, and grasping his slight arm, which he shook angrily; while, in a low deep voice, he upbraided the child, and uttered dreadful curses upon him for having left his home and not returned; and upon his mother, who had taught him disobedience and insolence.

Harry pleaded his hunger which had led him to go and beg; and he told of the ladies who had been so

kind to him, and who had desired him to wait for their return.

But this only added to the wrath of his uncle, who uttered maledictions against those who had interfered with the boy, and taught him disobedience.

At that moment both he and Harry caught sight of the approaching party, and a sudden change came over the countenances of each. Hope and joy sparkled in the eyes of the weeping boy; while shame and fear silenced his persecutor, and compelled him to loose his arm, and look conscience-stricken on the ground.

Mr. Severne went up to him, while Robert approached Harry, and spoke words of kindness to him, and placed the bat and ball in his trembling hand: and Grace and Ada stood by, and looked sadly on the child. They saw that he had been amusing himself during their absence with the treasures in his wallet. All his "chinas" were ranged out on the bank where he had been sitting when his uncle so cruelly interrupted him; and he now stooped to gather them up again while he clasped his new acquisition in his other hand. The child's love for his old favourites was very touching to Grace and Ada, and very surprising to Robert.

But they all turned from Harry to listen to Mr. Severne's earnest remonstrance to his uncle.

"Collins," he said, very gravely, "what did I hear you say? Are you aware of the awful words you uttered just now; and of the fearful and eternal

misery which you wished might fall on that helpless child, and on these gentle ladies who pitied^d and succoured him, when you sent him out to starve?"

The man looked partly sullen, and partly ashamed. He only muttered—

"I didn't mean any harm to the ladies."

"But the words you spoke expressed a wish—yes, even a prayer—that the greatest misery which God can inflict might fall upon them. Collins, do you ever pray to God in earnest? Do you know that you prayed to Him just now in impious mockery?—for you addressed Him by His holy name, and asked Him to send curses on these your fellow-creatures, and on the soul of your dead sister."

"Pray, sir!" said Collins, looking up rather startled at the word. "I used to pray—my mother taught me to pray—but surely I was not praying now!"

"Asking God to fulfil our wishes is prayer," replied Mr. Severne, very emphatically, "whether you meant it or not; every oath which you have ever uttered has been an appeal to the holy God of heaven and earth—every curse that has ever passed your lips has been a *prayer* for the eternal destruction of either your own soul, or that of one of your fellow-beings. And, Collins, remember that all those evil wishes must fall back on your own head—they cannot hurt anyone else. There is a saying which I heard when I was travelling in the East, and which made a deep impression upon me. It was spoken by a

Mahometan—but many who call themselves Christians would do well to lay it to heart ‘*Curses are like young chickens, they always come home to roost.*’ Do you not feel the truth of this proverb? Do you not know that your curses, and the evil feelings which prompt them, can only add to your own unhappiness? Collins, I believe you once loved your mother—that mother who taught you to pray, and towards whom you acted at last so shamefully and ungratefully—how would you have felt when you were the age of this child, if any one had cursed her, as you did his mother just now?”

There is a soft spot in almost every human heart, however seared, and hardened by selfishness, and defiled by sin. There is a chord which, when touched, will vibrate through the dearest soul. Mr Severne had probed that spot in the convict’s breast, and his countenance shewed that he felt it keenly; his eyes fell, and his lips quivered, and he replied in a low voice—

“I couldn’t have stood it, sir. Anything but that.”

“Then why do you try this poor boy in a way that you say you could not have borne yourself? It is because you have become so accustomed to use such impious language that you are hardly conscious of it at the time. Will you try and conquer that habit? Will you leave off those visits to the public-house which have brought you again to poverty, and exposed you to temptation of every kind? And will you work again like an honest industrious man? If

you can resolve, by God's help, to do all this, I will find you employment and your nephew also. "The father of these young ladies is in want of a labourer at Merton Cottage; and we can find occupation for your nephew also, provided he attends the school every morning

Collins looked very earnestly at Mr. Severne, and the varying expression of his countenance was quite a study. Surprise at the Rector's kindness was followed by gratitude; and then shame and penitence were strongly marked.

"I will try to deserve all your kindness, sir," he said, very humbly.

"May the Lord give you grace to keep your good resolutions," replied Mr. Severne. "Come to the Rectory this evening, and we will make arrangements for the future."

How bright and joyous was little Harry's face as he listened to the close of the conversation; he looked already like another child, and he stood beside his uncle with quite a confiding expression of countenance, as Mr Severne and the young Lovells bade them farewell, and pursued their way homewards.

"You have suggested exactly what I was longing to propose, but did not venture to do," said Grace. "I am sure my father will gladly employ that man, and Ada and I will take charge of Harry. I trust that Collins will go on steadily at last."

"'It is never too late to mend,' you know,"

observed Ada, "I have the greatest hope of that poor convict, I am sure there is still some good left in his heart; and perhaps God intends that we shall be the means of drawing it out."

"You are always sanguine, Ada," said Grace, "we must hope and pray"

That evening James Collins and Harry Fraser met Mr. Lovell at the Rectory, and it was agreed that they should both appear at Merton Cottage the following morning—Collins to commence his appointed work, and Harry to be clothed in some decent raiment, which Dinah was sent to procure at a ready-made shop in the village. The good nurse was greatly interested in all that Grace and Ada and Robert told her of their encounter with the poor boy and his cruel uncle; but she was much less hopeful of his reformation than the young people were

Dinah had seen something of the world, and knew something of the depravity of the human heart, and the difficulty of breaking off from evil habits—especially when they have become so deeply rooted as appeared to be the case with this *ticket-of-leave* convict. She was, however, most willing to do her part in befriending the poor little orphan boy; and she laid out the new suit of clothes in order, and looked forward with much satisfaction to seeing the child adorned with them.

The next morning Collins and his nephew arrived at the appointed time at Merton Cottage, and Dinah

and her young mistresses went to receive little Harry. To the great surprise of Grace and Ada, the nurse started and changed colour when her eyes fell on Collins's face. For a few moments she stood speechlessly gazing at him, and then she whispered in an agitated manner to Ada:—

"Do you know his name? You did not tell me his name."

"It is James Collins," replied Ada; and then, for the first time, the name struck her.

"My brother!" exclaimed Dinah; "my poor unhappy brother James!" And, almost overpowered by her feelings, she hurried up to the astonished convict, and threw her arms round him, sobbing violently.

Collins received her embraces with some embarrassment, he knew that he did not deserve to be thus welcomed. In a few moments Dinah recovered herself, and turning towards the boy, who was lost in amazement at the scene he was witnessing, she said hastily—

"And this child, who is he?"

"Harry Fraser," replied Grace.

"The son of my dear sister Sarah!" she exclaimed. O, Harry, I am your aunt Dinah, your mother's own sister!" And forthwith she commenced hugging and kissing the boy with a vehemence to which he certainly had not been subjected since he became an orphan, and which seemed to give him great satisfaction, for he returned it with considerable energy, and

even shed tears of joy in sympathy with those which streamed down Dinah's cheeks.

"I wonder the name Collins did not strike us, Ada," said Grace to her sister as they turned away and went back to the house, leaving Dinah and her new-found relatives to the free indulgence of their curiosity respecting each other's by-gone history.

"But who would even have supposed that our good Dinah Collins could be the sister of a *ticket-of-leave* man?" replied Ada rather indignantly.

"It does seem strange," said Grace, thoughtfully. "And it does seem providential that we should have been led to the spot where little Harry had gone to weep in secret, and should have been brought into contact with his uncle, and thus have discovered that they were Dinah's brother and nephew. I trust it is an indication that God has purposes of mercy for them both, and that we may be the means of bringing those purposes to pass."





CHAPTER V.

THE winter passed away, and the time arrived when Mr. Lovell was to return to his own parish, and his own flock at Croone ; and truly glad were all the party at the prospect of again being settled in their much-loved home, and among their valued friends and neighbours.

Ada had derived very decided benefit from her residence in England, her strength was greatly increased, and her whole appearance gave less idea of suffering and fragility. This was a source of gratitude to her father and sister, and they were very thankful that they had been directed to G—, where the climate and situation had so entirely suited the dear invalid, and where she, and indeed the whole party, had found so many objects of interest.

Of these objects little Harry was the chief ; at all events he was so to Ada, and to his good aunt Dinah, whose attention to his personal appearance and comfort was amply rewarded by seeing the ragged destitute-looking child gradually transformed into a handsome, intelligent boy, full of

life and spirit, and eager for improvement of every kind.

In his uncle James the change was less rapid and less decided. Sin and disgrace had left such deep traces on his features, and on his habits and manners, that it was impossible to hope they would soon be obliterated, even if the evil practices which had originally caused them were discontinued. He was generally steady and industrious, and proved himself a good workman, and he earned the approbation of Mr. Lovell as long as he was in his employment, and under his eye. Mr. Severne had also the satisfaction of seeing him a constant attendant at church, and of finding him a ready listener to his exhortations and advice with regard to his future conduct. But still there was something in his look and manner which did not satisfy any of those who felt so much interest in his well-being; he sometimes appeared moody and restless, and occasionally he so far fell back into his former bad ways as to be seen in a state of intoxication, and even to shew violence of temper; but on being admonished by either Mr. Severne or Mr. Lovell, he always expressed penitence, and seemed fully aware of his own sin and weakness.

The wish of Ada to take little Harry Fraser to Ireland was warmly seconded by his aunt Dinah, and Mr. Lovell gave a willing assent to the proposal. - He knew that it would be greatly to the boy's advantage to be removed from the care of James Collins, and placed under the influence of better training, and

better example than he was likely to receive so long as he remained with his uncle: and he also hoped that Ada would find a pleasant and a profitable occupation in instructing her young protégé, and initiating him into the mysteries of gardening, for which calling he shewed a decided inclination.

James Collins did not oppose the removal of the child, for he knew that it was the best arrangement that could be made for him. But as the time for the departure of the Lovells drew near he became more gloomy, and his sister Dinah felt and expressed some uneasiness respecting him. With her master's sanction she proposed to him that he also should go to Ireland when the term of his conviction had expired, and find employment in the parish of Croone; but he shook his head, and replied:—

“No, no; I am not ready for that sort of life yet, when I cross the sea again, it will not be in that direction.”

Dinah was alarmed.

“What do you mean, James?” she exclaimed, “have you ever been sent across the sea, and is there any fear of such a dreadful event taking place again?”

James understood her, and a grim smile passed over his dark features.

“No, Dinah,” he replied, “I never was transported, my sentence was always commuted to hard labour at the docks; and I never mean to be transported, or to visit the docks again. I intend to be an honest man,

and to remember what our mother used to teach me ; but I find it hard work to get out of the old ways, especially the drinking, and the bad words that the young ladies think so much of, and that will sometimes slip off my tongue. I must get cured of both those habits before I can venture to follow the good family to Ireland, and make myself in a way dependent on them. I might be an injury to the boy, and I do love poor Sarah's child, though I may have been rough with him when I have had too much cider."

"Ah, James, that cider has been your ruin, and the ruin of hundreds in this part of the world. It is worse, I do believe, than the Irish whisky—at least it is so much more easily obtained. I find the old system that our poor mother used to grieve over is still carried on ; the farmers still give cider as a large part of their men's wages, and the wives and children often want bread, while the man is getting too much to drink, and losing his health and strength, and character also."

"It's a bad system altogether, Dinah," replied James, very emphatically. "I tell you it's the ruin of the labourers all through this country. Our sister Sarah found it so ; Tom Fraser was an honest sober man when he married her, and settled in the next parish. But this truck system led him to drink, and I, like a villain, encouraged him. Poor Sarah bore it all like an angel, and she worked in the fields early and late, when she had not the strength for it, to get bread for herself and for him too ; for most of his

money went to the cider shop. And then, soon after Harry was born, Tom Fraser sickened and died. It was a hard struggle for Sarah to keep out of the workhouse, and I could not bear to see her, who had been brought up so differently, working like a man in all weathers, when her health was failing. Dinah, the first time I stole it was for her; she had the money, but she never knew how I got it. Then it was that I ran away from this country. I have often been in trouble since, as you know; I have been to foreign lands, and I have seen a great deal of the world: perhaps some day I may tell you all my history, but not now. You see it was pity for Sarah that led me to go wrong at first."

"O, James, do not say so; it was right to feel pity for poor dear Sarah, but that ought not to have led you into sin. If you had left off drinking, and had helped her with your honest gains, it would have been better for you both. I feel grief and shame now when I think of your past life, and of all that our mother and Sarah suffered through you. I will not say that you hastened their deaths; but you know that you made their last years sad. Dear James," she continued earnestly, and laying her hand on his arm, "if you had put your trust in the Lord in those hard times, and tried to serve Him in honesty and sobriety, He would not have suffered you to be tempted to sin."

"I know all that now, Dinah; I have not listened to Mr. Severne and Mr. Lovell for nothing. They

have indeed only told me what I knew before ; but then I used to turn a deaf ear to it, and drive it out of my mind. I became a thief to help Sarah, and then, having lost my character, I took to low company, and went on from bad to worse. I often think now of Sarah's pale face, and her sad weary look, as she worked in the heavy clay fields, pulling and cutting turnips, her clothes all wet and dirty, and an old coat of Tom's put on to keep off the snow. And then, sometimes, the child was laid in a corner of the field under a hedge, wrapped in an old shawl. I wonder he was ever reared."

"James, James, if I had known all this I would have sold my best clothes to help her. I would have begged for her rather than you should have stolen ; but I do not wonder that it stirred your heart to see her brought to such poverty. It does seem hard that women should have to bear the curse that was laid on man as well as that which fell on womankind—that they should earn bread *by the sweat of their brows*, when their hands and their hearts should be devoted to the care and the bringing up of their children, and to keeping a decent home for their husbands."

"It's not much of a decent home, or anything worthy of being called by the name of home, that any of the labourers' wives can keep about this part of the country. Why, they are mostly out all day, and only get home, wet and weary, in time to light a bit of fire in the cold grate, and get the supper in the

comfortless room, and then lie down and sleep, to get up the next day to the same hardship. Dinah,^e when we were children our mother did not live in that way. She could stay at home and look after us ; and don't you remember how she used to clean up the house, and make all nice and comfortable before father came in. He got good wages at his carpenter-work, and not a shilling did he ever spend at the cider shop ; his wages were all paid in money. If he had lived, I believe I should have turned out a different man. I might have done so if I had followed our mother's teaching ; but I did not. There is not one of us that have done her any real credit, Dinah, except you "

"And you will do so also, James," replied Dinah warmly, "if you will ask God to help you, and keep away from bad company, and follow Mr. Severne's advice while you are obliged to stay here ; and then you can come over to Ireland, and Mr. Lovell will be sure to find you work."

"We shall see—I cannot answer for what I shall do when I am a free man again," said James thoughtfully "You will not see me at Croonc, Dinah, until I can tell you that I am really a changed man "

"May the Lord work that change in you, dear James—and may I have the joy of welcoming you before long in that land which will always be my home ! I and Harry shall be glad to see your face there."

The conference was interrupted by Dinah being called away ; and it was not again resumed. In a few

days the Lovells left G——, much to the regret of Mr. S^reverne, and not less to that of his poor parishioners. They travelled slowly home; and Ada bore the journey so well, that she lost none of the improved appearance that she had gained during her residence in England; and her friends, the Kinnairds, were truly rejoiced to see the tinge of health on her cheek, and the comparative strength and activity of her movements.

The old happy social life was resumed at Croone; but to Grace it was not the same that it had been before her departure to England. A certain form, and a certain voice, that had shed a charm around the castle and the vicarage, were no longer there; and Grace missed them even more at Croone than she had done at G——.

She had, however, the satisfaction of constantly hearing of Alfred from his sisters; and they were never tired of telling of his adventures, and reading his letters, to his old friend and play-fellow.

There is some reason to believe that Ellen Kinnaird had a shrewd suspicion that the subject was a peculiarly interesting one to Grace—though she was too judicious to allow such a suspicion to be detected.

From Charles Lovell, Grace and her father and sister often heard; and his letters were full of amusing and graphic details of all that befell him and his fellow-traveller. But he did not tell all that Grace cared to know; and she felt a greater interest in Alfred's own dispatches to his sister, in which he spoke of his home, and expressed his own sentiments and opinions, while

comparing other countries, and their inhabitants, with those he had left behind him. It was pleasant to observe that the charm of novelty did not cause him to forget his native land, or those who had ever been the objects of his interest and affections. And it was also satisfactory to hear or read his intelligent, and often humorous remarks, on all the strange manners and customs that he met with in his wanderings; and to mark the decided preference which he gave to those of his own country.

Ada did not seem to lose ground during the spring and summer. She was able to walk about the village, and visit her old friends and neighbours; and she could enter into many pleasant social meetings with the Kinnairds. But one of her most constant occupations was teaching little Harry. Every day she gave him lessons in reading and writing, to prepare him for attending the village school—where he found himself far behind the other boys of his own age, who had had the advantage of early and regular training. But Ada's instructions were not confined to those of a literary nature. She was bent on keeping Harry as a member of the household; and she taught him to be a handy and useful assistant to Grace and herself in their favourite recreation of gardening; and Harry was never so happy as when he was thus employed, and permitted to attend on his young mistresses.

The boy grew wonderfully. Change of air and good living, and, above all, the unwonted sense of

happiness and protection, effected such an improvement in him that Dinah often declared she should not know him to be the same child whom she had first seen at G——. Her ambition was that he should eventually become domesticated in the family as a page, and she therefore initiated him into several of the mysteries of that calling, so that the young orphan bade fair to become a very accomplished servant, if he escaped being spoilt by so much care, and so much kindness.

The interest which the Lovells had felt in the *ticket-of-leave* convict did not fade away. Indeed, had they been disposed to forget him, Dinah would constantly have recalled him to their remembrance. Her anxiety for her brother's reformation was strong and unceasing. She thought of him, and she prayed for him, and she spoke frequently of him to Grace and Ada, who never failed to report to her all that their father heard of him from Mr Severne.

For some time his accounts were satisfactory; and the rector hoped that when the period of his freedom from all police surveillance arrived, he should be able to persuade him to accept Mr. Lovell's proposal that he should go to Croone, and settle there.

That time was very near, when Mr. Lovell and his family were grieved at hearing from Mr. Severne of the sudden and unexpected departure of James Collins from the neighbourhood of G——. No one knew where he was gone. Even the brother who generally

resided with him, declared his entire ignorance as to his motives for thus so mysteriously absconding, and also as to his destination.

Some excitement was felt in the village of G——, and in those places which Collins had frequented; for it was generally supposed that he must again have been guilty of some act of robbery, and that he had escaped with his ill-gotten booty. But no one could discover that they had lost any property—no articles were found to be missing. Then many and strange surmises were made as to the cause of his flight; all of which were groundless, and received no confirmation. And then interest and curiosity both subsided—the *ticket-of-leave* man ceased to be a topic of conversation—and the “*nine-days’ wonder*” was forgotten in the neighbourhood where the circumstance had occurred.

Not so at Croone. For some time after the Lovells had heard of Collins’ abrupt departure from G——, they and Dinah expected to see him arrive at Croone; and the whole family—including Harry—were very anxious for his appearance, as the best refutation of all the doubts and suspicions to which his strange conduct had given rise.

Dinah was extremely uneasy about her brother. She remembered the conversation which she had held with him at G——, and the remark which he had made relative to “*crossing the sea* ;” which had, at the time, appeared strange to her. His words now dwelt continually in her mind, and aroused many

doubts and many speculations as to his fate—and she looked out on the road that led from the nearest railway station many times each day, in the hope of seeing him approaching the vicarage—but always in vain.

He came not—neither did any intelligence arrive either of him or from him—which could quiet her anxiety, or allay her fears. And so the summer passed away; and flowers began to fade, and leaves to assume the rich and varied tints of autumn—and clouds would often gather on the summit of Sliebh Gullen; and then descend upon the fertile vallies around in heavy and continuous showers, such as are very common in the *Emerald Isle*, and are probably the cause of its meriting that appellation.

The change in the season, and the increased dampness of the atmosphere were not beneficial to Ada. An alteration was soon apparent in her; and it aroused very great anxiety in the hearts of all around her. Her strength declined perceptibly week by week; and—although her cheerfulness, and the sweetness of her look and manner were unaltered—it was evident that any exertion of mind or body was an effort to her, and that all the benefit she had derived from her residence in England was rapidly passing away.

To Grace and Dinah—who were continually with her—this change was, at first, much more apparent than it was to Mr. Lovell. When he was present Ada strove—and often successfully—to appear stronger and more lively than she actually felt. But the old

pallor returned ere long to her cheek ; and the old, deep, yearning look again came into her eyes, and saddened Grace with fears for the future, and her father with memories of the past.

Again her medical attendants prescribed change, and a drier climate, as the most effectual means of preserving—or, at all events, of prolonging—her life. And again Mr. Lovell felt himself compelled to make some arrangement which would enable him to leave his parish, and all the occupations in which he so much delighted ; and to take his beloved child from a climate, which—although her native one—had evidently never agreed with her shattered constitution.

This resolution was a painful one to the good vicar. Nothing but a conviction that a winter at Croone would prove fatal to Ada, could have led him to adopt it. But duty, as well as affection, prompted him to sacrifice every other consideration in the hope of saving her : and, having once felt this, he was prompt and energetic in carrying out his plans. Robert was therefore placed at school, with a promise that he should spend his holidays at Croone Castle ; and a good curate was engaged for a year to supply the vicar's place.

Both Grace and Dinah were as eager as Mr. Lovell that no time should be lost ; and the necessary preparations were a seasonable distraction to the mind of each of them, and tended in some degree to prevent them from dwelling too exclusively on painful and harassing subjects.

It was decided that sea air was very desirable for Ada. Before she was taken to Italy for the winter: and it was also decided that she should be conveyed at once to the continent, and stop as long as might be necessary at some foreign watering-place, which would afford both her and Grace much more amusement than a similar place in England; and would also save her from a sea-voyage later in the year.

By the advice of Mrs. Kinnaird, who was well acquainted with many parts of France, Dieppe was selected as the most suitable town for the purpose—the air being bracing, and yet sufficiently mild at that season to admit of the invalid passing much of her time out of doors.

The parting with their friends was again a trial to Grace and Ada—but they were young and sanguine; and—if doubts and fears and anxieties did at times take possession of their minds, and cast a gloom over their spirits—they still hoped that all would eventually be well; and that they should all meet again at Croone in health and happiness.

What would this world be without *Hope*?



CHAPTER VI.

IT is now time that we follow the travellers who had already got beyond the beaten track in Switzerland and Italy, and were enjoying a voyage up the Nile; intending—when they had satisfied their curiosity among the grand and mysterious ruins of Egypt—to find their way across the desert to Syria. There they proposed to spend the coming autumn and winter, and to return to Europe in the following spring.

But their plans were interrupted by one of those untoward events which we call *accidents*—but which are only links in the chain of Providential circumstances, and assist in bringing about the purposes of God.

The heat of Egypt was extremely great—indeed our travellers had not chosen the best season for visiting the Nile and its fertile banks; but their anxiety to see as much as possible of the interesting localities of Syria, had led them to proceed to Egypt too early in the year.

Alfred bore the climate well, and he was never

weary of ranging about on the banks of the river, and exploring all the many spots of interest that were to be found there. But Charles Lovell was not endowed with his young friend's strength of constitution. He had been advised not to encounter the cold of Canada, and now experience proved that the heat of an Egyptian summer was equally injurious to him. He suffered from several attacks of fever; and his eyes became at length so painfully affected, that he could hardly use them; and he was evidently quite unfit to undertake a journey across the desert, or a long exposure to a Syrian sun.

What was to be done? Alfred had set his heart on seeing Jerusalem, and he was hardly less bent on visiting his brother Edward on board his ship, which was now cruising on the coast of Syria. But he saw plainly that to pursue the journey which had been contemplated would endanger the health—and possibly the life—of his companion; and he resolved to relinquish all idea of doing so.

"We must go northward, Lovell," he said, as he stood in the tent, which they had pitched in the grand Temple of Luxor, and looked at his friend reclining on a carpet, and panting with the sultry heat of noon. "We must hasten back at once to Alexandria, and sail for Europe, without even looking towards the desert."

"I cannot consent to that, Alfred," replied Charles. "I came with you to be your companion, and not your burden, and marplot. Leave me here while you

go on to Philæ—which I shall ever regret not seeing, but which I must resign. By the time you return I trust I shall have recovered from this attack ; and be quite able to accompany you over the desert to Syria. I would not on any account be an obstacle to your accomplishing the great object of your wishes, and also deprive you of the pleasure of seeing Ned on board his vessel."

"Your health is of more consequence to me, and to many others, than either of those objects, uncle Charles," said Alfred smiling. "You came abroad to take care of me—and certainly you have done your best to do so, in your own way. Now it is my turn to take care of you, and I do not intend to fail in my duty. I believe that a few days' rest will do you good, for just now you are not fit to travel either north or south. I will therefore go up to Philæ, and take a look at the lovely Isle, and bring back a sketch or two for your consolation. If you really look like yourself when I return, we will talk about continuing our journey towards the east. But if, as I fear, the climate has affected your health so much as to render a decided change necessary, we will then, as I said before, go northwards."

"If I am compelled to do so, Alfred, I will go alone. You will easily find other travelling companions at Cairo or Alexandria, who will gladly join you in an expedition to Syria, and I can go to some German watering-place, and there wait until you re-join me."

"No, uncle Charles," replied Alfred decidedly. "Where you go, I go. I am not going to desert you, after persuading you to be the partner of my wanderings. I may hope to see Jerusalem, and Ned also, at some future time : but I can never hope to find such another friend as Charles Lovell. Therefore I do not intend to go on an expedition that must occupy several months, and leave you to pine alone at some dull German town."

"As you will, Alfred," said Charles. "I shall do my best to get up my strength during your voyage to Philæ, and when you return we will arrange our further plans."

Certainly Charles Lovell had no wish to be separated from his companion. His affection for Alfred had increased during the many months in which they had been so dependent upon each other for society. He had found in him a depth of character of which he had not previously been aware ; for he had seen little of him since his boyish days, until he was persuaded to be his fellow-traveller.

While at Croone, before the journey commenced ; and also still more during the time that they had accompanied the Lovells, Charles had observed Alfred's manner towards his eldest niece ; and had felt no doubt of the preference which he entertained for her. This discovery gave him very great satisfaction, and he earnestly hoped that this preference might be lasting ; and might, in due time, meet with a suitable return. This hope added to the interest which he

felt for his young friend, and caused him to observe his character with greater watchfulness; and, the more he studied his mind and disposition, the more he found to esteem and to love—and the more desirous he felt that their friendship might be cemented by a closer union between the families of Kinnaird, and Lovell

But Charles did not yet know the strength of Alfred's attachment to Grace—he had not any idea that it was understood and sanctioned by his parents—and therefore he very naturally doubted whether it would survive the trial of so long a separation. Gladly would Alfred have confided to him all his hopes and all his anxieties; gladly would he have talked with him of the interesting individual who was so dear to both of them. But he feared in any way to break his promise of secrecy; and he seldom suffered Grace's name to pass his lips, though her image was seldom long absent from his mind.

How did he think of her, and wish that she could have shared the vivid pleasure with which he enjoyed his farther ascent of the Nile, and his visit to the beautiful and singular Isle of Philæ. He knew her enthusiastic admiration of lovely or striking scenery; and he knew how her intelligent mind entered into every subject of interest, and every relic of past ages. Where could she have found such a field for all such sentiments, and all such reflections as in Egypt—and especially at Philæ?

Alfred did not prolong his stay in the island. He

performed his promise to Charles, and made a few very effective sketches of the ruined temples that once covered nearly the whole area of the Isle, and rendered it one of the most sacred spots in ancient Egypt—and then he retraced his steps, and again joined his friend at Luxor.

To his grief, and to Charles's great disappointment, no considerable amendment had taken place in the health of the latter. He could not persuade either himself or Alfred that he was equal to undertaking the projected journey; neither could he persuade Alfred to prosecute it without him. So it was decided that they should proceed leisurely to Alexandria, and thence to Italy, leaving their future movements to be guided by circumstances.

Edward Kinnaird had been informed of his brother's intention of extending his travels into Syria and Palestine, and his hope of meeting him at Beyrout, or some other port on that coast; and he had looked forward with great pleasure to escorting Alfred and "uncle Charles" to some of the places of interest with which he had himself become acquainted. It was therefore a great disappointment to him when he received a letter announcing the change in the plans of the travellers, and the sad cause of the alteration.

Edward had made all his arrangements to be at liberty when his brother and Charles should arrive. He had obtained a promise of leave of absence for rather an unusual length of time; and—although he could not have the companions on whom he had

counted—he was not at all disposed to forego the anticipated liberty, and the opportunity for a⁶ more lengthened excursion than he had hitherto enjoyed.

He was fortunately able to secure as a comrade a young Englishman, resident at Beyrout, with whom he had formed an intimacy ; and they agreed to spend the time allowed them in an excursion to the river Jordan and a survey of the Dead Sea.

This was a somewhat dangerous and difficult enterprise ; but Edward and his friend, Arthur Lonsdale, only felt the more desirous to undertake it the more they were assured that they should have obstacles to surmount, and dangers to face.

The ultimate consequences of this expedition were very important to several of the individuals whose story we are telling. We shall therefore give a more detailed account of it than we otherwise should do. Perhaps the best mode of doing this will be to transcribe a portion of Edward's letter which he sent off to his mother a few days after his return to Beyrout.

“ September 21st. We made a start on this day, after the usual altercations and annoyances that always attend such an event in the East. Our cavalcade consisted of myself and Lonsdale, and three trusty guides whom he had engaged, all mounted on good horses ; and also a camel to carry our tent and baggage, on which the camel-driver perched himself. Our journey to Tiberias was so prosperous that I have no adventures to relate. The first sight of the lake was a moment of great excitement

to me—I thought of all that had occurred on its surface, and on its margin, more than eighteen hundred years ago, and had so deeply hallowed every spot that I gazed upon; and I found no words to express my feelings.

“We rode from the town of Tiberias by the ruined buildings at the side of the lake—and then left the beach, and pursued our way round some low cliffs until we reached the entrance of the far-famed river Jordan. Along the banks of this interesting stream we continued to ride until the shades of night overtook us. But we had a splendid moon—such an one as I never saw shining on Sliebh Gullen—and we did not stop until we saw, at some distance ahead, a large Arab encampment. We expected an unpleasantly warm reception from these children of the desert; for a number of them ran towards us with such angry gestures that Lonsdale and I seized our guns, and went to meet them.

“By means of signs, however, we satisfied them that we had no intention of invading their territory; and they left us to encamp for the night.

“Many of the Arabs gathered round our tent the next morning; but they offered us no molestation. We afterwards passed two or three other encampments, the inhabitants of which seemed greatly surprised to see us, but did not attempt to oppose our progress down the river.

“The *Ghor*, or valley of the Jordan, was about nine miles broad in the upper part, and enclosed by barren hills; and beyond these we could see the ranges of mountains that overtopped them, and rendered them comparatively insignificant.

“Near the village of *Summakh* we were first assailed

by the Arabs. Lonsdale and I were at some distance from our men, and occupied in shooting at some birds among the cliffs, when we heard a shout from the camel-driver; and on running towards our party, we found them surrounded by a body of Arabs carrying spears and vociferating angrily. The Chief, or *Sheikh*, rode up to us, and insisted on our paying him a tribute of 600 piastres; without which acknowledgment of his authority, he refused to allow us to pass. The camel-driver, Hakim, was our interpreter; and after a long and rather violent altercation, and an ostentatious display of our fire-arms, we came to terms; and the Sheikh contented himself with a third of his original demand. For this sum he engaged to accompany us through his own territory, and ensure us from any further molestation.

“Our journey down the river was very fatiguing, and, not seldom, very dangerous. Also, every tribe of Arabs through whose district we passed, endeavoured to impose upon us, and throw obstacles in our way. Still we pursued our course; and generally followed the windings of the stream, which are very numerous. I cannot now give you a full description of all our many adventures; but I must tell you of the last and the most perilous.

“We had started on our last day’s journey down the river, hoping to reach the spot where it falls into the Dead Sea in the evening. Lonsdale and I rode forward, leaving our men and Hakim to follow with the baggage. As they were long without making their appearance, I sat down to take a sketch, and Lonsdale rode back to look for our party. In a little time he returned at full gallop; and told me that our men were surrounded by Arabs, who were robbing and ill-treating them.

"I sprang upon my horse, and we again galloped towards the spot—the Arabs were gone—and our three horsemen had likewise disappeared. Only Hakim came to meet us. He had escaped with the camel, and part of the baggage: but he was terror-stricken; and he gave a very alarming account of the attack which had been made.

"He said that a band of about forty men had rushed out from a narrow ravine, armed with spears and guns, and had fired several times, killing two of the horses, and slightly wounding the men. Resistance was useless; and the poor fellows were robbed of nearly all their clothes, and then driven away in the midst of the crowd of Arabs; the greater part of whom were blacks, of the tribe of the *Mesallicks*, and very fierce-looking.

"Happily for Hakim, he was at some distance from the other men; and he confessed that he kept himself and his camel concealed behind a rock as long as he could do so, and witnessed the violence and rapine which he was undoubtedly powerless to prevent.

"By and by he was observed by some of the marauders, and an attack was made upon him. This he escaped by the fleetness of the camel, which bore him away from the *mélée*, but in an opposite direction to that which my friend and I had taken: nor was he able to rejoin us until the whole band of robbers had departed; when—to his surprise and dismay—he found that his three companions had not reappeared.

"What was now to be done? We felt that we were ourselves in a most perilous position. To remain where we were, in the faint hope of our men rejoining us, would be to expose ourselves to the attack of overwhelming

numbers; and yet, to proceed on our way, and abandon our three attendants, was a painful alternative.

“For several hours we could not make up our minds to this course; and we wandered about, among rocks and ravines, in the direction which Hakim said the villains had taken; hoping to discover some traces of our men, and feeling it very possible that we might find their dead bodies.

“Until dark we continued our search, calling in vain upon the names of the lost men—whom we could hardly suppose the Arabs would care to take away to any great distance—but all in vain. Once my horse, which I was leading, fell, and rolled down the side of a hill. The camel and Lonsdale’s horse were stumbling every moment; and we were in continual expectation of being assailed by a crowd of ruffians, from whose violence we had but little means of defence.

“In this dilemma we at length resolved to return to the beaten track, and make the best of our way to Jericho; and from thence to send a strong body of men to search for our lost companions. Daylight would certainly have brought a host of savages upon us; and, though we might have sold our lives dearly, we could have done nothing to rescue our men.

“It was a weary and a melancholy ride. With heavy hearts we journeyed on all through the night—so exhausted, that nothing but excitement and a strong sense of danger kept us from falling off our horses. Indeed, I was obliged to walk a great part of the way, in order to keep myself awake.

“We reached the Castle of Jericho just as the sun rose above the hills, and shone down into the valley. I lost

no time in rousing the Governor; and—to my surprise and satisfaction—he acted with a promptitude very unusual in a Turk. In a very short time a strong body of soldiers, well armed and mounted, and accompanied by Hakim, were dispatched on the search, with orders to rescue the captives and convey them either to Jericho or Jerusalem, as might prove most convenient.

“ This being done, we rested our horses—and ourselves also—preparatory to starting again for the banks of the Jordan, which I was resolved if possible to examine still more carefully, in the hope of finding our men. The moon was up when we left Jericho; and, by its light, we picked our way through the stones and the prickly bushes that lay in our route. We were accompanied by a considerable party of soldiers, and other individuals who felt an interest in our search; and, as we rode along the same road which we had already traversed, at a quick pace, our cavalcade had quite an imposing appearance.

“ All night we proceeded, but met with no success: and, about seven in the morning we reached the spot where the affray had taken place. For some hours longer we continued to wander about the sand-hills, and over the ground beyond, occasionally making fruitless inquiries of the old women and boys who were burning weeds in the ravines—until at length the leader of the Turkish soldiers declared that he must abandon the search, and return to Jericho. The horses were already distressed, and the men were weary; so we were compelled to turn back. Under a blazing sun, and much disheartened at our failure, we rode again into Jericho, having been on horseback for twelve hours. I must own that when we

reached our tent outside the Castle, I felt utterly exhausted and dejected.

"As I did not yet despair of the safety of the men, I resolved to remain in that neighbourhood until some certain intelligence could reach me: and therefore Lonsdale agreed with me that we might accomplish our expedition to the Dead Sea during the interval; and, the next day, as soon as we had made our preparations, we again set out.

"I believe we were neither of us equal to the expedition; but we were restless and impatient, and eager to go and to return again without loss of time—hoping to hear some good tidings when we again reached Jericho.

"We were attended by half a dozen soldiers, who were appointed by the Agha as our body-guard to the shores of the Salt Lake, which we reached in about four hours. There four of the guard left us—two only remaining to take charge of our tent and the camel which carried it.

"The margin of the lake was so muddy that our horses sank up to their bodies as we tried to approach the water; and we were obliged to retreat, and take a circuit towards the south, where at length we found a firmer shore, and were able to pitch our tent. The water was of a dirty sandy colour, similar to that of the Jordan, and the taste of it was inexpressibly nauseous.

"We were able to disprove the assertion that the exhalations of this water are destructive to any birds that fly over it; for we killed some which were actually standing in it, and we saw several wild-ducks flying over its surface: but we could not discover any fish, or any other living thing in the water. Early the following

morning my friend and I took a bath in this strange lake. We found the water peculiarly buoyant; but it produced a very unpleasant greasy sensation on the skin, which it was difficult to remove. This, with the intense heat, and our previous fatigue, caused thirst and drowsiness to a very painful degree; and we agreed that we had fully satisfied our curiosity, and were quite ready to commence our return to Jericho, as soon as the evening breeze should set in.

“Gladly we turned our horses’ steps from the deadly lake—which, nevertheless, we were much pleased to have reached, and examined for ourselves. The poor animals were evidently affected as we were, by the heat and the miasma from the lake, and they were languid and dispirited; so that we proceeded very slowly, intending to stop for the night at a ruined Greek monastery which we had passed on our way from Jericho, and where we had found a spring of good water.

“After the shades of night had closed around us, and we were slowly and wearily making our way up the ravines and sand-hills that intersect the country between the Dead Sea and the plain of Jericho—we were startled by the sound of horses’ hoofs, rapidly approaching us from the North.

“We would have hurried on, and sought shelter in the ruined monastery; but the nature of the ground prevented it, and we could only look to our fire-arms, and prepare for any emergency which might arise.

“We were not long kept in suspense; in a few minutes we discerned a band of horsemen coming towards us at a pace that shewed they were well acquainted with the ground; and a loud voice called on us to stop. It

was useless to attempt to escape by speed, so we drew up and faced them, and their leader advanced to parley.

“He made many demands, and his tone was so insolent that I fear it aroused our British blood, and caused us to reply with more daring than prudence. The chief kept up a vociferous harangue, which was, no doubt, intended to engage our attention; and in this he succeeded, for, while we were exhausting our stock of native words and holding ourselves ready for defence, two or three of his followers detached themselves from the Arab party, and stealthily surrounded us.

“Suddenly the leader gave a word of command, and an attack was made upon us on all sides. Nothing but the superiority of our arms saved us from destruction; both our guards were wounded, and my horse was shot dead. We took ample revenge however on our assailants—several of whom were laid on the ground, *hors de combat*, at the first discharge of our muskets. We continued to fire on them with our pistols; and—our aim being good—we kept them at bay, and prevented them from attacking us with their spears.

“After the conflict had lasted for some time, the Arabs seemed to think they were getting the worst of it; and they commenced a retreat, carrying with them their wounded comrades, but leaving a few with their leader, to harass us, and prevent our following them.

“This we had no desire to do. All we wished was to be allowed to go on our way unmolested, and seek some place of rest and peace. But the Arabs were for war—even when the main body had retired into the deep ravine and were out of sight, the chief and his remaining men kept as close to us as they dared to come, and were

evidently bent on again attacking us the moment they could do so with advantage.

"We were in a decidedly awkward position—our only course seemed to be to advance, and yet to continue on our guard. I refused to mount either of the Turkish horses, as the men being wounded, were unfit to walk. Lonsdale also was dreadfully exhausted. I therefore took charge of the camel, which I led by the bridle, keeping his body, and the baggage which he carried, as a sort of rampart between me and our enemies; while I rested my gun which I had reloaded, on the creature's neck, ready to fire on the least provocation from the Arabs.

"Thus we proceeded through the first hours of the night—which was only enlightened by the stars—and, never before did I so anxiously long for safety, and repose. Our foes were not, however, disposed to allow us any respite. They followed us until we came within sight of Jericho; keeping us all the while on the alert by feigning to advance upon us—and yet evidently kept back by a wholesome dread of our fire-arms.

"In the middle of the night we reached the village of Jericho; and—without waiting to pitch our tent, or even to seek aid for our wounded attendants—we spread our blankets under the wall of the old castle, and all fell into a profound sleep.

"It was with inexpressible joy and thankfulness that we heard, the next morning of the safety of our lost comrades. The party which the governor had sent to seek for them, had returned with the intelligence that they had traced them to Jerusalem, whither they had escaped—naked and foot-sore—after being robbed and

dragged away many miles from the spot where the Arabs had seized them.

"We had now only to follow them to Beyrout—to which place the Turks informed us they were about to return when they left Jerusalem. Our time had nearly expired; and, had it not been so, we were too much worn out in mind and body to feel inclined for any further expeditions. At Jerusalem—where I had hoped to spend several most interesting days—we only stopped for one night: and we reached Beyrout looking very much like the ghosts of our former selves."^{*}

* Several of the incidents of the above narrative are taken from the Journal of the Author's brother, Lieut. T. Howard Molyneux—who explored the Jordan and the Dead Sea in 1847—and died at Beyrout of the fever occasioned by fatigue and excitement, combined with the poisonous exhalations from the Lake.





CHAPTER VII.

EDWARD'S long letter was extremely interesting to all the members of his family ; but it also gave rise to some anxiety, for they feared that both he and his fellow-traveller had greatly overtaken their strength, and might probably suffer from the extraordinary exertions which they had made, and the excitement they had gone through, after they had returned to their accustomed mode of life.

It was therefore with more sorrow than surprise that they perused another—but a much shorter—letter which Mrs. Kinnaird received from Edward three weeks after that which told of his expedition to the Dead Sea.

They had already begun to feel anxious at Edward's unusually long silence—for he was generally a very good, and a very amusing correspondent—and the contents of the second letter proved that their anxiety had not been unfounded.

“I write,” said the young sailor, “from my bed ; where I have been confined for more than a week, by a sharp

attack of fever. I am told that I was delirious for three days, and my life was considered in danger. But it has passed away now, and I am only weak.

"The doctor orders change of air and scene, and the Captain has forwarded my application to be placed on half-pay, to the Admiral, who will duly send it to the authorities. As soon as all this is arranged, I intend—God willing—to leave this ship, and go to Constantinople, and thence to follow Alfred and uncle Charles to whatever locality I find they have reached. I hope you may not object to this plan, for I am sure it is the best that I can adopt."

Mr. Kinnaird was a wealthy and a liberal man, and he had never denied his sons the means of doing what he felt to be for their real good. He therefore sent a ready assent to Edward's proposed plan, which was carried into execution as soon as the necessary arrangements were completed.

Edward had heard from his brother before he left his ship, and he knew that Alfred and Charles Lovell had reached Alexandria, and that the latter was already somewhat benefitted by the cooler climate. It was their intention to proceed to Malta; and, after resting there for a short time, to sail again for Italy. They did not propose to linger in any of the Italian towns which they had visited during the previous year—but to travel northwards, and go on through the Tyrol and the intermediate country until they reached Carlsbad. Their further route

was left to be determined by circumstances and inclination.

After some deliberation, Edward decided on spending the time that his brother and Charles Lovell were to remain in Malta and Italy in visiting various places in Asia Minor and in Turkey, and then joining the travellers at Carlsbad during the winter, with the intention of proceeding in their company wherever they might bend their steps.

And now we must leave him to pursue his long and very amusing journey, and to recover his health by the aid of constant change, and the pleasant society of the various travellers whom he encountered on his way—some of whom he joined for a time, and accompanied on different excursions; for he had no necessity, and no inclination to hurry through the interesting country that he was traversing.

At the time that Alfred and his companion were changing all their plans, and abandoning their cherished scheme of visiting Syria and Palestine, the Lovells were establishing themselves at Dieppe, and hoping much benefit might be derived by Ada from the pure sea-air. At first this was the case, and again her friends were sanguine as to her entire recovery. She found the greatest amusement in rambling about the picturesque old town, and visiting the market, and the numerous and beautiful shops for works in ivory. But that which chiefly interested her and her sister was the ancient cathedral, with its fanciful ornaments, and its quaint shrines, before each of which burned rows of

diminutive candles—votive offerings from those ^y believed in the sanctity of the saint to whom the shrine was dedicated.

Thither Ada and Grace very frequently repaired, when Mr. Lovell was otherwise engaged—attended either by Dinah or their young page, Harry, who, at Ada's request—which was very warmly seconded by the boy and his aunt—had been allowed to accompany the travellers. He proved himself worthy of the indulgence, for his intelligence and earnest desire to please, rendered him extremely useful. He considered himself not only as the attendant, but also the protector of both his young mistresses, but towards Ada in particular he shewed a devotion that was remarkable and very beautiful. He seemed to know her wishes by intuition, and to live only to accomplish them. Her eyes were his guiding stars, and her lightest word to him was a command.

How proud was Harry when he was permitted to accompany the young ladies in their wanderings—in which he took as much delight as they could do; and he stored up every remark, and every explanation of foreign objects and foreign manners that they made to him. His education had been commenced late, but its progress was unusually rapid—for it was a labour of love to both the teacher and the learner.

On Ada especially devolved the office of instructing the little orphan. She had undertaken it from the first, and she never wearied of the task. It was this

which bound the heart of Harry so strongly to her. She had awakened all his dormant faculties and his deadened feelings—she had opened to him sources of intelligent pleasure of which he had had no conception, and, better still, she had recalled to his memory the simple lessons of piety which he had learnt from his mother ; and she had led him on, step by step, until the blessed gospel was revealed to him, and received into his childish heart in all its beauty, and all its simplicity.

Very interesting it was to see the fine animated boy standing by the side of Ada's couch, and either reading to her, or listening to her instructions with an air of rivetted attention, as if he were learning as much from the wonderful expression of her eyes, as from the words which she uttered with her low sweet voice. The contrast between the teacher and the scholar was very striking, and Grace often wished that she could have had a faithful portrait taken of her beloved sister when thus occupied. In after times that wish recurred with even greater force—but then it was too late.

We linger at Dieppe as if unwilling to quit the place—for there Ada enjoyed the last weeks of comparative health and freedom from suffering that were accorded to her on earth.

As the season advanced a cold wind came over the sea, and the invalid again suffered from the old symptoms of cough and increased debility. A more southern climate was prescribed ; and no time was lost in commencing the journey to Italy.

It was performed with that ease and facility which now renders travelling such an every-day affair, and almost robs it of much of its interest. "*Men run to and fro on the earth*" so constantly, and so universally, that a journey of several hundred miles is a no more important circumstance than posting to a neighbouring town used to be in "*the good old times*"—which *times* we cannot wish to recall.

There are, however, accidents which will still occur in the best regulated modes of travelling; and carelessness will cause calamities even in these days of improvement

The Lovells had left the railroad which had conveyed them the greater part of their way; and were pursuing their journey in two carriages—one of which was occupied by Mr. Lovell and his daughters, and the other by Dinah, and her nephew, and the baggage. Since they had adopted this mode of travelling, they had proceeded very leisurely, and diverged occasionally from the beaten track; and Ada seemed to be revived and strengthened by the change, and the beauty of the scenery.

They were now approaching Florence from the north, and had reached the summit of a hill from whence a fine view of *Firenze la Bella* burst upon them, and paused exclamations of surprise and pleasure to escape from the lips of all; and Mr. Lovell made the drivers pause while they gazed at the rich and varied prospect before them. While they were thus engaged,

another carriage came slowly up the hill, and passed them almost unnoticed. It was a sort of covered calèche, with the hood up to ward off the burning rays of the sun from two travellers, who reclined beneath it, apparently asleep. Ada was absorbed in the view; and her father was pointing out to her the most celebrated buildings of the city, and the quaint old bridges that cross the Arno at the end of almost every street. What were these travellers to them, that they should turn their eyes from such a lovely prospect to observe them?

Only Grace glanced at the carriage; and, having done so, she continued to gaze, in a fixed and abstracted manner, on the countenance of one of the travellers who was nearest to her. It was not that Grace thought for a moment that she was acquainted with this bronzed and bearded individual; but there was, nevertheless, a something in his features that instantly recalled to her mind past happy days, and an image that very frequently presented itself to her mind, even amidst all the changing scenes which she had visited, and all the varied anxieties that she had experienced since last that image had been seen by her bodily eyes.

Grace did not speak—she did not call the attention of her father and sister to a resemblance that she believed to be but imaginary—but it made her heart beat and it brought the colour to her cheeks; and then she heaved a deep sigh, and turned again to look on beautiful Florence.

Had she known who those travellers were—and had a mutual recognition taken place—how much of future anxiety and sorrow, and how much also of present suffering might have been avoided! We speak *after the manner of men*—for we know assuredly that none of the events to which we allude came *by chance*. All were overruled and appointed by the Great Ruler of all things—even to the closed eyes and slumbering perceptions of those two weary travellers in the calèche.

So it came to pass that Mr. Lovell took no notice of the passing carriage, and presently desired the drivers to proceed, and to put the drag on the carriage-wheels. But there was none to the vehicle in which he and his daughters were seated; for it had been broken, and the owner had neglected to have it repaired. For this carelessness Mr. Lovell gently reprimanded him, and desired him to descend the hill with caution and at a slow pace. But the man was irritated at being found fault with; and both he and his spirited little horses were impatient at having been detained so long at the top of the hill. He made a short and surly reply, and immediately put the animals into a trot.

Several times Mr. Lovell called to him to slacken his pace, for he saw that Ada was alarmed—but the driver only replied that all was safe, and rather urged his horses forward than attempted to check them.

Soon they broke into a gallop, and the driver himself became aware of the danger, and he tried to stop

them. He pulled violently at the reins; and, as they were neither strong nor new—one of them broke; and the horses swerved suddenly to one side, in such a manner as to swing the light carriage round, and upset it against a bank, breaking the pole at the same time.

This brought the animals to a momentary check, and enabled Mr Lovell to extricate Ada from her perilous position; while Grace sprang from the carriage, and was happily unhurt. All her care was for her sister, who was greatly shaken and very much alarmed; but not apparently otherwise injured. She tried to reassure her father and sister; and, to convince them that she was not suffering, she attempted to rise from the bank where Mr. Lovell had placed her—but she could not stand, the shock had been too great for her weakened frame—and she would have fallen had not Grace caught her in her arms, and gently replaced her on the turf.

And where were those travellers who had so lately passed the Lovell party; and whose presence might either have prevented the catastrophe, or have assisted in remedying it? How thankful would both parties have been if they had known of each other's proximity at this juncture! How eagerly would Alfred Kinnaird and Charles Lovell have retraced their steps even now, if a voice could have whispered to them that those in whose welfare they were so deeply interested, were needing their aid and protection within the distance of a mile!

But they were rapidly proceeding on their way down the other side of the hill, quite unconscious of all around them; and it was long ere they knew that they had passed the very persons they most desired to see—and had “*made no sign.*”

Meantime the vehicle in which Dinah and Harry were following the Lovells had reached the spot where the accident had occurred; and where the terrified horses were now struggling furiously, and endeavouring to break away with the shattered carriage. The driver seemed stupified, and, unable to restrain them; and Mr Lovell's attention was absorbed in Ada, who had fainted on the bank—when young Harry sprang forward, and, at the risk of being knocked down and trampled, he caught the horses' bridles, and held on to them so vigorously and determinedly as to check their efforts to escape; while he called loudly to his master to come to his aid; and—we must confess—also expressed his opinion of the perverse driver in no very measured terms; which, happily, the man did not understand.

Mr Lovell's assistance was prompt and effectual. He also succeeded in rousing the driver—who was evidently intoxicated—to the use of his suspended faculties; and the horses were disengaged from the carriage before it was hopelessly injured.

Then Harry's wrath subsided; and he flew to the spot where Ada lay, and had already recovered her consciousness. The boy knelt down beside her, and begged to be allowed to assist her in some way. She

smiled kindly at him, and assured him that she was not suffering much bodily pain.

"But, Harry," she continued, "it gave me pain of another kind to hear you just now use such abusive language to that driver. You forgot yourself when you said that you wished you were able to give him a good threshing."

Harry looked earnestly into Ada's face, and the colour flushed his cheek, while he replied in an agitated manner—

"He deserved it. He never pulled up his horses as he ought to have done—and he was the cause of this accident. O, Miss Ada—if he has injured you by his carelessness, and caused you pain, how can I help feeling angry. It seemed as if it would do me good to beat him!"

Ada could hardly help smiling at the boy's vehemence; but she commanded her features, and replied gently—

"It would have done you harm, Harry—more harm probably than it would have done him—for it would have encouraged a revengeful spirit in you. You know that you should forgive those who injure you."

"O yes!" replied Harry, quickly; "I think I could forgive those who injured me; but not those who injure you. It seems so weak and cowardly to forgive those who do harm to those we love; and not even to try to resent it."

"Then, dear Harry," said Ada, very solemnly;

"God would be the weakest being in heaven and on earth—for no one in heaven or on earth forgives so much as He does!"

The expression in Ada's eyes said much more to Harry than her words did. It carried the full force of her meaning to his heart; and in his usual ingenuous manner he replied—while tears glistened in his eyes—

"O, Miss Ada—I know what you mean. God forgives us all our sins—and Jesus forgave even those who mocked and crucified him! Yes—I remember what you taught me about forgiveness. I will try to forgive even that man; though he does not seem at all sorry for all the mischief he has done."

On the contrary, the driver appeared to consider himself the injured party; and was, with a loud voice, and violent gesticulations, demanding from Mr. Lovell payment for the damage which had occurred to his carriage and horses. He even presumed to approach the two young ladies—while their father was busy at the carriage—and threatened to leave them on the hill if his demands were not satisfied. Harry could not understand his words; but his gestures were very expressive, and his manner extremely insolent; and the boy's young blood boiled up again very speedily. A look from Ada restored his calmness; and he remained still while Grace reasoned with the excited driver, and at length induced him to retire—but not before he had used some very impertinent language. Neither would he abate in his demands, and Mr.

Lovell would not listen to them ; and after some time, with many indignant expressions, and many threatening gestures, he led his horses away, positively refusing to bring or to send any other carriage for the travellers.

Happily the second carriage was sound, and the other driver sober and civil. Ada was therefore placed in it, and made as comfortable as circumstances would admit. Dinah accompanied her ; as the good nurse was eager to take charge of the invalid, and was also the least equal to walking into Florence, which was the only resource for the rest of the party.

The little procession moved on slowly ; for Ada could not bear a more rapid pace, especially when they reached the city, and the carriage rattled over the rough, uneven pavement, which makes the streets of Florence look so strange and unfinished in the eyes of English travellers.

The Lovells took up their abode in apartments in a house that looked on the Arno, and which had been engaged for them. Very thankful were they when Ada was comfortably settled on a couch placed near the window, and enjoying the balmy evening breeze that blew softly across the river. She looked very pale and very languid ; but she declared that fatigue was the only ill effect which she felt from the recent accident ; and that a night's rest would entirely restore her.



CHAPTER VIII.

ADA'S friends hoped that her declaration had proved well founded ; and that no permanent injury had been sustained by her. The novelty and interest of their present abode had the usual effect of all excitement on a weak and sensitive constitution—Ada was roused to more than her ordinary powers of exertion ; and her naturally buoyant spirits rose to an unusual degree. She took the most intense pleasure in visiting the various galleries of art in Florence, and gazing at the glorious specimens of painting and sculpture by which the ancient city is enriched ; and she also found both pleasure and refreshment in driving to the many spots of interest and of picturesque beauty by which it is surrounded on every side.

But Dinah observed even more than Grace did, that she was frequently much exhausted on her return from the daily expeditions, either in the city or the neighbourhood. The faithful nurse was alarmed. She felt convinced that the unfortunate accident on the day of their arrival had caused the return of some

untoward symptoms which she marked with sorrow. But Ada laughed at all her fears, and all her cautions. She was accustomed to suffering ; and she had learned to disregard it,—especially when its acknowledgment would cause inconvenience or disappointment to others.

Ada would have perhaps consented to deny herself some of the gratification which she derived from the sight of objects so congenial to her taste and her acute perception of beauty ; but she could not consent to throw a damp upon Grace's enjoyments, or arouse in her any feelings of anxiety. She hoped that the pleasure which her sister found in the study of art was drawing her thoughts from the past, and restoring that cheerful serenity of mind which had so evidently been interrupted by Alfred's departure. And, as she watched Grace busily and happily engaged in making notes and sketches of the objects and the places that most deeply interested her, she resolved that no anxiety about herself should call off her beloved sister's attention from such innocent and profitable sources of enjoyment.

And thus it came to pass that the ingenuous, truthful Ada was induced almost to act a part, and to appear well and at ease when she was really suffering both from fatigue and pain. And no one detected this well meant—but mistaken—effort, so frequently or so quickly as Harry did. He was a very constant attendant on Grace and Ada in all their expeditions, both in the city, and in the country. He often saw

the weary look, or the expression of pain, creep over Ada's pale sweet face, and dim the lustre of her glorious eyes, when she thought that the attention of her father and sister was fully occupied, and that no one was observing her. She did not always notice that the orphan boy—whom she had saved from a life of sorrow, and probably of sin—was devoting all the powers of that life to her service. She did not always observe that no objects of curiosity or of beauty ever withdrew his attention long from herself; and that he watched every change in her expressive countenance with an interest and an intelligence hardly to be imagined at his age.

He was always ready with a camp-stool if she looked tired, or a shawl if she turned pale in the large cold marble-paved galleries. And all his acts of attention were performed with a gentleness and an earnestness that led Ada almost to forget the difference in their social position, and to regard the boy rather as a young friend than as a servant. And if Harry was careful and watchful for Ada's bodily comfort, she was no less so for the mental and spiritual improvement of her grateful protégé. Every incident of daily life that admitted of useful application, was commented on with a simple earnestness that never failed to touch Harry's heart, and impress his memory—as in the instance of his indignation being aroused by the careless driver of the carriage. The moral which Ada had then endeavoured to enforce was further illustrated sometime after-

wards; and in a way that was never forgotten by Harry.●

It happened that Grace and Ada were returning one afternoon from the gallery of the Academy of Arts, attended only by Harry, who sat by the driver of the open carriage, and experienced a true boyish delight in watching the many vehicles of various forms and sizes that were rushing to and fro in all directions; almost invariably drawn by a pair of small, but very fleet and powerful black horses, with flowing manes and tails. The speed and security with which these animals traversed the uneven, and often dirty and slippery pavement, surprised and amused the boy, who was only accustomed to the clayey lanes of his native parish, and the gravelly soil of Croone.

He often uttered exclamations of astonishment, and sometimes of alarm, as the various carriages passed each other rapidly, or seemed to be dashing among groups of foot-passengers—who, however, were in no way discomposed, and always contrived to save themselves from any uncomfortable collision, in spite of the narrowness of some of the streets.

At length a real cry of terror was heard by Grace and Ada—the carriage stopped—and, looking up, they saw Harry leap from the driving-box, and run with all his speed towards a corner of the street, where already several persons were collected, and from whence cries of pain proceeded.

“It is the voice of a child!” exclaimed Ada. “Some

accident has happened. Let us go to the spot, Grace; for we may be of use."

"Stay here, Ada; and let me go on foot to the spot," said Grace, hastily opening the door to descend. She wished to save her sister from any spectacle that might painfully excite her; but Ada would not be thus spared.

"No, Grace," she said decidedly; "I must go. I have known what it is to suffer from a sudden and fearful accident; and I can feel for others in the same condition."

"Drive on," said Grace instantly; for she saw by Ada's countenance that suspense was worse than any reality was likely to be.

In a few moments they reached the ever-increasing crowd; and,—above the murmur of many voices—they heard the plaintive and stifled cries of pain, and the loud imprecations of an angry man against the author of the calamity.

Presently the excited individual appeared from the crowd carrying in his arms the writhing form of a little girl; and still invoking curses on the head of a careless driver, who had knocked down the child as she was crossing the street, and suffered the wheel of his carriage to go over her; and had then driven on,—regardless of her cries,—without even stopping to ascertain the injury which he had inflicted.

"Who is he?" exclaimed Ada, as her eyes fell on the man's flushed and angry countenance. "O, Grace—let us take the poor child in the carriage, and con-

vey her home. See how she suffers in the rough grasp of that man. Surely I have seen him before—I know his countenance.”

“That is Pietro—the father of the child he carries,” said the driver, in reply to Ada’s enquiry. “He is one of our trade; but he spends so much on wine and spirits that he and his family are always poor.”

While he was speaking Grace had got out of the carriage, and approached Pietro, and entreated him to place the poor little child beside Ada, and let her be gently driven to her home. She recognized him as the very man who had behaved so badly on the evening of their arrival at Florence; but she did not remind him of that circumstance. He did not seem to remember her, but the moment his eyes met those of Ada he turned pale, and hesitated.

She saw the look, and understood the hesitation—but she only said very kindly—

“Give me the poor child. I will take care of her;” and stretched out her arms to receive her.

Pietro did as he was desired; but he spoke not a word. Conscience upbraided him, and checked his wrathful expressions against the man whose carelessness had been so like his own, and had brought sorrow on himself.

Harry had darted with such rapidity to the child the moment he saw her fall to the ground, that he was in time to assist her father in raising her up, as the carriage drove on. He likewise knew that father to be the man who had so greatly aroused his anger some

weeks previously—but he did not now feel angry. Pity for the suffering child overcame every other sentiment; and he followed Pietro closely, hoping that his young mistresses would offer their assistance, and eager to see how they would act towards one who had been so cruel and uncourteous to them.

He soon saw enough to convince him that the sisters were guided by the same Christian principles of charity and forgiveness which Ada had impressed upon him; and he felt a throb of pleasure and of admiration when he saw the now quiet and subdued father, in obedience to Ada's directions, take his seat by the driver, and direct him where to go.

Grace and Harry followed as quickly as possible, guided by the persons whose sympathy or curiosity led them to feel an interest in the fate of the child.

Soon they reached the entrance of a large, but rather ruinous-looking house in a narrow street; and they saw, Pietro rush into the doorway, and soon reappear with a woman who might have seen better days, but who now wore an aspect of poverty and dejection.

Wildly she darted to the carriage, calling on "her darling—her blessed little Catarina:" and the child—who had been soothed and quieted by Ada's gentle looks, and gentle touch—began to wail again at the sight of her mother.

Grace came up, and endeavoured to console the poor woman with hopes that the child might only be slightly hurt—and she assisted her in carrying the

little creature into the house, and laying her on a wretched bed in the large but comfortless room which formed the home of the family.

The apartment was on the ground floor ; and Ada was therefore able to follow her sister, with Harry's ready assistance—which would not have been the case if Pietro's dwelling had been up three or four flights of steep and narrow stairs, as might have been the case.

The screams of the poor child as she was moved and placed on the bed convinced Grace and Ada that the injury must be more serious than they had at first supposed : and, on examination, they found that one of her slender little legs was broken, and the other severely bruised and lacerated.

The despair of the mother was touching in the extreme. Catarina, was her only child, and probably her chief comfort in life : and it was long before the sisters could calm her grief, or persuade her that her darling's life might yet be spared.

When Pietro beheld the sad spectacle of his little girl's crushed limbs, his rage and grief caused him to forget the presence of the young English ladies ; and he again broke out into violent and abusive language, and threatened to revenge himself upon Giuseppe—the careless fiacre driver—the first time that he should have an opportunity.

Ada heard and understood his threats and curses ; and—while Grace was occupied in assisting Beatrice to undress the child—she drew Harry aside, and re-

peated to him in English some of the man's wicked wishes, and revengeful threatenings. She had no need to press the application upon him—he felt it in a moment.

“And I was like that man” he said, with a look of ingenuous shame. “I was as sinful as he is. Shall I ask his forgiveness?”

“He was unconscious of your evil inclinations towards him, Harry; and does not know that he has anything to forgive. But God heard your angry words, and knew your angry feelings—have you asked Him to forgive them?”

“O, yes—I did so directly, and I have not forgotten it since. What can I do now to help Pietro?”

“You can go in our fiacre to Dr. Browne—who came to see me yesterday—and bring him here to attend to this poor child. I will speak to Pietro while you are gone.”

Harry flew to execute Ada's commission; and she then approached the still excited Pietro, and told him that she had sent for the best medical aid that the city could afford; and that everything should be done for the little Catarina's comfort, if only he would be calm, and try to sooth the suffering child and the distressed mother, instead of adding to their misery by his violence.

Again the look and voice of Ada had the effect of silencing Pietro: and she proceeded to remind him of his own conduct on the evening when he was driving her and her father and sister towards Florence; and

she compared it with that of the man who had now excited such anger in his own breast.

Pietro felt thoroughly ashamed, and his countenance expressed it. He saw and comprehended the kindly feelings that now prompted the two ladies whom he had injured and insulted—and his conscience told him that he had deserved no kindness at their hands, and that his conduct was a sad contrast to theirs. But he did not express all this in words; nor did Ada expect it. She perceived that he understood her; and she was contented to see that he became calm and quiet, and moved gently about the room, endeavouring to add to its comfort, and to assist his wife instead of scaring her with his loud voice and angry gestures—to which, no doubt, she was very much accustomed.

Ere long Harry returned, accompanied by Dr. Browne—who at once rendered to the little sufferer all the assistance that was requisite. Everything that he ordered for her health and comfort was provided by the liberality of Grace and Ada; and they left the house, promising to return the following day, and attended by the fervent blessings of the parents—Pietro's blessings were as vehement as his curses—and the grateful looks of the now tranquil child.

Ada's distressed countenance on her return home, at once told both her father and Dinah that something untoward had occurred. She was indeed worn in spirits and suffering in body from the unusual fatigue and excitement which she had undergone; and no efforts on her part could conceal the fact from those

who watched her so anxiously. She was unable to accompany her sister the next day when she went to visit the little Catarina. But Mr. Lovell went with Grace; and, by his kindness and his generosity, he added yet more to the grateful feelings of the parents, and of the patient little sufferer also.

Constantly were Grace's visits repeated, and occasionally Ada was able to accompany her; but more commonly she was attended by Dinah or Harry.

Little Catarina made very rapid progress towards recovery; and, to add to the satisfaction of her benefactors, they perceived a decided improvement in the aspect of the dwelling, and in the looks and manners of its inmates. For the present at least Pietro seemed to have left off his evil habits, and to be anxious for the comfort, not only of his sick child, but of his wife also. And Beatrice looked bright and hopeful, and was clothed with more attention to neatness and respectability than when first the Lovells had become acquainted with her. Some good had been done—and Grace and Ada rejoiced in having been permitted to effect it.

But the attention of Grace and her father was soon diverted from all other objects, and very painfully absorbed by Ada. She became perceptibly weaker day by day; and it was only occasionally, when the weather was unusually mild, that she could take a short drive on the banks of the Arno in Pietro's carriage—which was always the one now selected. The care with which he endeavoured to save the invalid

from every shock, and to avoid every rough spot, was an agreeable contrast to his former rude indifference : and even his horses seemed to partake in the same subdued feelings ; for they became perfectly gentle and tractable, and never betrayed the slightest impatience when their speed was checked, and they were compelled to go at a walking pace to suit the increasing debility of the sufferer.

All the best medical advice that Florence afforded—either English or Italian—was called in ; and hope was not abandoned for some weeks. But then Dr. Browne was obliged to own that Ada's constitution had received too many shocks ; and that her rallying powers were exhausted. She might linger for awhile ; but her father and sister must not hope ever to remove her from Florence.

This announcement was a very severe shock. Mr. Lovell and Grace had often felt alarmed when Ada had shewn greater weakness than usual , but hitherto she had always rallied under the treatment that had been adopted ; and they had learned to feel a sort of confidence that she would continue to do so. The affections of both—especially of Grace—were very much bound up in Ada. She had a winning manner, and a sweet imaginative way of expressing her thoughts and feelings that were peculiarly attractive, and shed a certain indefinable charm over the daily life in which she took a part. To realize her departure—to look forward to that daily life deprived of the wonted charm, was indeed a bitter feeling.

And Ada must be told that her recovery was hopeless; and that her time on earth would probably be very short. She must hear the sentence of death—for science could do no more to prolong her young life—and she must prepare to leave all she loved on earth; and to go forth to an untried and mysterious world—alone.

It was Mr. Lovell who told his beloved child that she must die; and his own heart was wrung with agony while he did so. Again the strong resemblance between Ada and her mother struck him as if afresh—and again it recalled to his memory all the sorrows which he had already felt, and added to the pain of the present trial.

To his surprise, as well as to his great relief, Ada did not appear at all startled by the dread announcement. Some tears of sympathy rose to her eyes as she saw the depth of her father's sorrow: but a sweet smile played on her lips a moment afterwards; and she pressed his hand fondly while she said—

“This is no new thought to me, dear father. For years I have endeavoured to prepare for an early death; and ever since we came to Florence I have been convinced that it would not be long delayed. I would not sadden you and my darling Grace by telling you that I knew we must soon part on earth. Grace has had some happy days at Florence. I would not have had them embittered by sad forebodings.”

“And you have overtaken your strength, Ada, and exerted yourself when you were suffering, to spare us

anxiety," exclaimed Mr. Lovell, in a tone of self-reproach. "We ought not to have allowed this."

"Dear father, it has been a source of great happiness to me to see both you and Grace enjoying all the beauties of nature and of art with which this place abounds. And I also have been happy here. I also have thoroughly appreciated all that I have seen; and I have thought of all the beauty and all the glory of that world to which I am hastening; and have felt how all these earthly things sink into utter insignificance when compared with them. Do not fancy that I have been grieving in secret at the prospect of death. There is but one thing that grieves me—it is the thought of leaving those I love so dearly, and knowing that they will mourn. I believe that no precautions could have prolonged my life. Had I not been convinced of this I would have listened to Dinah's warnings."

Much longer would the father and daughter have pursued this interesting theme; for it was a relief to Ada to tell all her thoughts, and all her blessed Christian hopes and expectations to him whose holy teaching had inspired her with them; and who could so fully enter into all her feelings. And there was a beautiful serenity in Ada's manner, and a heavenly expression in her lovely eyes, that soothed and calmed her afflicted father, and led him to forget his own sorrow in the prospect of her approaching bliss.

But the conversation was interrupted by Grace's entrance; and Mr. Lovell hastily left the room. He

well knew the devoted love which she had ever felt for her afflicted sister; and he wished that there should be no restraint to the freedom of their intercourse at this trying moment.

We will not describe that meeting or tell of Grace's deep irrepressible grief, and of Ada's gentle and affectionate words of consolation—and of hope beyond the grave. It is enough to say that both the girls were Christians—sincere and practical believers—and therefore they could not sorrow as those without the hopes of the gospel. Neither could they give way to any selfish feelings, and thus add to one another's grief.

Calmly they learned to converse together of their approaching separation; and joyfully they spoke of their future meeting. Grace had no great expectations of a happy life. She felt that disappointment had been her appointed lot—and she endeavoured to resign herself to it, and to *look forward*.

"I used to say that I should devote myself to you, dear Ada," she remarked one day, when her sister was trying to cheer her with the hope of bright and happy years to come. "I used to declare that I should remain single for your sake. Now I shall have no object but our father; and I will live for him alone."

Ada smiled. "Do not be too rash in your resolutions, Grace," she replied, "I hope you may live for others also; and be the joy and the comfort of another home, as you have ever been of ours."

"I think not, Ada. Such a home as I should be

willing to share is not likely to be offered to me ; and I will accept no other."

Grace blushed deeply as she said these words, and then rather abruptly changed the conversation. It was not again renewed.

Ada had so long been an invalid and had for so many years been the object of care and solicitude to her family, that her present condition had in it little of novelty—little to shock or excite those about her. She lay on a couch in the cheerful sitting-room, as she had so often done before, and she took part in the conversation of her father and sister, and she even continued to give frequent instruction to Harry—and it seemed hard to believe that she was rapidly passing away. Only her sweet voice grew weaker—and her eyes had a more heavenly and wonderful expression—and her thoughts were more raised above the things of this world, and were more freely communicated to those around her.

No one repined—no one even expressed their feelings of sorrow in Ada's presence. It would have seemed unkind to disturb the blessed serenity of her whole look and manner, and that heavenly peace which was manifested in all she said, and all she did. But there was grief—deep and ever increasing grief—in the hearts of those who loved her ; and the time was drawing near when it would no longer be a duty to repress it.



CHAPTER IX.

WHEN Alfred Kinnaird and Charles Lovell passed their friends and relatives on the road from Florence—and unconsciously left them to the perilous carelessness and offensive rudeness of their driver—they were on their way to Bohemia ; having been strongly recommended to try the baths of Carlsbad for the restoration of Charles's health and strength.

Thither they proceeded ; and there they took up their abode, and were very shortly in the full enjoyment of the beautiful scenery by which the town is surrounded, and the mild atmosphere that is secured to it by the protecting mountains on all sides.

The view from these bold heights is strikingly fine and varied : and ere long, Charles was able to climb to their summits, and look down on the houses that occupied the ravines below, and on the river Tept which runs between them—spanned by many bridges, and adorned on each side by many public buildings—more especially those erected for the convenience of visitors to the health-bestowing springs.

Nor were the charms of society wanting to the attractions of Carlsbad. Our travellers soon made acquaintance with several agreeable individuals, both English and foreign ; and a very pleasant intercourse was established, which made the time pass swiftly away. When the weather was not suitable for more distant excursions, the avenue of lime and chesnut trees, that runs along the river's bank, afforded a sheltered and much-frequented promenade, even at that season of the year.

Among the new acquaintances of Alfred and his companion, none were so much appreciated by the former as a certain Norwegian gentleman named Ludovic Dagmer—a young man a few years older than himself, and of a character and disposition not very dissimilar to his own. A real friendship sprang up between them ; and many a long ramble they took together to the summits of the Hummesberg, the Lorenzberg, and the Kreuzberg

Ludovic was an ardent admirer of scenery—especially of wild and mountainous scenery—and these rocky heights reminded him of his own native mountains, and led him to expatiate to his young friend on the charms and the beauties of his Norwegian home. His descriptions greatly interested Alfred ; and Ludovic so cordially invited him to go with him to his native country, when his stay at Carlsbad should be concluded, that he felt much tempted to comply. He would not, however, pledge himself to accept the invitation until he should see how his travelling

companion progressed, and whether he felt equal to a journey so far north. It had long been Alfred's wish to travel through Norway; and it had, indeed, formed part of his projected tour. But Charles Lovell's protracted illness had deranged all his plans, and he would not at present form any new ones, unconnected with his friend.

All was, by and by, made very easy to him, and in a way which he had not anticipated. His own pre-occupied mind—in which the image of Grace Lovell remained as deeply impressed as ever—made him indisposed to cultivate the general society of Carlsbad; or to seek the acquaintance of the many English families, who had left their homes in more exposed and trying situations, to seek the sheltered valleys, and the warm refreshing baths of this popular place. Alfred preferred the companionship of Ludovic Dagmer, and of a few other intelligent persons with whom the Norwegian made him acquainted; and the public assemblies, so much frequented by the visitors, had no charms for him.

But Charles Lovell was not altogether indifferent to the attractions by which he found himself surrounded. He was not equal—in spite of the general improvement in his health—to the long and fatiguing pedestrian expeditions in which Alfred and Ludovic delighted; and, during their absence, he generally contrived to spend his time very pleasantly with an English family named Vivian. He had met some relatives of Mr. Vivian's several years ago, and the

knowledge of this fact caused an intimacy to spring up between him and the family now residing at Carlsbad, which appeared to give lively satisfaction to both parties. Alfred also was welcomed by the Vivians whenever he sought their society ; but that he seldom did, as he preferred spending his time in studying the Norwegian language with his friend Ludovic Dagmer ; and exploring the country around Carlsbad as much as the season would permit.

Charles was therefore left a good deal to his own resources. But he found these so agreeable that time never hung heavily on his hands ; and he begged Alfred by no means to consider him, but to take advantage of every favourable day to pursue his Bohemian researches.

And Alfred did so without the slightest compunction, for he had discovered—and the discovery gave him neither pain nor jealousy—that his travelling companion had met with an individual whose society was even more attractive to him than his own. This individual was Catherine Vivian, the only child of Mr. and Mrs. Vivian, and on whom they had bestowed every care, and every advantage that could render her an agreeable and sensible companion, and fit her for the performance of every duty of life to which she might hereafter be called.

Alfred acknowledged the attractions of Miss Vivian—but he had no wish to rival Charles Lovell in her estimation ; and he devoted his attention, when in their company, chiefly to her parents, who were

singularly pleasing and well-informed persons; and he heartily wished that Charles's compulsory visit to Carlsbad might result in connecting him with such a family

Thus it came to pass that, although Charles had almost ceased to be an invalid before the winter months had expired, he yet felt no inclination to brave the inclemency of a Norwegian climate in the spring, nor to subject himself to the hardships of Norwegian travelling. He preferred to remain in Bohemia, and to occupy himself in sketching, and other pursuits which would admit of being shared by the gentler sex.

But he warmly pressed Alfred to accompany Ludovic Dagmer to his native land; and to avail himself of the opportunity of seeing the country and its inhabitants under such advantageous circumstances as might never be offered again.

"I can trust you with Dagmer," he said, laughing—"I believe he will take almost as good care of you as I could do, and I can safely write to your parents, and assure them that I have placed you in good hands. Your new friend is evidently as well-principled as he is agreeable and gentlemanly"

"And do not you want someone to take care of you, uncle Charles?" replied Alfred. "It seems to me that Carlsbad is a place of very peculiar danger to you."

Charles smiled cheerily, and said: "There are some dangers that one walks into with one's eyes open, and has no wish to escape." ~ ~

“Then I shall spare all my warnings, and leave you to your fate, my good uncle: only wishing, very sincerely, that whatever befalls you may be for your lasting happiness.”

“Thanks, Alfred, for your friendly wish. I heartily return it to you; and I am very sure that if we seek God’s blessing on all our undertakings in life, and act as honourable men and Christian believers ought to do, our respective wishes will be accomplished.”

“May the Lord grant it!” replied Alfred in a graver and more thoughtful tone. And then he left Charles, and went to seek his Norwegian friend, and to tell him that he had resolved on travelling with him to his home, and making the acquaintance of his native mountains and fiords, and of the manners and customs of his hardy and simple fellow-countrymen.

It was Ludovic’s intention to travel leisurely, and to see all that was best worth seeing in the countries through which he and his fellow-traveller would pass on their way to his native land. He had journeyed rapidly to Carlsbad late in the autumn with a relative, who had lately proceeded to Italy; and now that he could command his own time, he wished to take advantage of it, and to acquire all the information in his power concerning the countries that he was again about to traverse—more especially all such information as might prove useful to him at home, and enable him to introduce improvements of any kind among his dependents and neighbours.

This plan exactly fell in with Alfred’s views—for

he also desired to improve his time, and not to kill it. It was, therefore with anticipations of much pleasure and much profit that he made his preparations for a northern tour, which he expected would occupy him several months.

It was agreed that Charles Lovell should remain at Carlsbad as long as health and other considerations rendered a sojourn there desirable. At all events he proposed to stay until Edward Kinnaird joined him there, as he had promised to do during the winter, which was now almost giving way to spring.

When he arrived, Charles would decide on his own future plans; and either accompany Edward northwards in search of his brother, or leave him to go on alone, while he remained either at his present place of abode, or at some other town where the two young men could rejoin him on their return from Norway.

Thus do men plan and arrange for the future—but how seldom are they permitted to carry out their plans in all their proposed details!

As soon as the season was so far advanced that Ludovic Dagmer considered travelling would be easy and pleasant in the northern regions to which he and his friend were bound, they bade farewell to Charles Lovell, and left him to enjoy all the attractions of Carlsbad alone.

Almost the only drawback to Alfred's satisfaction in this arrangement was the fear that he should—when separated from Charles—hear much less regularly and frequently of the proceedings of Mr. Lovell

and his daughters. Hitherto the letters which Charles had received from his brother—and occasionally from Grace herself—had contained all the information that he could expect or hope for ; though by no means all that he could have wished to hear. He knew of all their movements, and of the anxiety which Mr. Lovell and Grace felt with regard to Ada—and which had caused them again to leave their home, and seek the more balmy air of Italy. But before he left Carlsbad no tidings had reached Charles of his niece's increased—and indeed hopeless—illness. Alfred therefore did not know of the deep sorrow that was pressing so heavily on Grace's heart as almost to banish every thought connected with herself, and her own individual feelings. He did not know that when his own image did recur to her mind, it only added to her sorrow, and to her sense of the loneliness that she should feel when her beloved sister should be taken from her. Had Alfred known all that Grace felt, and the light in which she had taught herself to view his past conduct, he would not have set out on his journey so cheerfully.

But he was in happy ignorance of much that would have caused him anxiety and regret ; and his own true heart was full of hope and confidence. He believed that Grace had understood him ; and he was sure that she would trust him, as he felt that he deserved to be trusted ; and in this belief he was as happy as circumstances would permit.

As we are not writing a book of travels—but the

history of the Lovell family, and of some other individuals in whom they felt a great interest—we will pass over all the intermediate time and space that were passed through between the day when Alfred and Ludovic left Carlsbad, and that on which they landed at Christiania, and set foot on Norwegian soil.

It was evening when they arrived at the capital of Norway; and the declining sun threw a rich glow over the scenery; the beauty and novelty of which were delightful to Alfred, and seemed to be no less appreciated by the young Norwegian. The fiord, at the head of which Christiania is situated, is narrow and winding, and enclosed between high and rocky banks—but occasionally spreading out into a wide expanse, studded with little islands—then again becoming so narrow as to give the idea that no outlet can be found.

The city itself presented few attractions to Alfred, and none to Ludovic, who was also impatient to proceed towards his home, and to shew his friend what he considered the best samples of Norwegian life, and Norwegian amusements.

The travellers did not therefore make any stay in this rather dull metropolis; but engaged a native cariole, and set out for Roystadt, the much-extolled home of Ludovic Dagmer.

This estate was situated in the valley of Stordal—one of the most extensive of the valleys that lead from the more elevated country down to the great

Dronthiem fiord ; and—in Ludovic's estimation—it was one of the most favoured spots in all Norway.

The journey thither from Christiania occupied some time, and gave Alfred an opportunity of observing many peculiarities belonging to the country, and also to its inhabitants, that both amused and interested him greatly.

Ludovic had taken the usual precaution adopted by travellers in Norway, and had dispatched a boy with a luggage cart some hours before he and Alfred commenced their journey, with several printed notices to be delivered to the master of each posting station that they intended to pass that day. These notices were duly filled up with the number of horses that would be required, and the hour at which they were expected to be in readiness ; and it was the duty of the station master to procure the animals from the farmer whose turn it might be to furnish them.

By this convenient arrangement no useless delay was incurred, and the travellers had no occasion to record any complaints in the book which was presented to them at each station, that they might certify how they had been served.

With the horses themselves it would have been impossible to find fault. Alfred was charmed with them, and only wished that he could have imported a whole team of the active and hardy animals into his own country. Their speed, over rough and hilly roads, astonished him. Up or down the steepest hills the driver never slackened his speed, nor did the horses

ever make a false step. For safety, for courage, and for endurance, Alfred declared that he had never seen their equals.

"I think I can shew you some very fine specimens at Roystadt," said Ludovic in reply to this remark. "When you see my sister, Elena, riding her favourite horse, I expect that you will indeed say that you have never seen one to match him either for shape or for paces.

"Is your sister fond of riding?" asked Alfred.

"She is fond of everything that makes her my companion," replied Ludovic; with a pleasant smile on his fine open countenance. "Elena and I have been all in all to each other for so many years that we never like being separated. Perhaps you would think some of her occupations rather masculine; for she constantly accompanies me in my fishing expeditions; and she even carries a light gun sometimes, and goes with me across the moors. Elena is no bad shot, I assure you."

"She must have felt very lonely during your long absence, if she has remained all the time at Roystadt," observed Alfred—who was rather amused at this account of Miss Dagmer's accomplishments.

"She has not been alone," replied Ludovic. "Some of our relatives have spent the greatest part of the winter with her, and she has also been to visit some friends at Dronthiem. She will, however, be rejoiced to see me at home again—especially as I bring such good company with me."

"Is it long, Ludovic, since your young sister was left to your charge?"

"Our father was killed in battle when Elena was but four years old. She cannot remember him; but I have never forgotten his grand martial figure, and his noble bearing—nor yet his gentleness to our mother and to us." And Ludovic looked proud to have this opportunity of extolling his much-loved father. "It was a sad day that brought the news of his death. My poor mother never recovered it—she only lived two years after him, and she never was like herself. She would have lived for our sakes—but her heart was broken, and she faded away, and died. That was more than twelve years ago, and I was nearly grown up. I promised her that I would take care of our darling Elena, and—God helping me—I can say that I have done so. A sister of our father's came to live with us at Roystadt, and brought up my sister, and taught her all womanly works and accomplishments. When Elena was fifteen our aunt died; and since that time she has been my special care, and my favourite companion. I may have taught her some things that young ladies do not generally practice; but I have watched over her with as much care as her mother could have done; and I think, Alfred, that when you know her well you will confess that she has a truly feminine and well cultivated mind, though she has been so much the companion of a rough Norwegian farmer like myself."

"She might have had many less improving com-

panions than you," replied Alfred laughing—and he felt what he said ; for he had found so much pleasure, and profit also, in Ludovic's society, that he could not think his sister to be pitied for having been so entirely left to his care and guidance. Hitherto he had not felt much interest in his friend's sister ; but now his curiosity was excited, and he began to be almost as impatient to reach Roystadt as Dagmer himself was ; and he rejoiced when their long journey was accomplished, although it had given him no inconsiderable pleasure and satisfaction during its performance.

The travellers entered the town of Dronthiem in the afternoon, and its appearance would have led Alfred to devote some time to exploring it, had not his friend insisted on proceeding to Roystadt as soon as fresh horses could be attached to the cariole.

They dashed along the wide streets bordered with large—and, in many cases, handsome—houses ; which were almost all constructed of wood, and remarkable for their extreme cleanliness and neatness. The abundance of water supplied by the cisterns placed at the corners of all the main streets seemed to be duly appreciated by the inhabitants ; for numbers of hand-maidens were busily engaged in scrubbing the doors and windows of the houses, and even the pavements in front of them : which operations did not appear at all to incommode the many well-dressed ladies who were walking about, and enjoying the fine spring evening. The beauty of the Dronthiemers particularly struck Alfred—and, on remarking it to Ludovic, he

assured him that it was a well-known peculiarity, and one on which the inhabitants of the favoured district very greatly prided themselves.

The young Norwegian was himself no bad specimen of the manly beauty of Dronthiem and its neighbourhood; and Alfred wondered whether his sister in like manner supported the pretensions of the Dronthiemers.

This point was soon settled to his entire satisfaction; for—as he and Ludovic drove up to the old mansion-house, which had been the home of the Dagmer's for many generations—Elena darted forth from the open door, and met her brother with a warm embrace, and words of hearty welcome, that reminded Alfred of his own receptions at Croone Castle, and very strongly revived those longings for home and its dear inhabitants, that had constantly beset him during his wanderings.

Elena was a very striking girl—tall and upright, with a graceful freedom of action that was by no means masculine; but which shewed that she had been accustomed to much out-of-door exercise, and to the bracing air of her native mountains.

Her beauty was of a peculiar style; but quite sufficient to keep up the character of the Dronthiem ladies. She had not the sunny brown hair, the clear dark-blue eyes, and transparent complexion of Grace Lovell; nor yet the raven locks, and large black eyes, and ivory skin of Ada. Elena was fair, with sparkling grey eyes, full of fire and expression; and her light waving hair seemed to vary in colour with every

movement, as sun or shade fell upon it. Her manners were perfectly easy and natural; for—young as she was—she had already acted for some years as mistress of her brother's house, and had learned to do the honours with dignity and propriety.

The relatives of whom Ludovic had spoken were still at Roystadt; and other guests were invited to fill the old house, which was a fine specimen of the wooden buildings of Norway, with picturesque gables, and projecting windows, around which ivy and many hardy creepers hung in profusion. The size of some of the beams used in its construction astonished Alfred, who had no idea that the timber of Norway ever attained to such a magnitude. Ludovic pointed out to him some logs which were actually three feet square, and at least twenty-five feet long. The trees from which such beams were cut must have been of great size, and they must also have been of native growth—for they could not have been brought from any distance across such a country, and in times when roads were hardly formed.



CHAPTER X.

THE interior of the mansion at Roystadt interested Alfred even more than the outside: and it recalled to his mind all that he had read and heard of the manners and customs of Great Britain in the days of the Tudors. The family-room was just what he had pictured to himself as the hall of an old mansion-house of those times. The furniture was simple in construction, and by no means so easy and luxurious in form as that to which Alfred was accustomed at home; but every article was clean, and highly-polished. The floor was sprinkled with the young shoots of the larch or fir, in the place of a carpet, and had a very peculiar, and not unpleasing effect.

In this spacious and well-lighted apartment all the occupations of the family were carried on; and here again Alfred was interested in observing the contrast sometimes exhibited between the customs of more primitive times, and the refinement of modern days. Occasionally, when he and Ludovic came into the room, they found the stately Elena and her cousin Hilda,

busy in one corner carding wool or spinning, assisted by the maids. The breakfast was laid out on a long tray at one end of the apartment, and consisted of bread and butter, dried fish and meat, and such other articles of food; while, instead of tea, a large silver tankard of ale, and sundry bottles of French and home-made brandy adorned the board. No one sat down to this meal, but each helped himself as he felt inclined, and walked about the room conversing gaily, or continued his occupations or his studies, as the case might be. Sometimes the gentlemen residing in the neighbourhood would call at this hour, which appeared to be one of entire freedom, and the scene was so lively and animated, and the manners of all parties were so amiable and polished, that Alfred rejoiced in the opportunity that had been afforded him of becoming thus intimately acquainted with Norwegian domestic life.

Few things indeed struck him more—in this land which he had been in the habit of looking on as only half-civilized—than the good manners of all classes of its inhabitants. Even among the very lowest orders he observed none of the sultry roughness towards one another which is too common in our own country. He remarked that one labourer never passed another without taking off his cap, and uttering a civil recognition, or a complimentary expression, such as wishing him good luck at his work—and it would be considered rude to omit this courteous form.

But there was one usage which particularly surprised

and amused Alfred, and for which he was wholly unprepared. After dinner, on getting up from the table, each individual of the party went round to the whole company, shaking hands with them, and saying "*Tak for mad*"—thanks for the meal—to the host and hostess; and "*Will bekomme*"—may it do you good—to the other guests.

This custom he found to be universal—even the youngest children being taught to make a bow or curtsy to their mothers, and lisp out "*Tak for mad*."

There were many other observances of the same kind that gave our young traveller a very high idea of the good-breeding of the Norwegians, and led him to feel a great interest in them, and in their mode of life. He found the time pass quickly and pleasantly at Roystadt; for every day—almost every hour—was fully occupied.

He made frequent fishing expeditions with Ludovic; and—when no others were of the party—Elena and her cousin occasionally accompanied them; as they also did on all their riding excursions, to explore the beauties of the surrounding scenery, or to visit some of the neighbouring families.

As an equestrian, Elena peculiarly excelled; and Alfred very willingly accorded to her, and to her favourite steed, all the admiration that her brother could desire. She managed her horse with the same ease and grace that characterized all her actions; and with that entire absence of all pretension, which gave a charm to everything she did. In that respect

resembled Grace Lovell ; and it was for that quality that Alfred most admired her. Whatever reminded him of Grace was charming in his eyes—the remembrance of his early friend was as fresh and vivid as when he parted from her in North Wales ; and no one whom he had since beheld, had ever—even for a moment—effaced her image from his mind. Happy would Grace have been if she had been conscious of this fact !

The accomplishments of the fair Norwegian girl were not confined to those we have alluded to. Both she and her brother were good musicians, and she would often leave her homely occupations of spinning and knitting, to take her guitar into the deep recess of a window, and sing to its accompaniment—in a low sweet voice—some of her native airs, or she would seat herself at the piano, and astonish Alfred by the brilliancy and the good taste of her performance, while Ludovic accompanied her on the violin.

The home of the Dagmers was indeed simple, and many of its customs were such as have long been exploded in most European countries : but there was a courtesy, and a real refinement of mind and feeling, that more than compensated for any deficiencies ; and even gave a charm to many peculiarities, and relics of antiquity, in the manners and habits of its inhabitants.

Therefore, as we have observed, Alfred Kinnaird found himself extremely happy and comfortable in the hospitable dwelling of his Norwegian friend ; and

he was very willing to prolong his stay at Roystadt, and to cultivate a more intimate and extensive acquaintance with the country and its people.

The satisfaction which he found in this occupation of his time was greatly enhanced by the intelligent remarks of Ludovic on all the subjects which aroused his interest. The Norwegian had thought much, and had given his mind greatly to the improvement of his tenants and dependents; and he was highly respected both by them, and by all his friends and neighbours. He was therefore well able to give Alfred every information that he desired, and to explain to him all that was peculiar in the public and social institutions of the country, with all of which he was himself familiar.

After Alfred had been domesticated at Roystadt for a few weeks, and had shared the hospitality of the neighbourhood, Ludovic and his sister resolved to return the civilities which had been shewn to them and their guest; and a list was made of all the persons whom they wished to invite. This list was sent round to all the houses, and each individual wrote opposite his own name, whether he accepted or declined the invitation.

On the day appointed, the family at Roystadt took usual early dinner; and dressed for the reception of expected visitors at four in the afternoon. There was no longer a hard surface of snow—as during long Norwegian winter—on which the sledges glide noiselessly and swiftly along, and convey passengers to the usual gay Christmas

meetings. Spring had now arrived ; and all nature was rising from its long sleep, and putting on its cheery dress of foliage and blossoms. The snow had all melted, and the light carioles had taken the place of the graceful and varied sledges. But the horses still wore their little tinkling bells—which could be heard approaching the house by the winding drive that led to the entrance long before the spirited little animals, with their flowing manes and tails, dashed up to the door.

There Ludovic received his guests ; who were then conducted to the great family room, to be welcomed by Elena, and refreshed with tea and coffee.

When all the party were assembled the *mellemaattid*—or middle repast—was brought in. This was merely a tray, containing bread and butter, anchovies, slices of salted reindeer's tongue, and cheese. A glass of some kind of spirits was taken as a matter of course by all the gentlemen, the greater part of whom then sat down to various card-tables, which were set out at one end of the long room ; while the remainder shewed their better taste by joining the ladies around the piano, and taking part in the music and singing. An occasional performance of the national polka, or equally popular waltz, enlivened the evening ; which appeared to Alfred to be remarkably free from formality, or false pretensions of any kind.

The time for the customary supper was drawing near ; and Elena, who was an excellent housewife,

had absented herself for the discharge of some of her domestic duties. As she returned towards the reception-room—now gaily lighted, and adorned with flowers and garlands—she stood a few moments at the open door of the hall, and looked out at the clear evening sky, in which the moon was shining calmly and brilliantly.

Perhaps the music in the room at the other side of the hall, and the sound of the dancing feet, prevented her from hearing the approach of a cariole. Certain it is that she was startled by a carriage suddenly stopping, and a gentleman in a travelling cloak springing from it.

If Elena was startled at the unexpected appearance of a stranger, that individual was at least equally astonished at the apparition that met his eyes. The Norwegian maiden was attired in a flowing white dress, of a simple and becoming form, and a wreath of ivy and snow-drops encircled her graceful head. As she stood on the entrance steps, and looked up towards heaven, the cold silvery moonbeams played on her shining hair, and on her calm regular features; and she looked like a fine statue.

But this illusion was quickly dissipated when her attention was called to the unlooked-for guest. The light sparkled in her eyes, and a clear penetrating glance seemed to question the stranger as to his errand at such a time. Then with a very graceful bow, she said quietly—

“I will summon my brother,” and retreated across

the hall, and entered the reception-room, where she was lost to the admiring gaze of the visitor.

No servant was in the hall, and the stranger remained at the entrance for a few moments; when Ludovic approached him, and courteously announced himself as the host.

A few words of explanation followed, and then Ludovic conducted his new guest into the large room, and introduced him to Elena as Lieut Edward Kinnaird.

A blush rose to her cheek as she expressed her welcome to Mr Kinnaird's brother, but any little embarrassment that she might feel was quickly banished by Alfred coming up and eagerly greeting Edward, and then entering into an animated conversation, which interested Elena, and gave her time to observe the new comer.

Edward was greatly altered since his brother had seen him; and greatly improved in every respect. Perhaps, had they met altogether unexpectedly, Alfred might have passed the young sailor without recognizing him. But he had heard of his brother's arrival at Carlsbad, and of his intended departure in order to follow him to Norway—and therefore he was prepared to see him; and Ludovic had insisted that whenever he came, both the brothers should continue his guests as long as they remained in the country.

He now bade Edward very cordially welcome; and desired him, as the greatest stranger, to conduct Elena to the supper room.

Ludovic was a very good English scholar; and his sister also understood the language, and could speak it in a very charming broken manner, which Edward greatly preferred to her more fluent French. He found no difficulty in holding communication with her; and they were soon in very animated converse, which proved so interesting that Elena actually forgot part of her duty, as the lady of the house.

It was expected that she should rise from her seat after all the guests had helped themselves from the dishes that were carried round, and, passing behind the company, she should see that all were properly supplied. Indeed the Norwegian hostess frequently hardly sits down at all during the evening repast, so entirely is her attention occupied by her guests.

But Elena was unusually remiss. She was listening to the recital of Edward's adventures in Syria; and her cousin Hilda observed her pre-occupation, and very considerately supplied her place so well that no deficiency was perceived. Only when the concluding dish—a large rich cake—was introduced, Elena recollected her duty; and then, with heightened colour, and an amused expression in her laughing eye, she rose and proceeded to cut up and distribute the final delicacy.

This was the signal for the guests to depart; and, ere long, the house was cleared of all but its proper inmates.

The pleasure which Alfred felt at the arrival of his brother, and at the favourable impression which he

evidently made on Ludovic Dagmer and his sister, was considerably damped when—on the following morning—Edward gave him a long letter from “uncle Charles,” in which were several extracts from one which he had just received from his brother at Florence

“We cannot conceal from ourselves,” wrote Mr Lovell—“that our beloved Ada is passing away, and that, ere long, the eye that hath seen her shall see her no more—no more on this earth. She knows that she is leaving us, and it is she who speaks words of comfort to us, and cheers us under the prospect of the coming separation. Grace—my darling Grace—also bears up in this trying time, as only a Christian can do. She thinks not of herself—she only lives for her sister and for me. But I dread the time when she must realize her loneliness, and the irreparable loss that she will sustain. May the Lord enable her to endure it with resignation, and give me grace and strength to cheer and comfort her when the blow really falls.”

What would Alfred not have given to have been privileged to hasten to Florence, and devote himself to the help and comfort of Grace! He did feel almost a conviction that his presence, and his society would help, as much as anything external could do, to support her during these days of anxiety and of sorrow. But he remembered his promise. He was pledged not to betray his feelings until he should have proved the strength of his attachment to the satisfaction of his parents, and should have received their sanction.

So he was obliged to content himself with writing a letter of sincere sympathy to Mr Lovell ; and sending kind and friendly messages both to the dying girl and to her sister. So engrossed was his mind with all that his friends were feeling and suffering, that he forgot to mention the arrival of his brother—he only alluded to the letter which he had received from “uncle Charles,” and its sad contents. He also spoke of his friend Ludovic Dagmer, and of his sister. He said that Elena was fair and good ; and that he had aroused her warmest sympathy by telling her of Ada’s illness, and Ada’s resignation and faith—and he added, “I wish Grace could know her. There is a power and a beauty in her character that I am sure she would appreciate ; and that would render her a congenial and a comforting companion to my early friend and playmate”

Why did that concluding sentence grate somewhat harshly on poor Grace’s ear as her father read it aloud to her ? We can only say that it did so ; and that the words recurred to her mind again and again until more absorbing feelings than any selfish ones caused them to be for a time forgotten.

But there was no reason for Grace to feel saddened by any expression of Alfred’s admiration and regard for his friend’s sister—it never even occurred to him that it would be possible for her to do so. That he did admire Elena Dagmer is certain ; and that he also felt both regard and esteem for her may be inferred from the fact that he observed with increasing satisfac-

tion the mutual pleasure that she and Edward evidently found in each other's society

Every agreeable excursion was to be repeated for Edward's benefit—every fine mountain ride was to be taken again for the gratification of the young sailor ; who was gifted with all the love of equestrian exercise, and all the reckless daring, that generally characterize his age and his profession. He was always at Elena's side ; and assuredly she did look very captivating, as she rode fearlessly along the roughest and most difficult passes, confiding entirely in the sure-footed animal she sat so gracefully, and conversing with all the animation and intelligence that were natural to her

Ludovic was not blind to the admiration which Edward took no pains to conceal—indeed Alfred remarked upon it to his friend, and very honourably consulted him as to whether it were desirable that the intimacy should be allowed to continue.

"My brother is a man of honour," he said ; "I know that he will never trifle with anyone's feelings. But he must not try to gain your sister's regard unless such a result would be sanctioned by you."

"He is your brother, Alfred—and he appears to be actuated by the same principles and feelings that have led me to regard you as my dearest and most esteemed friend. If he wins Elena's affections I will bestow her upon him with no fears for her future happiness ; and no regret but the selfish one that I shall lose the brightest ornament, and the best treasure of my home."

"You must then try to replace her by taking another

mistress of your house, Ludovic. Among all the fair and accomplished ladies of Dronthiem and its neighbourhood, you can surely find one who would grace your pleasant home "

"None to equal my darling Elena," replied Dagmer, rather sadly "I fear she has engrossed too much of my thoughts and affections. But I will put no obstacle in the way of her happiness "

So Alfred left his brother to follow the impulse of his own taste and feeling, for he was sure of his upright conduct; and he also felt confident that Elena would prove a real prize to the man who was so fortunate as to gain possession of her warm unsullied heart, and to win her esteem

It had been arranged before the arrival of Edward, that when he had seen the beauties of Dronthiem and its noble fiord, he should accompany Alfred and their host on a tour through the northern part of Norway, and then return to Roystadt before they left the country

Both Dagmer and Alfred considered it desirable, for various reasons, that this arrangement should still be carried out, although Edward would very willingly have given up all further explorations of Norway, and have contented himself with riding about the immediate neighbourhood of Roystadt. He had not, however, the opportunity of making a choice; for the time of departure was fixed, and Elena and her cousin went to Hilda's home on a distant part of the shores of the great fiord; and Edward was compelled to make the

best of his situation and circumstances, and to hope for something better and more decided when the same happy party should again assemble at Roystadt

He did not tell all his thoughts and all his hopes even to Alfred. He was too uncertain as to their future result to be willing as yet to breathe them into the ear of another. But though he thus kept—or thought he kept—his own secret, he did not fail to inform his brother how “uncle Charles” was progressing in the favour of Miss Vivian; and how he prophesied that they should ultimately have an “aunt Catherine”—who he hoped, would never alienate from them the affection which had been one of the charms of their boyhood, and had never been interrupted in later years.

“If uncle Charles marries, we must all follow his example, Ned,” replied Alfred, laughing—“by way of consolation for the loss of his society I am quite ready to give up a roving life, and to settle at the priory. What do you say?”

“I have no priory to settle at; and who would take up with a poor homeless younger son?” replied Edward in the same strain—and his brother did not press him any farther.

The journey was commenced, and very prosperously continued—but we will not follow the travellers step by step as they proceeded northwards, even until the days became so long that night had no actual darkness, and the sun seemed only to sink beneath the horizon, and again to reappear.

They joined in several bear hunts ; and they shot wild birds, and fished in many a mountain stream, and many a beautiful fiord. And they visited several encampments of the diminutive Laps, and procured from them samples of their gaily embroidered caps, and fur coats and boots, and carved implements of various kinds. Gladly would they have brought back with them one of the sledges in which these strange little people traverse their own and the adjacent countries during the winter, and in which they convey the few simple articles which their bleak district produces to exchange at Dronthiem, and other mercantile towns, for objects of comparative luxury. But there was no snow, on which the sledge could be conveyed by the team of fleet reindeer down to any sea-port—and Alfred also feared that the hardy animals would not thrive in his father's park—so the idea was abandoned, and, in due time, he and his companions turned their steps southwards, greatly to Edward's satisfaction.

Here we will leave them, and return to the Lovells, whom we left at Florence in all the sorrow that must ever be felt—however, that sorrow may be tempered by Christian faith and hope—when the object of deep and tender affection is seen to be passing irrecoverably away.



CHAPTER XI.

VERY slowly, and very gently Ada Lovell faded away—so slowly, and so gently that those who loved her best, and watched her most anxiously, were hardly conscious of her daily decline. It was only by looking back, and comparing her state with what it had been at some given time previously, that they could judge of the progress she had made in her journey to the grave.

To *the grave*. Yes—that must be the last stage of the great journey—but it would not be the goal—the haven of rest. It was not that on which the thoughts of either Ada or her loving friends dwelt. They looked beyond the grave, to the real rest which they all knew awaited the sufferer after a few more days or weeks of earthly trial had been meekly and patiently borne.

And very patiently Ada endured all the trials and privations of a long and mortal sickness, from which she neither hoped nor desired to recover. But every day of prolonged life and comparative ease, that enabled her to enjoy the society of her beloved father

and sister, was dearly prized by her and by them ; and every opportunity that was afforded her of testifying to the mercy and goodness of God, and of manifesting the power of His grace in supporting and cheering her through the valley of the shadow of death, she gratefully availed herself of.

The valley—the dreaded valley, which all must one day tread—was not dark to Ada. It was enlightened by a pure and simple faith, in the promises of God, and an unfailing trust in the love of her Saviour ; and it was cheered by all that devoted human affection could devise for her comfort. She had one sorrow—the sorrow of the approaching separation from her father and sister, and others who loved her, and were beloved by her. Among these, Dinah Collins—her devoted nurse ; and Harry Fraser—her grateful scholar—were not the least cared for. Their grief at the prospect of losing their young mistress and friend, was very great ; and they were frequently unable to command it in her presence, as Mr. Lovell and Grace had schooled themselves to do.

Poor little Harry especially was often quite overcome when Ada spoke to him of her coming change, and tried to reconcile him to the loss which he felt to be so great. The boy could not view it as she did—he could not look beyond her present sufferings and his own approaching bereavement, and rejoice that her race would so soon be run, and the crown of victory be won. It seemed to him a hard fate for one so young, so prosperous, and so beloved, to be called away from all

the comforts and enjoyments, and all the hopes and anticipations of life ; and to be compelled to go forth alone to an untried and mysterious state of being. Almost he was disposed to question the mercy of God in a dispensation that appeared to him so sad and so dark ; and to think that the cross laid on the gentle sufferer, and on all who loved and valued her so much, was too heavy.

"Why should you leave us so soon ?" he said very sadly, one day when he was left alone with Ada, to receive the daily instruction which she still delighted to impart "Why should you go away now, when your life is so precious, and you are doing so much good ?"

"The Lord knows best, Harry, how to bring His own purposes to pass All the good that He sees fit to be done, He can effect without my aid. If He has permitted me to be the humble instrument of leading you to the knowledge of Himself, and to a simple belief in His Son Jesus Christ, I thank Him heartily, and feel that my short life has not been altogether in vain. He who so unexpectedly brought you to our notice, and inclined us to befriend you, will not leave you comfortless. You have many friends to supply my place to you."

"Yes" replied the boy—and he looked up gratefully in Ada's face—"Yes—all are kind to me ; but there is none like you !" And he burst into a paroxysm of tears.

Ada was touched by his childish grief, and she laid

her thin white hand upon his shoulder, as he sat on a low stool by her side, with his head now bowed down upon his hands.

"Dear Harry," she said, "you add to your own sorrow, and to mine, by this repining against the will of God. Try to feel that what He wills is best—*absolutely best* for us each individually; although we may not see how and why it is so. Jesus said to his disciples 'What I do thou knowest not now; but *thou shalt know hereafter*;' and so He still says to all who are His disciples and trust in Him. I will teach you a few lines, Harry, that have often been a comfort to me, and that I hope you will remember and think of when I am gone."

Harry raised his still tearful eyes, and looked intently at Ada, while she slowly and emphatically repeated these lines;

"God nothing does, nor suffers to be done,
But what thou would'st thyself, could'st thou but see
Through all events of time as well as He."

Harry was silent for awhile. Then he said—

"I will try to remember that, and to believe it. But it is hard—very hard, when things happen so contrary to my wishes. Are not such events called *crosses*—and is it not because they are so painful, and so hard to bear?"

"Certainly all trials—all events that are contrary to our desires—are painful. The Bible tell us, Harry, that 'no chastisement seemeth to be joyous, but

grievous,' while we are enduring it. But what I want to impress upon you is that we are all too apt to make our trials greater than they need be, by resisting God's will, and opposing them, as it were, instead of doing our best, by His help, to reconcile ourselves to them. I was much struck lately by hearing the definition given by a good and wise man to his children of the true nature of *a cross*. He took two slips of wood—one long, and the other short—'See my children,' he said—'the long piece is the *will of God*—the short piece is *your own will*. Lay your will in a line with the will of God, and you have *no cross*. Lay it athwart, and you have one directly.'

"I will try to remember that as well as the lines," said Harry thoughtfully. "How wise you are, Miss Ada—and how good and kind. I shall never—never forget all that you have taught me."

"That is all that I desire Harry. It is possible that I may be able—after I have left my poor weak body—to take account of your doings, and your progress through life. It would be a rich reward if I could be conscious that my humble efforts had been blessed to your lasting good."

A bright flush rose to Harry's cheek, and hope and joy sparkled in his eyes, as he received this consolatory idea.

"O, Miss Ada!" he exclaimed, "then I will try more and more to do all that you would wish me to do. I will try to please you as long as I live!"

"Try to please God, Harry—and then we shall

meet again hereafter, and rejoice together in all the mercy that the Lord has shewn us. Of that we are sure, whether my rather visionary notions are correct or not. It is a blessed hope to me now that I shall see all I love in heaven. It comforts me in the only trouble I now feel—the only trouble I shall ever feel henceforth throughout eternity—that of leaving my beloved earthly friends. Harry, the more I realize the joys of heaven, and the more strongly I feel the conviction that they have been purchased and secured to me by the blood of Christ alone—so the more ardently do I desire that others—especially those I care for—should inherit those joys by obtaining an interest in Christ's merits and death. That is the chief subject of my prayers. I see now—as I never saw before—how utterly worthless are all other things when compared with the *'one thing needful.'*"

"Do you ever pray for my poor uncle, James Collins, Miss Ada? I should like to know that you prayed for his salvation. I often think of him; and, though he was not always kind to me, I love him; and I should be very glad to know that he had given up his bad ways, and had become a good man."

"I do not forget your uncle, Harry. I have always felt a great interest in him; and have believed that he would at length turn to God, and lead a new and a Christian life. I trust you will one day see him an altered and a happy man—though I shall not live to do so. You must pray for him yourself, Harry. It is the only thing that you can do to help him."

Harry coloured deeply, and cast down his eyes ; and then said very humbly, "I have always prayed to God for uncle James, ever since you taught me to care for my own soul. I could not help asking God to make him repent and believe, though it seemed very bold of a poor ignorant boy like me to ask for blessings on others."

"Be sure, Harry, that the Lord does not consider it bold in anyone to pray to Him for the richest spiritual blessings for themselves or for others. An anxiety for the real good of our fellow-creatures is the best proof that we are ourselves sincere believers in all the promises of God. Pleading those gracious promises, you may pray in faith for all that you desire ; and the Lord will hear your prayer, and will assuredly answer it as He sees to be best. Never despair—and never cease to pray, or to believe that 'all things shall work together for good to those who love God.'"

Thus did Ada strive to impress more and more deeply upon the heart of her interesting young pupil the truths which she had already taught him ; and to call into active exercise the principles that she had inculcated from the first day that she undertook the task of instructing him. She knew that her days and hours were numbered, and that *time* was, for her, rapidly drawing to a close : and she desired to work while it was yet day, lest darkness should come upon her, and find any part of her appointed task in life unaccomplished. Not on Harry only did she bestow her thoughts and her care—not for his good alone did she

labour and pray. She seemed to have some sweet word of comfort or encouragement or instruction for all who came within her influence ; and all she said was said so meekly and so humbly ; and urged so affectionately and with such heart-felt earnestness of look and manner, that no one could hear her unmoved.

Her appearance was now peculiarly striking. Her finely-cut features were more clearly defined ; and her eyes—which had always been remarkable for beauty and expression—were now apparently deepened in colour, and spiritualized in expression. Her clear ivory skin had become so transparent that every vein in her temples was visible, and every changing feeling could be traced in her varying colour. But when she was asleep, or at perfect rest, her complexion was as colourless as marble ; and she often looked as if the spirit had already fled, and left the wasted form to death and decay.

It was not always so—there were times—even during her last days on earth—when it seemed as if life were returning with all its former energy, and its power of enjoyment. Ada would then be placed in the balcony that overhung a fragrant little garden at the back of the house ; and gaze on the fresh spring flowers, and inhale the rich perfume from the orange trees which had been carried out from their winter shelter, and placed beneath the window. Beyond the garden could be seen the river Arno shining softly in the evening light ; and beyond the Arno rose the lovely prospect of hills and vallies—of wood and rock—in-

terspersed with villas of every size and form, and overhung by a sky so deep and blue and clear that no human eye could follow its depth.

Into that unfathomable depth Ada would gaze with that peculiar look which had belonged to her from childhood, but which had become stranger and more intensified as she approached nearer to the boundary of things invisible to mortal ken. When Dinah had watched her thus reclining silently upon her couch, and wrapt in thoughts that shed a gleam of heavenly joy upon her countenance, she would whisper to Grace that her dear young lady looked already like an angel; and Grace would steal away to weep in secret while she thought how soon that loved and loving countenance would be removed from her sight, and be seen no more, until *that day* when all shall once again meet on this earth—some to be re-united for a blissful eternity, and others to be doomed to an everlasting separation.

We must not linger over Ada's last days—and yet we are loath to tell of their close—they were so calm, and were soothed by so much genuine faith and holy Christian love.

At length the last day came; and all knew it to be *the last*—and all were still, and waiting for the final messenger. It was midnight, and Ada had spoken her farewell words to each and all, and she lay quietly fading away in perfect consciousness, and peaceful hope.

A dim shaded light faintly illuminated one end of

the long airy room—but only the moonlight, which streamed in through the uncurtained window, fell on the form of the dying girl, as she lay with closed eyes and clasped hands, and gradually sinking breath.

The stillness became oppressive to Grace—her heart beat violently, and her brain seemed to burn; and she noiselessly left the room to seek for one moment's relief. She passed hastily into the large sitting-room which, until the last few days, Ada had occupied for some hours every evening, and which had been furnished and adorned with a special view to her comfort and enjoyment.

A bright wood fire blazed in the English grate, and cast a cheerful light on all the familiar objects around. There were books, and drawings, and work—and there was Ada's guitar lying on the couch where she had reclined only a few evenings ago, and had accompanied Grace in a favourite Irish song, And there were the last sketches that Grace had made at her sister's request; and which Ada had gazed at with lingering looks, and a pensive pleasure. And flowers were there—many bright and fragrant flowers—procured for Ada's gratification, and arranged by her own tasteful fingers. They looked fresh—fragile as they were—for Harry had tended them daily; and she who had arranged the leaves and blossoms was fading away more rapidly than they!

Harry's care and thought were manifested also in other ways. A kettle was singing by the fire, and tea-things shone upon a little table set in its usual

place. And all looked pleasant and home-like—but Grace's heart felt sad and desolate—all the more sad and desolate from the striking contrast between that cheery room, and the chamber of death from which she had just come.

Poor Grace!—her tears were generally restrained ; but now she sank down and crouched on a low stool by the fire ; and, resting her head on her knees, she wept passionately, and with uncontrolled grief.

There she sat—relieved indeed by the very violence of her emotion—but sunk and subdued, and hardly conscious of the passage of time, or of the dread scene that was slowly going on so near her.

Soon—it seemed very soon to Grace—and yet she had felt, and thought, and prayed much in that short time—soon a low voice struck her ear, and aroused her from her deep reverie. “Will you come, Miss Lovell,” said Harry—“your name was called.”

Grace looked up ; and in the boy's scared expression, and white quivering features, she read what his lips refused to utter.

Ada was dying.

In a moment Grace was by her bedside, and saw that she was recognized ; but no words were spoken. Her own name was the last sound that her sister uttered. The next was when her ransomed spirit joined the heavenly choir, and sang the praises of her Redeemer.

Over the intermediate time—which was very brief, and very peaceful—we drop a veil.

Ada's funeral was very simple and attended by very few persons. Her father and sister felt that they were strangers in a strange land, and that little sympathy could be felt with them, by those among whom they dwelt. But there was one act that shewed love and reverence for the departed, and that touched them greatly.

Behind the carriages in which the mourners came, followed a closed fiacre, driven by a grave and subdued-looking man; and—when the service was concluded, and the grave was about to be filled, and the mourners to retire—a weeping woman, dressed in faded black, descended from the fiacre, and led a little limping child to the edge of the grave. The child carried a large bouquet of gay flowers in her hand; and—after gazing a moment at the coffin below—she cast the flowers upon it, and burst into a wailing cry, so sad as to arrest the attention of the father and daughter, even at that moment of crowning sorrow.

It was little Catarina, led by her mother to pay this last tribute of gratitude to their kind young benefactress—and the action was appreciated by those who saw it.

Some very sad days followed. Grace had overtaken her strength and her spirits, in her resolution to do all that in her lay to minister to her beloved Ada's comfort, as long as she was spared to her—and also to refrain from any outward expression of grief that could have distressed the patient sufferer, or have disturbed her perfect peace.

The consequence of this long-continued effort was a great reaction when the motive for the effort was taken away. Grace sank into a state of morbid grief that almost tempted her to repine at the affliction which the Lord had laid upon her. She could not find comfort for herself—and she could minister none to her father; or to Dinah and Harry—who so sincerely shared her sorrow.

For some time Mr. Lovell tried in vain to cheer his daughter. Her dejection defied all his efforts; and he resolved to leave Florence as soon as possible, and try the effect of change, and also of a more bracing climate—for even the north of Italy was becoming very hot and relaxing.

On the evening previous to the day fixed for their departure, he took Grace to pay a farewell visit to the grave of their loved one. It was a trying moment to both—but in Mr. Lovell's breast there was no bitterness—no repining thoughts. He had passed through the school of affliction; and had learnt the great lesson of perfect submission, and perfect confidence in the goodness of his Almighty Father.

He had known a greater trial than that which had so recently been laid upon him; and, when—on their return home—Grace sat down in the balcony; and, in a despairing voice, said: “O, father—I feel that I can never be happy again—this sorrow is too heavy for me to bear”—he seated himself by her, and replied—“My child—I know the depth of your sorrow—I know what it is to lose the object of one's strongest

feelings, and most constant thoughts—and, thank God, I know where comfort is to be found under the greatest of such trials.

As Grace listened to her father's words, she remembered that the sorrows he had endured when her mother died must have been far more intense than the grief she was now suffering—she had been too young to realize her loss at that time, or to give her father the sympathy he must have so sorely needed. But this sorrow had fallen on them together; and before she lay down to rest that night she resolved that no want of cheerful resignation on her part should add to her father's sadness. She trusted in God to enable her to carry out her resolution—and she did not trust in vain. Both Mr. Lovell and Dinah saw with wonder and satisfaction the efforts which she made to resume all her usual occupations, and even to perform all those which used to devolve especially on Ada. She took upon herself to carry on all that her sister was so efficiently doing for Harry; and when the boy saw how bravely she checked her grief, and how energetically she strove to do whatever she felt to be her duty, he also dried his fast-falling tears, and shook off his langour and despondency, and worked to please Grace almost as willingly as he had done to please Ada.

Mr. Lovell rejoiced in the change in his daughter; but he still felt that a removal from Florence would greatly assist her efforts to conquer her feelings of regret, and her sad retrospection of all the last days and weeks. He formed no definite plan as to the course

which should be pursued ; but he left it to be guided by circumstances, and by Grace's inclinations. He knew that she wished to visit Switzerland ; and thither they proceeded immediately, and spent several weeks among the most striking scenes of that bewitching country.





CHAPTER XII.

THE beauty of the scenery, and the bracing effect of the mountain air, did much for Grace—and, indeed for all the party. But nothing occurred which relates more particularly to our narrative. They met with no acquaintances in those wild, but much-frequented regions; and—owing to their wandering hither and thither without any settled plan—they hardly ever received any letters; and they remained in ignorance of Charles Lovell's proceedings at Carlsbad, and of all that Alfred and Edward were doing in Norway.

They did not even yet know that the young sailor had arrived in Europe, and had gone to seek his brother in the north. They rather believed that Charles Lovell had followed him thither, as such had been the plan at first proposed; and it had only been abandoned when Edward had joined Charles, and volunteered to take his place as Alfred's companion, and leave him to enjoy other society at Carlsbad.

If Grace felt any peculiar interest or curiosity respecting the movements of her former play-fellow

they were not gratified ; and she seldom named him to her father.

Grace continued to make numerous and very clever sketches of all that came within the range of her pencil. But one great source of interest in drawing—as in every other occupation—was now withdrawn. Her sister was not there to take delight and pride in all she did ; and to encourage her in all her efforts, by her intelligent remarks. Her father, however, strove as far as possible, to supply Ada's place to her. He was her constant companion, and interested himself in all her pursuits with so much kindness, and so much good judgment, that, ere long, Grace very greatly recovered her spirits ; and the wonted energy of her character again shewed itself.

In all the beauties of nature she had ever taken an intense delight ; and in Switzerland she gazed with enthusiasm at the glorious mountains, and the ever-flowing cataracts, and the craggy precipices, and the gleaming glaciers. How many happy days she spent in wandering among these scenes of magnificence with her beloved father!—and if sad thoughts of her whom they had lost did often arise in both their minds, it was with a softened grief, and with a feeling of thankfulness that her life of suffering and privation had been exchanged for one of unclouded happiness, and active enjoyment.

It was especially the lovely wild flowers of the Alpine vallies that brought the image of Ada most vividly before Grace's mental vision. Ada had loved

flowers with a sort of passion ; and in all her rambles at home and abroad, it had ever been Grace's object to bring back to her sister some sweet specimens which she had gathered by the way. Now the bright blue gentians, and crimson rhododendrons, and yellow cistuses, and flowers of every form and colour, that rewarded her search among the rocks and glades, and even at the foot of the ice-cliffs, filled her with a saddened pleasure, and led her to serious thoughts and feelings.

The prodigality with which these gifts of God's unbounded mercy to His creatures were strewed over every spot that was left to nature's cultivation, struck her with surprise. It almost seemed like a lavish waste of beauty, that such exquisite objects should be made to bloom and die unseen, as must be so very frequently the case in spots that are hidden from the eyes of man—but not from the ever-superintending care of God—and she expressed this feeling to her father.

"I cannot look on all these beautiful blossoms," she said ; "without a feeling of wonder why they were made to grow in such a spot as this, where probably no human eye, except our own, will behold their beauty. And up there, beyond those craggy heights—where no foot but that of the chamois could climb—there are, no doubt, countless treasures now lying unheeded and unvalued. It recalls to my mind those hacknied lines—

'Full many a flower is born to blush unseen
And waste its fragrance on the desert air.'

"I should like to know *why* this should be."

"I cannot tell you, Grace," replied her father. "No human being can explain the reason of many of the things which we have seen around us—of many things far more mysterious and more painful than this apparent waste of creative power and contrivance. But I met the other day in one of Keble's hymns, with an idea which pleased me much, as illustrating this subject. He says—speaking of the flowers that '*blush unseen*'—

'In wasteful beauty showered, they smile unseen ;
Unseen by men—but what if purer sprights,
By moonlight o'er their dewy bosoms lean,
To adore the Father of all gentle lights.'

"O, what a lovely idea!" exclaimed Grace, with a bright smile. "That seems to explain away my difficulty, and to reconcile me to the prodigality of beauty and sweetness which I see all around me, and which I know to exist even in the uninhabited wilderness, and the pathless forest—and which appear to our finite minds to be useless. Ada would have loved that idea, father. She would have appreciated its beauty."

"Yes, Grace—she was pure in heart, and spiritual in thought and feeling. Now she is still purer and more spiritual. She *knows* what we can only guess at, and hope for."

"Yes, father, she knows now whether all her own sweet fancies were well-founded or not. She had

many lovely thoughts, and many cheering views of that state on which she has already entered."

"These things are not revealed to us, my child," replied Mr. Lovell reverently. "But enough is told us to allow of our indulging in many such hopes and expectations. What indeed if the ministering spirits, who wait on the heirs of salvation—and those spirits of the blessed, who loved such exquisite works of God's hand while they lived and walked with us on earth—should even now be hovering over the flowers and the scenery which no mortal eye may gaze on? What if they—in their holy purity of thought and feeling—should be enjoying their beauties with a zest which no human heart can feel, and giving glory to the Maker of all with a devotion which no human soul can aspire to? O, would not this be a delightful contradiction to the poet's assertion that any of our Father's handiworks are made '*to taste their fragrance,*' or their brilliant beauty?"

"Thank you for that charming comment. I shall think of Keble's idea, and of your illustration of it, whenever I am tempted to wonder at the apparent superfluity of God's most lovely works. I shall fancy that Ada's spirit is thus enjoying what she prized so much during her life, and even that she knows and shares our pleasure in those '*things of beauty*' which we are permitted to see. How much such a hope would add to my enjoyment."

"It is, at least, an innocent hope, Grace; and we

are privileged to cherish it. Soon—we know not how soon—we shall ‘know even as we are known,’ and all our difficulties, and all our doubts will be cleared away for ever.”

Many were the conversations of this kind which Grace held with her father; and they tended greatly to calm her mind, and to elevate it above this present world, and its trials and sorrows. Her health also improved; and Dinah declared that she was now more beautiful and more graceful than she had ever seen her—and that it did her heart good to see the bloom returning to her cheek, and the light to her eye.

* * * * *

Thus they wandered on from place to place until they had in a measure gratified their taste for the beauties of nature in her more magnificent forms. Then they proceeded northwards through Germany, and found both interest and pleasure in visiting several of the most important towns and cities, and observing the manners and customs of the people—although many of these did not approve themselves to their taste or feeling.

The degraded condition of the women among the lower orders of society, struck both Grace and her father very painfully. Many times it caused the indignant blood to mount into Grace’s cheeks to see the poor women carrying burdens that seemed sufficient to crush them to the earth, while “the lords of creation” stood by unconcerned, or even placed the cumbrous

basket, or heavy box, or pile of fire-wood on the bending back of their weaker *help-meet*, and let her carry it away with tottering steps. She had often thought her own sex hardly worked both in Ireland and England; but she had never seen women subjected to such drudgery as she now constantly beheld in Germany; and it proved quite a drawback to the pleasure which the novelty of all around her would otherwise have afforded her.

There was also a certain roughness, and want of refinement in many ways, which struck our travellers, in the manners of the Germans with whom they came in contact. Had they enjoyed the opportunity of becoming acquainted with members of the higher class of society, they would, no doubt, have found their manners and mode of life to be equal to those among the same class in other countries. But, as this was not the case, they did not form a very favourable judgment of the inhabitants of the "fatherland," to which its people are so much attached.

But there were things which they saw in Germany that excited their warmest interest and their highest admiration. There were proofs of real nobility of spirit—of true Christian faith and courage, and perseverance—that they had never before met with, and that made a deep and lasting impression on their minds.

It was *accident*—if so we may call any of those circumstances in life that, however trifling they may appear, so often bring very important results—it was

accident that led the Lovells to become acquainted with one of the most striking of those evidences of the power of faith to which we have alluded—and which shed such honour on the land in which they exist.

At one of the towns where our travellers stopped for a day, they happened to meet Mr. Severne, the rector of G——, where they had spent some months of the previous year, and where they had become acquainted with James Collins, and Harry Fraser. The friendship which had arisen between Mr. Lovell and Mr. Severne was cordially renewed; and the rector listened with deep interest and much sympathy to the story of Ada's illness, and her happy peaceful death. He was also glad to hear of Harry's well-doing, and to observe the progress which the once wild and ignorant boy had made in every way. To Harry's eager inquiries respecting his uncle James the rector could give no satisfactory reply. He had never heard any tidings of him since he left the neighbourhood of G——; and his brother had disclaimed all knowledge of his whereabouts, and of his motive for his sudden disappearance.

Mr. Severne informed the Lovells that he was on his way to Hamburg, where his eldest daughter, Mrs. Calthorpe was at that time residing—her husband having joined the Danish forces, and gone to Sönderborg, where his regiment was quartered.

During his absence Mrs. Calthorpe had entreated her father to come to Hamburg, and cheer her in

her loneliness and anxiety; and he was now hastening to comply with her request.

As Mr. Lovell had made no positive arrangements for the present, and did not intend to return to Ireland until the end of the summer, he was easily persuaded to accompany his friend to Hamburg; especially as Grace expressed a strong inclination to do so, and he hoped that the society of Edith Calthorpe would be both pleasant and useful to her.

So they went to Hamburg; and they saw all that was to be seen in the city—and they made several excursions in the neighbourhood—sometimes with Mr. Severne and his daughter, and sometimes attended by Dinah and Harry.

On one bright spring morning they set out to drive to Wandsbeck, a town at no great distance from Hamburg, where they expected to find some objects of interest. Dinah and her nephew were seated in the rumble of the hired britska, and preparations had been made for remaining out the whole day, and amusing themselves with sketching and exploring wherever their fancy led them.

Mr. Lovell and Grace were tired of the crowded streets of Hamburg, and of the public walks, frequented by gaily-dressed persons. They had examined the ancient buildings, and Grace had made sketches of several of the picturesque many-storyed houses, with their quaint gables and odd-shaped windows; and they longed for a day of pure country air and freedom.

They drove through the Stein-Thor, and the suburb

of St. George ; and then turned to the right along a fine road overhung by noble trees, and enlivened by pleasant-looking villas, each surrounded by a gay garden filled with flowers and shrubs. The early sun shone brightly on the winding river Elbe, and all looked cheerful and inviting for a stroll on foot.

The Lovells descended from the carriage, and desired the driver to wait at a neighbouring *auberge*, while they pursued a tempting pathway that led under the thick overshadowing chestnuts towards a rising ground at some little distance. The perfect quiet of the scene was refreshing after the noise and bustle of the busy city ; and as Mr. Lovell and his daughter wandered on beneath the trees and listened to the notes of the many birds that dwelt among their branches, they felt the truth of that wise saying—“ *God* made the country, and *man* made the town ”—and they proceeded almost in silence, followed by Dinah and Harry, carrying the sketching apparatus, and the luncheon-basket.

They soon came to an open spot, from whence the view was more extensive ; and they beheld, at the summit of another low eminence, a wooden spire, and two or three high-pitched roofs rising among a clump of trees. A little farther, and they saw a number of houses grouped together, with gardens and avenues between.

These buildings excited the curiosity of the Lovells ; and they determined to rest awhile on the shady knoll which they had reached, and refresh themselves with

the contents of their basket, and then proceed to examine the apparent village, and the pretty scenery around it.

The rest and refreshment did not occupy much time, for they were impatient to have a nearer view of the hamlet, which had evidently much that was peculiar about it, and promised to reward their search for the picturesque or the characteristic.

As they advanced they saw that the low spire formed a sort of centre to the whole collection of buildings, which were greatly varied in form and size; and behind the hamlet they could discern, through the openings between the trees and the houses, a rather extensive lawn—or *park*, as the Germans call it—belted round with thick trees. No other fence enclosed this remarkable little domain—no gates barred the entrance to the various paths that converged towards the central group of buildings—all seemed free and open; and many boys and men could be seen moving about at a brisk pace, as if actively and cheerfully employed.

“What can this strange place be?” exclaimed Grace. “I should imagine it were a factory of some kind, from the number of persons whom we see going to and fro, and the quantity of buildings of all sorts. But then there are none of those ugly smoking chimneys that disfigure almost all such establishments, and the boys who are running about among the lanes and gardens look too free and happy to be factory labourers.”

“I agree with you, Grace, that this cannot be any establishment of that kind. Possibly it may be one

of the great schools which are to be found in many parts of Germany. We will approach the hamlet, and no doubt our curiosity will soon be satisfied. See, there is a respectable-looking man standing under that fine chestnut tree, with a group of boys around him. Let us ask him to give us the information we desire."

Mr. Lovell and Grace walked quickly on towards the individual under the chestnut tree, who was so much engrossed by his conversation with the youths around him, that he did not observe their approach, until they were very near him. Then he turned round, following the direction of the boys' eyes; and mutual surprise—and mutual pleasure also—were depicted both in his countenance and those of the Lovells.

"James Collins!" exclaimed Grace. "Surely it is he—and yet what can have brought him here?"

"Shame for the past—and a desire for improvement—a desire to become more worthy of all the kindness that has been shewn to me and mine," replied James—advancing very humbly, and yet with evident joy and gratitude, to meet his benefactors.

"How do you mean, Collins? What is this establishment, which looks like a prosperous and happy village?" inquired Mr. Lovell.

"It is prosperous, and it is happy!" replied Collins, with earnestness—"for the blessing of God rests upon it. This is Dr. Wichern's Reformatory, sir. No doubt you have heard of it, and of all the good that has been done in it."

"Yes, James; I have heard much of it some years ago. But I had no idea that it was situated in this neighbourhood. How did you become acquainted with the place? And what induced you to become an inmate of it?"

"It would be a long story, sir, if I were to tell you the history of my early life, with all its errors, and all its wanderings, and you know that I have nothing to be proud of, and much to cause me both shame and sorrow. I have, however, had many blessings granted to me—far more than I deserved—and one of the greatest was being sent here when I was a lad, and kept here, under Dr. Wichern's care and teaching for a year and a half. I was serving in a merchant-ship that came to Hamburg for a cargo. I got into bad company on shore, and was concerned in several disgraceful actions, for some of which I was punished on board. At last I determined to run away; and I succeeded in doing so, and in concealing myself until the ship had left the port. Then I returned to my old ways, and my old companions. I earned money as I could, and spent it in sinful indulgence. This led to other crimes; and I was at length apprehended, and thrown into prison. After a time I was sent to this place, and the day I arrived I made up my mind to escape from it. But there was something that held me here, far stronger than bars and bolts. I did not understand it then, but I think I do so now. I think I know now why Dr. Wichern, and his good kind mother, are able to govern a multitude of wild reck-

less youths, and attach them to themselves, and to their home."

"Why did you leave them, James Collins," asked Grace. "Why did you go back to the evil ways from which you had been rescued?"

"Because I did not know myself, Miss Lovell—and did not suspect the sin and depravity of my own heart. After I had been in this place for eighteen months, and had learned how to maintain myself by honest labour, I bade farewell to Dr. Wichern and his mother, and all the brethren, and all my companions; and I went forth again into a world of danger and temptation, from which I was unable to guard myself. I believed that I was entirely changed, and that all my evil propensities were dead and gone, and would no more rise up to torment me. But I was grievously mistaken—as I soon found to my shame. I will not trouble you, or shock Miss Lovell's ears, by entering into the particulars of my backslidings and my sins. They were many and great; and they brought disgrace and punishment with them. You know, sir, that when it pleased God to bring me to your notice, I was only allowed my freedom as a convict with a ticket-of-leave. I remained in the same neighbourhood until my time was up, and I was no longer under the superintendence of the police. I had long made up my mind what I would do as soon as I was at liberty. I felt the shame of my past life as I had never done before I knew you, Mr. Lovell, and the young ladies." Here Collins glanced round, and then

fixed his eyes with a look of sorrowful inquiry on Grace's deep mourning dress. He understood what had befallen her sister, and he proceeded rather hurriedly: "I resolved, by God's blessing, to become less unworthy of the kindness that you had all shewn to me; and I knew that this was the place, where with God's help, my good resolutions might be strengthened, and I might be helped to redeem my character. I had saved some money; and with that I started for Hamburg, and then hastened to the *Rough House*."

"And how did Dr. Wichern receive you?—and did his venerable mother look kindly upon you, after such a long absence, and such a sad life as you had led, Collins?" inquired Grace, very earnestly.

"I could not tell you of all the kindness I met with, Miss Lovell," replied the man with some emotion. "Indeed it was like the Prodigal Son returning to his father's house. I told my story—all of it, good and bad—to Dr. Wichern. His dear good mother died more than a year ago; but the Doctor at once believed me, and admitted me into this place of rest, and peace, and goodness. I had not forgotten their language, which I had learnt as a boy; and I have been able, I hope, to make myself useful here; certainly I have never in all my life, known what it was to be really happy until I came again to the *Rough House*."



CHAPTER XIII.

AS James Collins concluded his narrative, he was startled by a loud cry of joy and amazement; and, in a moment, he found himself encircled by the arms of Dinah, who poured forth a torrent of queries, and waited for no answer to any of them.

She and Harry had remained on the spot where the luncheon had been spread, to re-arrange the basket; and they were not aware of the interesting discovery that the Lovells had made, until they had approached so near to the chestnut tree as to distinguish the features of the strangers.

Then Dinah caught hold of her nephew's arm exclaiming—

“Surely it's your uncle James, if it is not his ghost!” and then she rushed up to him, and expressed all her surprise and all her joy with an eloquent mixture of smiles and tears.

When she released her brother—whom she had never hoped to see on earth again—Harry came forward, and was hardly recognized by his uncle, so

greatly was he grown and improved, and so wonderfully had his intellectual powers been drawn out, and given expression and beauty to his features.

"You have no need of a *Reformatory*, Harry," said Collins rather sadly, and yet with a look of proud satisfaction at the boy. "You did not stay long enough with me to forget your mother's teaching, and learn my ways—and it is a blessing for you that you were taken away and kept under the care of those who could bring you up as a Christian. I should be glad indeed—and proud too—to have you here with me; but I hope, Harry, you may never come here, either as a convicted criminal, or as a penitent one—as I have done."

"I should not like to stay in a Reformatory, uncle," replied Harry; looking about him with rather a disdainful air. "But I should like you to come away from this place—which, I suppose, is something like a prison—and live in Ireland, near our beautiful home, as Mr. Lovell invited you to do. Surely you will come now." And he held his uncle's hand firmly, and looked as if he wished to drag him away at once from what he looked upon as a place of *durance vile*.

James Collins smiled.

"You are mistaken, my boy," he said kindly. "This is no prison, but a place of perfect liberty, and of great happiness—as I will presently show you. Nevertheless, I am most willing now to leave it, and to accompany you and my sister, and your most kind friends, to Ireland; if Mr. Lovell is still willing to give

me employment, and Dr. Wichern considers me fit to be trusted."

"Then I am sure you will come, uncle James!" exclaimed Harry joyfully. "I will go and tell Miss Lovell that you will return with us to Croone." And the boy bounded away after Grace and her father—who had walked on towards the buildings—leaving James Collins and Dinah to follow, and to discuss, at their ease, the past and the future.

Harry's intelligence was very well received by Mr. Lovell and his daughter. They had lost none of their interest in the "ticket-of-leave" man; and all that he had just told them of himself, and his earnest desire to lead a new life, made them only the more anxious to give him a helping hand, and to place him in a situation where he could, as it were, start afresh in life, and earn a good character, uninfluenced by former prejudices, and former sad remembrances against him.

Mr. Lovell promised Harry that all this should be arranged: and then he desired him to ask his uncle to conduct him and his party to Dr. Wichern; as he much wished to make the acquaintance of that excellent and justly-celebrated man; and also to be permitted to inspect his most interesting establishment, and hear from himself the story of its foundation, and of its almost miraculous prosperity and usefulness.

They were soon introduced to the Principal of the *Rough House*, who received them with the greatest courtesy, and led them over the numerous buildings

that comprise his very extensive premises. His deep-set, steady eyes—the firm and strongly-marked lines of his features,—and his remarkably clear and expressive manners of speaking, all gave evidence of that energy and determination which have marked his whole life, and have enabled him to overcome—trusting in the Lord for strength and guidance—all the many difficulties which have beset his path. He was a man who at once inspired respect; and the more Mr. Lovell and Grace saw of him, and the more they heard of his simple faith and his unshrinking confidence in the Lord his God, the more did that respect increase.

From him they heard of his first attempt to open a refuge for the guilty and the destitute—of the lonely cottage where he and his noble-hearted mother entered on a life of constant sacrifice and self-denial; with no hope except that of rescuing some few rough, hardened youths from their sinful and degrading courses, and bringing them to the knowledge and the love of God.

From him they also heard how the God whom he served had blessed and acknowledged his work, and had given him a supply of all things needful, and had never suffered him to want; but in every hour of need had sent more than sufficient to meet that need. From one old peasant's hut—which was at first adapted for the reception of twelve boys—the establishment had gradually increased, until, when the Lovells visited it, it comprised twenty separate

houses. The little patch of garden round the fish-pond had grown into a domain of fifty acres. The twelve boys who first submitted, with a severe struggle, to Dr. Wichern's discipline and instruction had multiplied to four hundred and fifty; and one hundred and thirty girls had also been added to the establishment, and located in separate dwellings, known by the name of the "*Swallows' Nests*."

Of all the domestic arrangements of this now celebrated Reformatory we will not tell. Suffice it to say that Mr. Lovell and his daughter, and their attendants, visited every part of it. They saw the chapel, and the schools, and the workshops, and the refectories and dormitories; and they found much to admire in all; and they found much to call forth astonishment, and earnest approval of the mode in which all was conducted, and the spirit which pervaded every plan and every regulation.*

The day was far spent by the time their interest and curiosity were fully satisfied. Dr. Wichern did not allow his guests to depart until he had introduced them to his own simple, but very comfortable apartment, where refreshment was provided for them, and where his mother's picture, and his mother's "old arm-chair" occupied conspicuous places. Here Mr. Lovell made arrangements with Dr. Wichern for

* For a full account of this wonderful establishment, and of some others, which have been similarly founded, and similarly supported, we refer our readers to a deeply interesting volume, entitled "*Praying and Working*," by the Revd. William Flemming Stevenson.

James Collins to leave the Reformatory, and enter his service. The character which the good Principal gave of him was entirely satisfactory ; and the man's countenance, and his whole appearance and bearing bore testimony to the sincerity and the extent of the change which had been wrought in him.

When the Lovells left the apartments, and turned to take leave of their host, they were almost startled by the sudden burst of melody which met their ears. On the green in front of the house were assembled about a hundred and fifty men and boys, ranged in four groups according to their voices ; and when they saw the Lovells come forth, accompanied by their beloved teacher, they struck up one of their fine national hymns, and sang it in perfect harmony. Another and another succeeded ; and Grace and her father listened with delighted ears until the sinking sun warned them that it was time to return, and to seek their carriage at the little inn where they had left it.

Again they bade adieu to the man whose faith had wrought such wonders, and who yet retained all the simplicity, and all the humility of a child : and they went on their way, marvelling that a like faith should be found in so few of those who profess to believe in God as the Answerer of prayers, and the liberal Bestower of all good gifts on those who "*ask in faith, believing.*"

We cannot refrain from here quoting Immanuel Wichern's own words, when speaking of the remark-

able manner in which all his wants have been met. "I know," he says, "that it seems to many wrong, or even dangerous, for a household, where hundreds must be daily fed, to have no more laid up than the sparrows. It is true, also, that whoever will remain sure of the power and the riches of his faith must have learned it, and felt it, and lived it. But whoever lives it and feels it, the treasure chambers of our heavenly Father lie open to him; and he has but to take in order to be inwardly certain that our God is a living God, and Saviour of the body and the soul. Such is the hope and comfort with which we meet the future. As I write, we are in urgent need; our need has no end; but then we know the better how the Lord alone is our help. I do not mean that in this respect ours is a special house, and that other families do not enjoy the same care as our own. I believe that whatever Christian household or person trusts the Lord utterly, and allows Him to be the only God and Saviour—although it be out of great faltering and weakness—that household or person shall never want, but shall have all it wants, even if it should obtain it through daily need and peril."

* * * * *

In due time James Collins left the Reformatory for a second time—not now to go forth into life, and all its dangers and temptations, trusting in his own strength and good resolutions; and, therefore, liable to fall into sin and ruin—but as a really converted man, who knew, by sad experience, his own utter

weakness, and had learnt where to find strength for the conflict. Immanuel Wichern had now entire confidence in him, and in the change that had been wrought in him; and he rejoiced in the prospect of comfort and respectability which Mr. Lovell's kindness laid open before him.

Still more did Dinah rejoice at the recovery of her brother, who had never ceased to be an object of deep and anxious interest to her; and whose fate had caused her very serious uneasiness and alarm after she heard of his strange disappearance from the neighbourhood of G——.

It was not Mr. Lovell's intention to return to Croone until late in the summer. He wished Grace to have time to recover her spirits, and her usual energy of character, before she again found herself in her accustomed home, where she and her beloved Ada had dwelt in such happiness together; and before she again resumed those duties, and those occupations that her sister had shared with her for so many years—years that could never be either recalled or forgotten. He, therefore, proposed to his daughter that they should remain at Hamburg as long as Mr. Severne and Mrs. Calthorpe continued to reside there; and that they should make excursions into Jutland, and other neighbouring states, as circumstances should permit. To this proposal Grace gave a ready assent. She longed for home—at times she yearned to re-visit every spot where she and Ada had been together, and to re-call all the happy inter-

course, and all the free interchange of thought and feeling which had ever subsisted between them. But at other times she shrank from the painful trial which she well knew her next going home would prove; and she was glad to defer it until the Kinnairds—who were now in Italy—should return to Croone Castle, and help to cheer her by their affection and their pleasant society.

In Mrs. Calthorpe she found a very congenial companion, and a very warm and sincere friend. She was also an earnest Christian; and Grace saw and felt that her religion was an abiding and an influential principle that guided her in all her daily life: and therefore she found comfort in conversing with her; and she soon confided to her all her sorrow, and all her inmost thoughts and sentiments—with only one reservation. There was a sorrow—there was a subject—which Grace never spoke of to any human being. She would have banished it from her own thoughts, and have rooted it out of her heart, had she been able to do so; for she feared it was useless—and worse than useless—now to cherish any remembrance of certain happy days at Croone, and of the feelings which had then seemed to be so warmly reciprocated. If she ever mentioned Alfred Kinnaird to her new friend, it was merely as one whom she had known from childhood, and whose sisters had ever been her intimate associates.

But Grace did not forget. Hers was not a character that admitted of strong impressions being effaced, or

strong affections ever dying away. Alfred had been her chosen companion in childhood—her friend and protector in all her juvenile difficulties and distresses. During the years in which he spent almost all his time in England, she had never ceased to regard him in the same light—to think of him with fond remembrance—and to look forward with hope and joy to his return to Croone. And when again they met—changed in appearance indeed, and ripened in intellect and feeling—there was no change in their mutual sentiments. They were only more warm and more absorbing; and each was more convinced of the other's love, and more conscious of the strength and constancy of their own attachment.

But we have seen that all open avowal of their affection was forbidden; and they who loved one another with a pure and devoted love, that would have stood the test of time and absence, were forced to part without one word of promise, and to endure months—nay, years—of separation, without the solace of correspondence—without one of those blessed little missives that convey such love and joy from one faithful heart to another.

For many weeks Grace had not even heard any tidings of Alfred. She only knew that he had gone to Norway with a friend, and was domesticated in his family. Could she believe or hope that he still thought of her as once he had done, and that he could suffer so long a time to elapse without endeavouring to ascertain the state of her feelings? “No”—

she repeated to herself—"he has, no doubt, seen many who are far more attractive than I am. He has forgotten me, even if he has not given his heart to another."

That last thought caused Grace a bitter pang. She tried to realize it, and to ascertain what would be her feelings if Alfred were indeed to return to Croone with a bride? She thought—poor Grace!—that she loved him well enough, and disinterestedly enough, to be able to rejoice in his happiness, and to welcome the enviable woman whom he had chosen as his life-companion. She thought that she could banish from her heart all lingering and torturing recollections, and be to Alfred and his wife a true and unselfish friend. She thought—yes, she thought many vain things—and she reckoned on her own strength of purpose, and her own womanly pride, to carry her through the inward struggle, and enable her to hide from every eye the sore disappointment which it would be her lot to suffer.

So much did Grace reproach herself for the pain which she felt at the idea of Alfred having transferred to another that love which she had once believed to be all her own, that she compelled herself to dwell on it, until at last she almost believed that such an event had taken place. It seemed natural, and in the course of things that he should meet with women more worthy of him than she believed herself to be—and it seemed still more natural, and indeed inevitable that no one to whom he offered his heart, could refuse

it. So she went on musing on the future, and recalling her old half-playful declaration that *she should never marry*, until it seemed to her a sort of prophetic warning.

Was she happy under this conviction? No—she tried to resign herself to it; but the sadness which often rested on her features—and which was attributed by her father and her friends to her recent bereavement—was not all caused by regret for the loss of her sister. Her darling Ada was at rest; and she could rejoice that she had been so early removed from a life of pain and privation. She thought of her with a tender regret—but she would not have recalled her to earth again. There was no bitterness in any remembrances connected with Ada—there was nothing to hope—nothing to fear—nothing to cause anxiety.

It was not so with other recollections and other thoughts of the future. There was hope, and fear, and anxiety, more intense and more abiding than Grace was herself aware of; and they all did their accustomed work, and left their accustomed traces. Mary Calthorpe alone suspected that her young friend had some hidden cause for grief and care. But she did not betray her suspicions—she only adapted her conversation to what she rightly guessed that cause to be; and Grace often marvelled at the “words in season,” and the appropriate remarks that Mrs. Calthorpe uttered.

These “words in due season” were more called for by and by: and they did not fail.



CHAPTER XIV.

WE left Alfred and Edward Kinnaird enjoying the hospitality of their Norwegian friends at Roystadt. The more they saw of the Dagmers the more they admired and esteemed them; and Edward's admiration and esteem for Elena ripened into warm and absorbing love. Ere long he declared his sentiments—which both Ludovic and his sister had already discovered—and which the latter confessed she had no wish to check or discourage. Neither did Ludovic or Alfred throw any obstacles in the way of the young people's happiness—for both the brothers considered them extremely well-suited to each other; and Alfred felt no doubt that when his parents became acquainted with the fair Norwegian, they would be ready to receive her as their future daughter.

So Edward and Elena were betrothed; and, for a short time, they enjoyed that fulness of contentment which arises from the consciousness of being ardently and devotedly loved, and from looking forward to a life-long continuance of the same affection, and the same entire confidence. It is sad that such rational

expectations should not always be realized! In the case of Edward and Elena we hope it may be so.

A few weeks passed away very pleasantly. The short summer of Norway was approaching, and the earth was covered with verdure and bright blossoms, and the trees with rich foliage. The scenery was very lovely—Elena thought it had never been so beautiful; and she was never weary of showing all her favourite spots to the enthusiastic young sailor; who, under her guidance and influence, manifested a taste for the picturesque which he had never before been supposed to possess.

What a pity that such a pleasant state of things should be interrupted! Yet so it was—as we shall see by and by.

Alfred had spent as much time in Norway as he felt he could spare; and he was anxious to return to Carlsbad and rejoin Charles Lovell, who was living there very contentedly, and in no hurry to leave the place. He had written very few letters to his former travelling-companion, and Alfred knew little of his matrimonial plans, or of the progress of his wooing. His own mind was fixed on one object, from which it had never wandered. Time had only convinced him more and more of the stability of his attachment to Grace Lovell—distance had only drawn closer the ties which bound his heart to her—and the sight of other scenes and other persons had only made him feel a stronger assurance that he should never attain to real and lasting happiness until he could return to his

native country and claim his long-loved Grace as his bride.

In a few months the term of the probation would be over, and he would have spent the two years which had been allotted for the purpose, in travelling. Much had he seen, and much had he learnt. Both in mind and in body he was greatly matured and improved. He had never been wild and reckless; and the determination which he had so early formed, of settling at the Priory as a respectable member of society, had kept him from many of the follies, and many of the extravagances into which young men are prone to fall.

But Alfred still "*lacked one thing.*" He was as yet only a fine *natural* character, and had not experienced that change of heart, without which he could not be accounted a true disciple of Christ. Had Grace met him now, she would, after a time, have experienced a sense of disappointment. She would have felt that there was a subject—now the most interesting of all subjects to her—on which she and Alfred could not entirely sympathize: and this would have embittered all the joy that a knowledge of his unchanged affection would have given her.

Grace's spiritual feelings and spiritual knowledge had greatly increased since the time that she parted with Alfred. Sorrow and trial and anxiety had been blessed to her, and had taught her to look above this world for happiness, and to a Power higher than her own for strength to bear the trials of life. All the

Christian teaching which she had received in childhood from her mother—and which her young heart had stored up since that beloved mother's death—had recurred yet more strongly to her mind in the hours of affliction : and the confidential intercourse which had been established between herself and her father, since they had been left alone, had been unspeakably precious and profitable to her.

Grace had often looked back to the days when she and Alfred were thoughtless children—caring only for outward things—contented with the enjoyment of the present life. And she had also reflected much on Alfred's character, as it had appeared during his last visit to Croone Castle. Then she had fancied that he was all that she could desire ; and she had not a doubt or a misgiving either with regard to his love for her, or his capability of rendering her perfectly happy. But after she had become conscious of the change which had been wrought in her own soul, she had also felt a new anxiety concerning the spiritual state of him who was the object of her long-tried affection. Her confidence in his love for her had long been entirely shaken : but still she desired for him the *greatest good* and the most exalted happiness. This was the constant subject of her prayers—for this she pleaded long after she had ceased to believe that his character would ever have any influence on her own personal happiness—and her prayers were heard and answered ; though not in the way that she would have chosen.

Alfred pressed Edward to leave Roystadt with him, and either accompany him to Carlsbad, or go at once in search of their parents, in order to inform them of the step which he had taken, and ask for their consent and approval. The young sailor was very reluctant to leave his *fiancée*; and suggested many cogent reasons why he should yet linger at Roystadt—such as his ignorance respecting his parents' whereabouts, and his certainty of their entire approval of his choice.

But Alfred would not listen to his excuses; and Ludovic joined with him in desiring that Edward should lose no time in obtaining the sanction of Mr. and Mrs. Kinnaird to his engagement. So he and Alfred set forth on their journey southwards, with a promise of returning to claim Elena as a member of their family as soon as all necessary arrangements could be made.

But all the plans so comfortably settled were very shortly deranged, and circumstances arose which none of the party foresaw, and which materially altered their line of conduct. So true it is that "*Man proposes, and God disposes.*"

* * * * *

The Danish war was just then at its height. We need not weary our readers with a detailed account of all the particulars of that sadly interesting and most calamitous war; as they are so recent as to be in the recollection of all. At the time of which we speak the siege of Dybbøl Hill and Fort was being carried

on by the Austrians and Prussians, under Marshal Wrangel and Prince Frederick Charles, with an army of about fourteen thousand men, well furnished with artillery, and a strong body of cavalry.

It was after the retreat of General De Meza with the Danish army from the *Dannevirke* line between Slesvig and Holstein—which he found it impossible to defend—that the desperate engagement took place at Oversø, on the road to Flensburg. The enemies' forces were gallantly withstood by a body of Danish infantry; and the artillery and baggage were thus enabled to escape. One division of the Danish army then retired across North Slesvig into Jutland; and the remainder proceeded to occupy the Island of Als, and the adjacent Hill of Dybbøl.

The Island of Als is situated in the Little Belt, which separates the Isle of *Fyen*—or *Funen*—from the Peninsula of Jutland; and between Als and the main-land, on which stands the promontory called Dybbøl Hill, lies the narrow Strait of Alssund. The town of Sønderborg is immediately opposite to Dybbøl, and the Strait, at that point, is only a hundred and sixty yards across. On the hill once stood a windmill, and around this building the Danes erected forts and bomb-proof block houses; and they thus hoped to defend Sønderborg, as well as to hold their own position on the promontory.

The old castle of Sønderborg had been turned into a hospital for the sick and wounded, and its spacious apartments were well filled with occupants. The

courtyards were piled with ordnance stores ; and many of the Danish officers found quarters in the offices, while others were accommodated in the houses of the better class of citizens.

Among these latter was Lionel Calthorpe, whose wife was now residing with her father at Hamburg. Captain Calthorpe had entered the Danish service many years ago ; and had, when a mere youth, distinguished himself in the war of 1848-9. He had become a great favourite in his regiment ; and, being a proficient in the Danish language, he was allowed to have the command of a company. In general the Danes do not employ foreign volunteers ; and Swedes and Norwegians were—with very few exceptions—the only allies who assisted in the defence of Dybbol Hill.

Lionel Calthorpe had been on the spot from the commencement of the siege in February. He had witnessed and shared the bravery of the little garrison ; and he had lamented the loss of life which he saw going on around him. The greater part of the troops were taken from a class of men resembling the English yeomen, and the more respectable of the peasantry. They were marked by a gravity and sobriety of demeanour that is but too seldom met with, either in the camp or the garrison ; and it was evident that loyalty and patriotism alone had brought these men into the ranks of the army ; and that home affections, and home habits kept them from the evil that so often accompanies war. No

drunkenness or riot were to be seen. No wild recklessness of manner lowered the character of their courage in the fight, or their fortitude in the endurance of fatigue, and privation, and suffering. It was well said by an eye-witness, that "to see only a few dozen of such men killed or wounded was a mournful thing. Not merely were fellow-creatures maimed and suffering, but so many fathers of families were lost to their wives and children." But very few young men were in the ranks of the little army at Dybbol; by far the greater number of the men were in the prime of life.

Sadly had Lionel watched the periodical funerals that took place in the pretty cemetery. Generally those who had fallen during the week in the trenches, or had died in the castle hospital, were buried in one long grave. Very simple, but very effecting, was the manner in which this ceremony was performed. A procession of soldiers carried the coffins; and a military band, playing slow and solemn music, marched before them. The chaplain of the forces followed, attired in a costume very similar to that worn by the Scotch covenanters, and marked by the same well-known ruff around the neck. No relatives were there to mourn over the departed heroes. Only a few comrades or idle spectators stood by the long deep trench in which the dead were laid side by side, and a single volley of a few muskets told when the sad service was over. Then the assemblage quietly dispersed, and those who were loved, and watched

and waited for in their distant homes, and whose untimely deaths would be long and bitterly deplored, were left in their last resting place—to be joined, as each week passed away, by others as brave, and as beloved, and as deeply to be lamented. It was a melancholy war—this struggle between the gallant little kingdom of Denmark, and her overwhelming and merciless enemies!

Captain Calthorpe had some business to transact at Copenhagen, and, as no serious attack was expected for some weeks, he determined to avail himself of a few days' leave of absence, which he readily obtained, and to take a passage in one of the hospital ships that conveyed the sick and wounded from the scene of action. There were many of such passengers in various states of suffering; but Lionel saw, with interest and satisfaction, the kind treatment which they met with, and the care and gentleness with which they were assisted. Some could walk up the gangway, leaning on sticks or crutches; others moved painfully with the support of two hospital nurses; and many were borne to the vessel on litters, groaning piteously at each slow and measured step of their bearers. It was sad indeed to look into their countenances, most of which were familiar to Lionel, and to see the change which a few weeks had wrought. Strong, healthy men reduced to helpless wrecks—maimed for life, or going to their once happy homes to die among their own people. Captain Calthorpe had been a soldier from his boyhood, and a brave

one—but his heart sickened at the spectacle around him; and he thought sadly of the cruel and unavailing sacrifice of life which this unjust war had already brought about, and of the still greater slaughter which must be expected ere the siege of Dybbøl would be lost or won.

The passage to Svendborg was performed in a few hours, and there an eager crowd waited the arrival of the ship. At that moment a vessel, whose deck was covered with raw recruits going forth to fill the vacancies which death and sickness had made, passed close to the hospital ship. Loud cheers rose up from the gallant and devoted men, but they met with no answering cheer from the sick and the dying. They were absorbed in the scene which awaited them on shore—they had no heart to cheer on their brethren to the scene they had left behind them.

Slowly and painfully these disabled heroes were conveyed to the shore, and each pallid face was gazed at with the deepest interest, as women pressed forward to look for some loved one. To the eager inquiries of several was returned the chilling reply, "He is dead!" and agonizing were the signs of uncontrollable grief that followed the fatal announcement. Others, more happy, caught a glimpse of some much-loved—but O, how altered—form, and rushed forward to cast their arms around them, and to shed tears of joy, and yet of anguish, on their breasts.

Lionel thought of his own dear wife, and, with more fervency of devotion than was common to him,

he prayed that she might be spared the suffering which it wrung his heart to witness.

At Svendborg, as well as at Odensö and Copenhagen, there were spacious hospitals for convalescents, and, to the first of these, many of the sufferers, who had been Captain Calthorpe's fellow-passengers, were taken. More than one of these belonged to his own company, and he attended them to the hospital, where he was much struck with the comfort and cleanliness that prevailed in all the wards, and the attention bestowed on the inmates.

One of his own men, in whom he felt a peculiar interest, had been removed a few weeks ago to the Svendborg hospital "*severely wounded*," and Lionel was desirous of ascertaining his fate, and of visiting him if he still lived. He passed from room to room without recognizing poor Karl; and he feared that he was dead. But, on questioning one of the surgeons, he was told that he still lived; and one of the Swedish sisters of mercy, who had volunteered their help as nurses, led the way with noiseless tread between the narrow white beds, on which lay maimed, and suffering, and dying men, until she came to a part of the ward that was devoted to the more desperate cases.

The nurse paused by one bed, the occupant of which looked indeed as if his hours were numbered. The wan cheek, with one burning spot of fever—the restless and glittering eyes, which yet almost lacked intelligence—the short and hurried breath—and the

wasted hands that clutched the bed-clothes—all told that the time of his departure drew nigh.

“He has not two days to live,” whispered the nurse to Lionel, “and he knows it.”

Calthorpe leant over the dying man, and thought of the fine manly fellow whom he had seen so lately bravely defending one of the redoubts on Dybbøl Hill. Hardly could he now recognize him in the emaciated form before him.

“Karl,” he said, in as cheerful a tone as he could command.

The man turned his restless eyes on the speaker, and gazed for a moment vacantly in his face. Then a look of recognition, and a faint, sad smile lighted up his features.

“My captain,” he said, in a scarcely articulate voice ; and he tried to say more, but his breath failed him.

Calthorpe gently passed his arm beneath the sufferer’s shoulders, and raised him a little, and Karl looked at him gratefully, and then said to the nurse, “Give it to him—he will take care of it.”

As he spoke, he glanced towards a blood-stained knapsack that lay on a chair by his side. The nurse took from it a small and well-worn Bible, and laid it before Karl. With a trembling but eager hand he opened it, and pointed to his own name on the cover, written in his wife’s handwriting. It was her gift.

He turned over a few pages, and took out a long tress of light silky hair, tied with a piece of faded

ribbon. On this relic he gazed with a sad and lingering look, and then held it towards his captain, saying very feebly,

"Give it to my wife—it is our child's hair. May the Lord bless them!"

Lionel took it, and tears were in the brave officer's eyes, as he assured poor Karl that his last wish should be attended to. We need not say that he kept his word, and that Karl's widow and child found a friend in him.*

Sadly Captain Calthorpe left the hospital, and proceeded from Svendborg to Copenhagen, and there we must leave him, while we return to Roystadt, and tell how it came to pass that Alfred and Edward Kinnaird, who left the pleasant and hospitable dwelling, with all its various attractions, under the impression that many months must elapse ere they again met their host and hostess, did actually find themselves again in their society, a few days after their departure.

Ludovic Dagmer had, from the first, taken a deep interest in the political state of Denmark, and had deeply sympathized in all her wrongs, and all her gallant efforts. Had he felt himself quite independent, he would at once have volunteered into the Danish army, and have devoted himself, and all his influence and possessions, to her service.

* Some parts of the above details, and others which will follow, are derived from an interesting book, entitled, "*The Tale of Danish Heroism*," by J. E. H. Skinner.

But his sister was a strong tie to him. He could not leave her alone and unprotected, and she had no near relative to whose care he could consign her with perfect confidence, and feel that if he never returned from the war, she would be properly cared for and guarded.

Her betrothal to Edward Kinnaird had given him a happy assurance with regard to her ultimate future, but it did not at present take her out of his hands; and, though he ardently desired to see her married, that he might be free to follow the dictates of his own heart, his feelings of honour and delicacy forbade his suggesting an immediate marriage. He hoped that the progress of the war would be retarded, if not altogether checked, and that if it continued, he might be able to take an active part in it, before any very serious events should occur to threaten the independence of Denmark.

This last hope was, however, destroyed when, a day or two after the Kinnairds left Roystadt, a friend of Ludovic's arrived from Copenhagen, and brought the news of the continued siege of Dybbol—the weakened state of the garrison—and the fears that were everywhere entertained of its fall, and the disastrous events that would follow such a defeat.

Ludovic's heart swelled, and his ardent spirit burned to go forth to the aid of the oppressed. His eyes met Elena's, and she read his thoughts, and knew all his desires, and all his scruples.

Elena was a girl of courage and determination.

She rose, and approached her brother, and laying her hand on his shoulder, she said calmly, though with rather a faltering voice,—

“Ludovic, do your duty. Leave me here to the care of your dependents. I fear nothing so much as being a hindrance to you in that good work to which your own noble heart impels you.”

Ludovic threw his arm round her and kissed her fondly.

“You never have been a hindrance to me, Elena,” he said, “but a help and an encourager in all that is right and good. But I cannot leave you alone. Your cousin Hilda could not now come to Roystadt as she has formerly done; and her home is not one in which I should choose you to reside. You are my first care—my first duty—and our mother’s dying charge to me shall never be neglected.”

“I am safe here, Ludovic,” said his sister softly. “I would live here in perfect retirement until you returned to me.” She paused, and her colour came and went. Then she added in a very low voice, meant for Ludovic alone; “And if . . . O Ludovic, if . . .” She could say no more, but turned hastily away, and left her brother and his friend together.

Long they discussed the possibility of Ludovic Dagmer joining the Danish forces at Sönderborg; and many were the plans which were thought of for the disposal of Elena, all of which were abandoned as undesirable. Harold Andersen was a thorough soldier, entirely devoted to his profession, and not very sensi-

tive to any other claims or duties. He very strongly urged Ludovic to hasten to the scene of war, whither he intended very shortly to return. He was acting as a volunteer, and he was now going to Dronthiem, his native city, to seek for money and recruits! His ardour, and the indignant terms in which he spoke of the conduct of Denmark's foes, added fuel to the fire of his friend's enthusiasm; and Dagmer felt more and more desirous to engage in the same righteous cause.

Again and again it recurred to the mind of Dagmer that there was only one protector to whom he could with comfort and confidence resign his sister; and he almost regretted that he had not opened his mind to Alfred, and consulted him on the subject before he and his brother left Roystadt.

He confided to his friend that Elena was betrothed to a young native of the British Isles; and that he had just departed to seek his parents, and ask their consent to his marriage. This would necessarily occupy several weeks; and some time must then elapse before the wedding could take place, and he could feel himself free and independent. It would probably be then too late to offer his services to the Danes. The fate of the gallant and oppressed little kingdom would no doubt be decided long before that time could arrive. Such a delay, and such a state of suspense and impatient waiting appeared intolerable to the enthusiastic Ludovic; and equally so to his friend.

Harold Andersen spurned the idea that so trifling

an obstacle as the disposal of a young girl—even such an one as Elena Dagmer—should be allowed to deter Ludovic from the performance of a great duty—the exercise as he deemed it, of a great privilege. So strongly did he urge the point—and so warmly did the listener sympathize in all that he said—that at length Dagmer agreed to consult his sister ; and, if she could suggest any suitable home in which she could remain during his absence, he promised that he would follow his friend to Sonderborg as soon as he had placed her in it. To leave her alone at Roystadt was not to be thought of.





CHAPTER XV.

WITH this promise—in which he fully confided—Harold Andersen took his leave, and hastened on to Dronthiem to execute his commission. Dagmer immediately repaired to his sister's own apartment, to perform what he felt to be a painful task—to tell her of his resolution to join the Danish forces, provided she were first comfortably settled ; and to ask her own opinion as to the possibility of this object being speedily accomplished.

He found Elena sitting on her favourite low seat at the open window ; her hands folded firmly together as they lay on her knee, and her eyes apparently fixed on her own little garden below, which was already beginning to look gay with spring blossoms.

She started as she heard her brother's step, and turned towards him with a firm and resolved expression, although he could detect the signs of trouble and sorrow in her clear blue eye, and in the tones of her rich voice.

“ Ludovic,” she said ; “ I have arranged everything. You shall have no anxiety on my account ; and you

shall be free to go where duty calls you without any delay."

"Dear Elena," replied her brother, as he sat down beside her, and took her hand in his; "it is painful to me to think of leaving you—and on such an errand. But if men in my circumstances do not devote themselves to this noble cause, how can we expect others, who are less independent, to do so. Tell me, my darling sister, what you, in your unselfish heart, have devised in this emergency."

"Not so very unselfish, Ludovic," returned Elena, forcing a playful smile. "I care as much for the Danes as you do; and I am as anxious to see their wrongs redressed. O, if I were but a man, that I might go with you, my brother, and fight by your side!"

How handsome the young girl looked as she uttered these words! There was an animation in her eyes that perhaps belongs exclusively to such as are of the tint that made hers so remarkable: and the warm blood rushed up and suffused her fair cheeks, shewing clearly, through her transparent skin, how strongly her feelings were aroused.

"Gently, Elena," said Ludovic, laughing at her zeal. "You must moderate your military ardour now. What would Edward Kinnaird say to your volunteering for the defence of Dybbøl Hill?"

Again the eloquent colour which had faded away as rapidly as it had risen—mounted to Elena's very brow.

"Well," she said gaily, "I suppose I must not be a soldier, or even a soldier's page: so I will tell you how I propose to help you by my absence, as I cannot do so by my presence. You know that my old governess, Madame Hennemann, has established a *pension* at Christiania; and she has more than once, pressed me to visit her there. Hitherto I have refused, because I would not leave you; but now I will accept her invitation, in the same friendly spirit in which I know it was given. I can be ready to start to-morrow. When does Harold Andersen leave Dronthiem for the capital?"

"Thanks, dear Elena!" exclaimed Ludovic joyfully. "You have indeed hit on a solution of all my difficulties. With Madame Hennemann you will be safe; and, I hope, happy also. You always loved her, and she was quite devoted to you."

"Yes, Ludovic, I shall be happy with my dear old friend—as happy as I can be when I am separated from you. But I was not thinking of that—my object in wishing to go to Christiania is to be nearer to the seat of war. I shall be able to hear more readily of you, and from you. All news from the army will be speedily known at the city—and brother," she continued in a less firm voice, "dear brother, I could go to Sonderborg, or to Svendborg if you wanted me."

"I trust I shall not want you, in the capacity to which you allude, Elena;" replied her brother. But a cloud passed over his features as he spoke, and a grave thoughtful expression remained on his countenance

until he left Elena and went to seek for Harold at Dronthiem, and communicated to him the arrangement that his sister had made. Then all gloomy thoughts were driven away by the congratulations of his friend, and by the necessity for active exertion.

He found that Andersen intended to set out on his return journey the following evening. He had succeeded beyond his expectations in the attainment of his object; and he was anxious to reach Christiania as soon as possible, that he might transact similar business there, and then proceed to Hamburg, which place was also included in his recruiting tour.

Ludovic arranged that they should all travel together to Christiania; and then he returned to Roystadt, where he found Elena and her maid Marion very busily preparing for the expected journey. He shut himself up in his own private room for some time that night—but he was not engaged in mere arrangements for his own present comfort. His confidential man of business was with him; and papers were prepared and executed, which might, under certain contingencies, be important to Elena's future welfare.

The following day was fully occupied; and late in the afternoon, the party set out from Roystadt. Marion and Dagmer's servant, Hans, with the baggage, occupied one hired carriage; and their master and mistress, and Harold travelled in Dagmer's own Britska.

They proceeded, changing horses frequently, until night; when they stopped at a small town. Again

at daybreak they set forth, and pursued their way until long after sunset: and late on the third day they arrived at Christiania.

The Dagmers and Harold Anderson took up their abode at the Hotel du Nord, a large establishment, and very well conducted; and here they proposed to stay while the latter transacted the business which he had in hand, and until Elena had been settled under the roof of Madame Hennemann.

The morning after their arrival at the Hotel du Nord, the travellers were seated at breakfast near a projecting window that afforded a good view up and down the street. Elena's attention had been for some time very painfully engaged by a sight, which happily, is rather peculiar to Christiania, and is not often seen elsewhere. A gang of galley-slaves, in company with other ordinary labourers, were being marched to their work in another part of the town; and they passed along the street opposite to the Hotel window. They came out from a house whence Elena had just before heard the sound of music and singing. Perhaps the convicts had joined in a morning hymn with the female voices that were distinctly to be heard! As they came forth, the clanking of chains sounded discordantly with the still continued music. Elena gazed with intense interest at these wretched, and probably reckless men; and her heart swelled and beat high as she observed the brutal manner in which they were fettered. They had iron collars round their necks, and similar burdens on their legs; and these were

encumbered with projections, so arranged as to prevent the poor victims from finding rest in any position. Some of them were very young—too young, Elena thought, to be irreclaimable—and it pained her to observe the shameless way in which even these youths met the public gaze, and addressed the women and children whom they met in the wide and almost deserted street.

Elena leant from the window, and watched the sad procession moving up the street. She did not express her feelings at the degrading spectacle, for her brother and Harold were in earnest discussion on some point connected with the war—but she kept her eyes fixed on the retreating forms of the galley-slaves; and she did not, for a moment, perceive a very different individual, who was standing in the street, and looking at her with the liveliest astonishment and joy.

As she drew back her graceful form from the window, her eyes met those of the stranger, and she involuntarily exclaimed.

“Mr. Kinnaird is below, Ludovic!”

Had Harold not already known that the name *Kinnaird* was one of peculiar interest to the fair Norwegian girl, the animation of her tone, and the sudden flush that overspread her features, would have told the tale to less observant eyes than those which were now fixed on her. Harold looked from Elena to the individual who had thus pleasantly excited her; and he could not deny that the fine young man whom he saw gazing up with such beaming and affectionate

admiration, was a good specimen of a British gentleman, and a worthy aspirant for the hand of the fair Elena.

Meantime, Ludovic had hurried down into the street, and was now conducting Edward Kinnaird into the presence of his betrothed. Harold Andersen only waited to be introduced to him ; and then, with much good taste and judgment, he took his leave, and went to follow his own avocations.

Quickly was the mystery of this unlooked-for meeting explained ; and the explanation caused many and deeply interesting thoughts to arise in Edward's breast—thoughts which he did not then declare, but which he was, nevertheless, very much bent on bringing to pass.

To Ludovic this meeting was not altogether so unexpected as it was to both Edward and Elena. He knew that the Kinnairds intended to remain two or three days at Christiania, before proceeding to Germany ; and he both wished and hoped to meet them in the capital, in order to inform them of his own intention of joining the Danish troops ; and also that Edward might be made acquainted with the place of residence which had been chosen for his promised bride.

Ere long, Alfred joined them. The brothers were living in the same hotel in which the Dagmers had found accommodation, and had heard the late arrival of travellers on the preceeding night, and the consequent hurry and bustle in the establishment. But

they had little guessed whom these travellers were ; or that they had any interest in their movements further than that they found themselves neglected for the new comers, and their supper was allowed to get cold, while the wants of the strangers were being attended to.

When Alfred and Edward left the Dagmers' apartment, and sought their own, the latter told his brother all that was in his heart ; but he did not at first meet with the sympathy and encouragement that he desired.

"You were always an impetuous fellow, Ned," replied the elder and graver of the brothers. "Why should all that we have just heard make any alteration in your plans? Elena will remain with her friend here in Christiania as safely as if she were residing with her brother at Roystadt ; and, by the time you have seen our parents, and returned—as I feel confident you will do—with their full consent to your marriage, I have no doubt the war will be over, and Dagmer ready to conduct his sister home, and give her to you as your wife."

"And Elena is then to be left in a *pension*—a sort of school—for as many weeks and months as Ludovic may choose to play the soldier ! I could not stand that, Alfred—my darling would be moped to death in this dull desolate place, and with no companions except an old governess, and her uninteresting pupils !—she who is accustomed to climb mountains, and ride across the country in perfect freedom !"

Alfred laughed at his brother's outburst of indignation.

"My dear fellow, pray be calm," he replied. "Are you sure that Elena regards a short residence with her old friend as such a serious penance as you represent it? I daresay she would be perfectly contented to wait for you at Christiania as patiently as she would have done at Roystadt."

"How provokingly calm and sensible you are, Alfred!" exclaimed Edward; but he also laughed at his own impetuosity. Then, with a sudden change of countenance, he went on—"But it is not altogether a laughing matter—death is going on fearfully in Dybbol, as we heard yesterday. Dagmer is going to take the place of some poor fellow who has fallen there, or who may be lying maimed in one of the hospitals. Who can say what may befall that brave Norwegian? I am sure he will be to the fore whenever hot work is going on—and if he should fall—if Elena should suddenly be deprived of the brother whom she loves so dearly, who would be near to comfort her? Alfred, she belongs to Ludovic now—but, if he were to give her to me, I should have a right to comfort her under every affliction, and in every trial; and I could be to her all—and more than all—that her brother has ever been!"

There was strong and manly feeling in Edward's words, and in his manner of uttering them; and Alfred felt the force of his arguments.

"Ned, I believe you are right;" he said kindly

"You have a right to guard that dear girl from the possible desolation that may threaten her. If her brother consents to your immediate marriage, and you can win her over also, you shall have no opposition from me. I believe that our parents would—under the circumstances—approve of the step you wish to take. I only wish that I were as near the fulfilment of all my long-cherished wishes as I hope you may be. I am very weary of my long probation."

"It will soon be over, Alfred. In a few months all the parties concerned will be, I trust, re-assembled at dear old Croone; and we will have a grand merry-making at your wedding. But tell me; are you quite sure of Grace? Two years is a long time to have left her without even a promise between you. I almost doubt whether I could have stood it, or whether I could have trusted Elena."

Alfred smiled a smile of confidence.

"Grace and I have loved one another for years, Ned—not only for weeks. I know she could not change; and she ought to be equally sure of me. It would have been a great happiness to us to have been allowed to correspond during all this long separation—and I fully expected it when I agreed to travel for two years. But it will 'all be right by and by, and we shall enjoy our time of betrothal all the more for its having been so long postponed. And we shall have proved to ourselves, and to the world, that our love was of a good sterling quality, and not to be injured by time or absence."

"All right, my wise brother, I am glad you take it so philosophically. But I cannot follow your example just now. I must go and demand an audience of Dagmer, and try to bring him over to my views. I only hope he may shew himself as sensible in this matter as you have done."

"I hope so, too, for your sake, Ned, and for Elena's also. God speed you."

So saying, he warmly shook his brother by the hand, and dismissed him to his anxious errand, while he sat down to write a long-postponed letter to "uncle Charles," at Carlsbad.

The proposition of Edward Kinnaird was rather startling to Dagmer. It is true he had wished that circumstances had permitted his sister's marriage to take place at Roystadt, before he felt himself called to leave his home, and embark in a foreign war. But the idea of giving her away in the hasty and extempore manner that Edward now suggested, appeared to him at first an impossibility.

Long he urged the many difficulties that arose in his mind ; and Edward combated them in order, and contrived to dispose of them to his own satisfaction at least. The most powerful obstacle was Dagmer's reluctance to permit the marriage to take place without the consent, or even the knowledge, of the young man's parents. But even this was at length overcome by the same argument that had convinced Alfred. Edward very gently hinted at the chances of war, and at Elena's lonely position, and then repeated his

confident assurance that his own parents and sisters would be such to her, as soon as they were made acquainted with her.

All that he said had been long present to the mind of Dagmer; and, as we have seen, he had made arrangements for the worst that could happen. He stood silent and thoughtful for a few minutes, then, with a sad, sweet smile, he turned to Edward, and, holding out his hand to him, he said frankly and cordially,—

“My brother Edward, you have my consent. Only obtain Elena’s, and I will give her to you at once, fully convinced I am securing to her a good, a devoted, and a high-minded protector for life. She is a treasure, Kinnaird, and you will find her one. I could not part with her so willingly now, were it not for all that is before me. I may never return to her, but you and Alfred will replace me; you will be to her a good husband, and he will be a true brother.”

Edward would have expressed all the joy and gratitude that he felt at this proof of Dagmer’s confidence, but his manner forbade it. He was evidently deeply impressed with some sad forebodings, and, before the young sailor could quite make up his mind how to reply to him, he had left the room.

Dagmer may have been right, or he may have been wrong, in thus yielding to Edward’s solicitations. It is an open question, on which we have our own opinion, but we shall not reveal it. So it was, however, that the straightforward and simple-minded

Norwegian gentleman put full confidence in both Edward Kinnaird and his brother. He judged them by himself, and he believed in the purity and strength of Edward's attachment; and he also believed all that the brothers assured him of respecting their parents. He considered his sister as already *virtually* Edward's wife—for was she not solemnly betrothed to him? Who, then, could be so fit to guard and protect her as he? And why not *now*, before evil days should come, which might retard or sadden their nuptials, and when she could at once be placed in a position of perfect comfort and happiness?

Thus Dagmer reasoned within himself, and thus he acted. And then, having declared his decision to Edward, he hastened away, to hide from him the struggle which that decision had cost him.

He left the young man to plead his own cause with Elena; and he had no great doubt of his ultimate success, although he felt sure that she would be even more startled than he had himself been at the suddenness of the proposal, and the many obvious objections.

In a little time he sought his friend, Harold Andersen, and communicated to him the determination at which he had arrived with regard to his sister, and also respecting his own plans.

"My departure for Copenhagen and Sonderborg must now be delayed," he said, "until this marriage has taken place. No time shall be lost, I assure you. As I have consented to this rather extraordinary step, I feel impatient to have it accomplished, that I may

give my whole mind to the new course of life on which I am about to enter."

"You are right, Dagmer!" exclaimed Harold, very heartily. "I rejoice to hear that that fine young man has succeeded in overcoming all your scruples. Be assured that his parents will be well satisfied with their new daughter-in-law, and will not object to the hasty manner in which she may have entered the family. I know your estimation of your sister—and I know that all who know her well must cordially agree with you. I am a soldier by profession, and by choice, and not a marrying man. Were it otherwise—had I ever been in a position to indulge myself with a wife—the only woman I would have aspired to would have been Elena Dagmer."

"And you should have had my consent to try and win her, Harold," replied his friend, warmly; "but that is past, and I am well satisfied to give her to this young Irishman. Now you and I must think of very different things, and prepare for a very different fate."

"A more glorious one, Ludovic. I hardly envy even Mr. Kinnaird just now, for my heart is in Dybbol Fort. I must start for Copenhagen this evening, and from thence I shall proceed to Hamburg, where I hope to obtain some recruits; and where, also, I shall see the wife of an English officer, who belongs to the Danish army, and who is now with his regiment at Sönderborg. His name is Calthorpe."

"Calthorpe!" replied Dagmer. "Is he Lionel Calthorpe?"

"Yes, that is his name. Have you ever met him? He has been in the Danish army for many years."

"Then he is the same whom I knew well at Copenhagen some years ago. He was as brave, and as kind-hearted a man as I ever met."

"He is so still," replied Harold, "and he will welcome you cordially to Sønderborg. Probably you will arrive there before I return from Hamburg. He is quartered in the upper part of the town, in the house of a family named Holdin. You will easily find him, and he will introduce you to the general."

"Come and dine with us before you set out this evening, Andersen," said Ludovic. "I should like you to see more of our British friends, who are so soon to be relatives. Elena, also, will be grieved if she does not see you again."

"No, Dagmer, I have much to do, and I had better not join a happy party—it might make my journey seem very lonely by comparison. Give my kind regards, and my best and most hearty wishes for her happiness to your sister; but I confess I would rather not witness it just now." So saying, Harold shook hands with his friend, and left him.

As he turned into another street, he looked back to give another parting salutation, and he saw a tall man, much resembling Edward Kinnaird, but with a longer beard, and a more mature aspect, come out of the hotel, and join Dagmer. They both courteously returned his salutation, and then walked away together.

"That must be Kinnaird's fellow-traveller," said Harold to himself. "Probably that 'uncle Charles,' of whom I heard Elena make some mention to her brother at Roystadt, as the companion whom Kinnaird was going to join."

And he went away with this conviction, which was an unfortunate one, as it happened.

* * * * *

In a very few days Elena Dagmer and Edward Kinnaird were married. The ceremony was performed in the simple manner that is usual in the Lutheran Church; and it was attended only by Madame Hennemann, and two of her favourite pupils, who acted the part of bridesmaids.

Then the happy couple took leave of Dagmer and Alfred—and the parting was a severe trial to both Elena and her brother—and they set out on their return to Roystadt. It was arranged that they should remain there until an answer could be received to the letters which Edward and Alfred had dispatched to Mr. and Mrs. Kinnaird, and without which answer, neither Elena nor her brother wished that she should present herself to her new relatives.



CHAPTER XVI.



ALFRED and Ludovic were left alone ; and both were grave and thoughtful. “What shall you do with yourself now Kinnaird?” inquired the Norwegian, after a long silence.

“I am uncertain,” replied Alfred. “I do not care to return to Carlsbad, until I know what reply my father sends to Edward. I have not the slightest doubt as to the nature of that reply. I am sure that he and my mother will both of them approve of the step which has been taken. They will sympathize with Edward ; and they will sympathize with you also—for I know what they feel on the subject of this unjust war, and they wish heartily for the success of the Danes. I should like to hear from them before I go back to uncle Charles.”

“Why should not you go with me to Sønderborg ? It would interest you to see what is going on in the Danish army ; and you might have an opportunity of lending a helping hand to the good cause.”

Alfred considered for a moment, and then looked up with a very eager expression in his eyes.

"I will go with you, Dagmer," he said. "I will go and judge for myself of the condition and prospects of the Danish forces now engaged at Dybbøl; and, if I find that I can be of any use, I will remain until the siege is concluded. My parents must approve of my taking the part of the oppressed, and fighting for the countrymen and the kindred of our lovely young Princess Alexandra. Ludovic, I heard much of her arrival in England last year, and I shared in the enthusiasm with which she and her parents were received and welcomed. I little thought that they would so soon be threatened almost with the loss of their kingdom; and that her happiness and peace of mind would be disturbed on their account."

"Happiness and peace of mind are very uncertain things, Alfred. I have lived long enough to find that out. Let us hope that the measure now enjoyed by your brother and Elena may be more durable than that which seemed to be bestowed on the amiable and highly-favoured Princess of Wales. You are right, as a British subject, to espouse her cause, which must necessarily be the cause of her parents and of her native land. I shall be proud to have you as my brother-in-arms. But is there no one, Alfred, who would feel a peculiar interest in your deciding to fight for the Danes—an interest as great as ever your mother could feel; and whose wishes ought also to be considered?"

Alfred smiled ; and the warm blood mounted to his brow. But he answered frankly—

“There is one who would encourage me to go to the aid of the oppressed—one of Elena’s spirit, who could not love any man who would stand by, and see the weaker party crushed.”

“But would this high-minded individual approve of your risking your life in a cause which duty does not impel you to join?” asked Dagmer in a lively tone. Then he added, more seriously, “I should be grieved if I were the means of leading you into any needless peril, Alfred. I perceive that your life is a very valuable one—you must not endanger it thoughtlessly.”

“I will not do so, my good friend. I will accompany you to Sönderborg ; and then I will decide on what my further course shall be. But surely your life is as precious as mine can be ; and your death would be far more widely regretted.”

“No—you are mistaken, Alfred. There is no one whose happiness would be seriously affected by such an event, except my darling sister ; and I have now given her a substitute in the person of Edward. I stand very much alone in the world. There was one—the only one whom I have ever known—who could have tied me to life, and made me shun danger and death for her dear sake. Had she lived my whole life would have been different. But she left me, and went to a purer and brighter world than this—and then I devoted myself to Elena—she became my all on earth.

Now I have given her to another, and I am free from every tie. If I die, she is well provided for ; and if I live, she, and those whom she loves, will be my care. But I believe that I shall never see her again in this world."

"Do not say so," replied Alfred. "You are depressed this evening from having parted with dear Elena, who so well deserves, and so warmly returns your love. To-morrow you will feel more cheerfully ; and will look forward to a happy meeting with your sister and her husband."

"I am not superstitious, Kinnaird," replied Dagmer with a calm smile ; "and I do not fear death. If, as I expect, it meets me soon, I shall not complain. Good night ; we must start at daybreak for Copenhagen."

There was little to interest the reader in the voyage from Christiania to the capital of Denmark. The steam-vessel proceeded safely and steadily on her way, with few interruptions ; and, in due time, reached the entrance to the narrow channel which separates the Island of *Seeland*, or *Zealand*, from the mainland of Sweden. Passing the castle of Kronberg, near the town of Elsinore, the goodly ship steamed down the Sound ; and, emerging from the narrow strait into the fine port—which was crowded with ships of war and merchant-vessels—brought her passengers to a full view of the very striking city.

Copenhagen is considered one of the finest capitals in Europe ; and Alfred—who had never before seen

it—was greatly impressed by its beauty and grandeur. He was very desirous to examine the many public buildings which he saw rising above the ordinary roofs—especially the famous Observatory, which Dagmer pointed out to him, and which is built on the summit of a very remarkable round tower, one hundred and fifteen feet high; which is also the tower and belfry of Trinity Church.

Dagmer had to make certain military preparations which detained him for a few days at Copenhagen; and therefore Alfred was enabled to gratify his curiosity by a cursory view of all that was most worth seeing in the city and its environs; including the splendid summer palace of Fredericksberg, with its beautiful and extensive gardens, which forms a delightful royal retreat from the damp and unwholesome climate of Copenhagen.

During one of his rambles, in which Ludovic accompanied him, they met an individual of a very pleasing aspect, and decidedly military bearing. He looked hard at Dagmer, and almost paused as if to address him. This caused the Norwegian to examine his countenance more carefully; and then a mutual recognition took place.

“Lionel Calthorpe!” exclaimed Ludovic.

“My old friend Dagmer!” responded the other: and a very friendly greeting ensued. Alfred was introduced to the Danish officer; and the three men entered very speedily and very earnestly into a conversation on the Danish war—more especially the

operations then being carried on at Dybbøl and in the adjacent district—in which they each and all felt a peculiar interest.

The report which Captain Calthorpe gave of the siege of Dybbøl, and of the overwhelming numbers of the enemy, aroused the indignation and the enthusiasm of his hearers afresh. They felt even more impatient to press on to the seat of war, and to take part with the weak against the strong; and Lionel Calthorpe omitted nothing, in his detailed account, that could deepen the impression which he saw he was making on the proposed volunteers.

It was agreed that they should all go to Sønderborg together as soon as Dagmer's purchases were completed; and this was very speedily accomplished. His servant, Hans, was infected with the same military ardour that inspired his master and his master's friend; and he insisted on being considered a recruit, and on having military equipments. Indeed the whole city seemed to have but one occupation—the collecting and preparing stores for the army. And but one thought engaged the minds, and one feeling filled the hearts of her inhabitants—the thought of their country's peril; and the feeling of indignant hostility to her overbearing and tyrannical enemies.

We must sympathize in the impatience of the young men, and hasten over all the necessary preparations; and all the various little events that occurred during their journey to the Island of Als. Suffice it to say that they arrived at Sønderborg with strong

arms, and brave hearts, and high spirits, to cheer and aid the heroic little garrison of Dybbol—of whose previous proceedings we will now make brief mention.

During the period in which Captain Calthorpe had been unavoidably absent from his regiment, a greater change had taken place in the state of affairs at Dybbol and Sonderborg than he had anticipated. Could he have foreseen how much the garrison and the fortifications would suffer from the Prussian artillery before he returned to his post, he would never have thought of leaving it; neither would his commanding officer have so readily given him the leave which he desired.

Several attacks—more or less serious—had been made by the enemy upon Dybbol Hill, and the village of the same name. The German forces which occupied the locality of Broagerland, had advanced upon the Danish position, and had actually captured two hundred prisoners, and taken possession of the churchyard, driving the opposing Danes to the protection of the redoubts on the hill above. General Gerlach—who had recently been appointed commander-in-chief of the Danish army, in the place of General de Meza—had failed in his efforts to drive the Prussians from their post; and he lost, in this affair, about six hundred men. From that time he found himself confined—upon the mainland—to the fortified hill, with its chain of earthworks, extending from Alssund to Vemmingbund; while the enemy retained possession of

Dybböl village, and the adjacent ground on which they afterwards erected batteries.

Even the city of Sønderborg had been threatened ; and many a shot and shell had come whizzing across from Broagerland—rather to the alarm than to the injury of the inhabitants.

This feeling had, however, again subsided ; and the good people of Sønderborg had resumed their accustomed occupations and modes of life, under the conviction that the Prussians had no intention of destroying the town, and had fired a few long-range guns merely for the purpose of driving away the shipping from Alssund. This had been effected ; and a motley fleet of vessels of every size, and of various descriptions had taken refuge in the harbour of Hørup Hav.

There was then a brief pause in the operations of the enemy ; and during that period King Christian had visited the Island of Als, and had spent two days in inspecting the works at Dybböl, and the hospital of Augustenborg. He was warmly received by his loyal troops, and his presence inspired them with fresh courage and resolution. But after his departure many ill-founded reports became current in the army that an armistice was likely to take place ; and this had the effect of convincing the inhabitants of Sønderborg that no serious danger need be apprehended for their city or themselves ; and they almost forgot the batteries on Broagerland, with their terrible long-range guns.

This feeling of security was not, however, encouraged by the proceedings of the garrison. There all was activity and earnest preparation. Fresh works were thrown up to command Alssund and the bridges across the strait; the streets of Sönderborg were improved; and, where necessary, widened; and many houses that occupied dangerous positions, and might if set on fire, do damage to the city, were pulled down.

The cannonade on Sönderborg had indeed ceased; but on Dybböl Hill fell a continuous shower of shells, which burst among the earthworks—sometimes destroying several men at once, but more frequently falling harmless. No regular attack was made, and the Danes could do no damage to their foes across the Vemmingbund. It was very galling work to stand thus, day after day, as marks for the German shot and shell, with no assault to repel—no reprisals to make—and no exercise for their courage.

Daily their numbers were decreased; and nightly they had to toil, in parties that relieved one another, in repairing the block-houses and redoubts, and in replacing broken gun-carriages. The enemy seldom annoyed them during the hours of darkness; but occasionally a bright flash would be seen on Broagerland, a fierce rush would come across Vemmingbund, and the shock of a bursting shell would be felt. All who saw the flash would fly behind the nearest shelters; and, then, when the shock was over, come forth to see whether any comrade was hurt; and immediately again resume the same active labour.

Another, and still more important engagement had taken place while Lionel Calthorpe was at Copenhagen. This occurred on Easter Monday, when Marshal Wrangel took advantage of a drizzling rain, and constant puffs of wind, to attempt to surprise the Danish sentries who kept guard on Dybböl Hill. Early on that morning several Prussian regiments noiselessly approached the outposts, which were not far in advance of the Danish works.

An alarm was given about three o'clock, which roused the sleeping gunners in the redoubts; and in a few moments every piece was manned, and ready for action. Then all over Dybböl Hill, and down in the cantonments, were heard the ringing of bugle notes, and the hoarse calls of the officers to their men, as the troops hurriedly mustered.

Sönderborg awoke to a sudden sense of danger; and her startled inhabitants believed that a general assault had commenced. Battalions were rapidly formed in the street, and marched away in the gloom of night. Orderlies galloped away to head-quarters, and returned at full speed, clattering over the muddy stones. Everything was done to meet the expected emergency; but it was not the city which was then threatened. A heavy fire was being poured into the defences of Dybböl Hill; and the crashing and splintering of the breast-works could almost be heard across the narrow Alssund.

Now the Danes had a visible foe to contend with; and there was loud cheering among these brave and

patient men, and much ardour and excitement—but no confusion—no faltering in their ranks.

From the redoubts a point-blank fire was poured into dimly-seen masses of the enemy, whose form and distance were shrouded by the thick mist, and the fast-falling rain.

Just then the Danish vessel—the well known *Rolf Krake*—steamed up the Vemmingbund, and opened fire on the Prussians' flank, causing them considerable damage. The mist cleared off, and the rain ceased; and the thick gloom was succeeded by bright moonlight. Then it was seen that the intended surprise had proved a failure. Twenty-eight of the enemy, including four officers had been taken prisoners, besides the killed and wounded: but the Prussians did not yet retire. The action was carried on for three hours. The Danish batteries thundered incessantly, and many of their men were laid low by the enemy's rifles as they stood behind their breastworks; but the great guns on Broagerland were silent. The *tête-de-pont*, and the whole of the bridge itself were crowded with troops, mingled with eager and anxious spectators; all anticipating some great and decisive achievement. But the din of battle gradually died away. The Prussians became scattered, and then retreated, leaving the village of Dybbøl in flames. Before eight o'clock the firing had become more and more distant; the German huzzahs had died away; and they were succeeded by one loud Danish shout of victory!

This was a proud day for Dybböl and Sønderborg. They had repulsed their enemies, and retained their own position. But then followed the sad part of every such day—that part which casts a gloom over every victory! Waggon's laden with the dead and wounded passed slowly through the streets of Sønderborg; and the sight silenced all sounds of joy and triumph.

About one hundred and fifty Danes had been either killed or disabled, and more than two hundred taken prisoners. Of their enemies a still larger number must have been put *hors de combat*.

It was a few days after this affair of Easter Monday, that Captain Calthorpe and his new allies reached the scene of action. They found a considerable degree of excitement still prevailing at Sønderborg. The inhabitants walked about arm in arm with the soldiers, whom they looked upon as their preservers; and bands paraded the streets playing the national anthem—*Kong Christian*—while many groups amused themselves, and gave expression to their loyalty and gratitude, by singing spirited military songs, and fine old native hymns in perfect harmony.

No time was lost by Captain Calthorpe in reporting his return to his post, which he much regretted he had been induced, even for a short time, to abandon. He also hastened to introduce to the commanding officer the Norwegian volunteer, and his British companion.

General Gerlach received the new comers with

much cordiality ; and was evidently well pleased with their manners and appearance. We cannot say that they were equally favourably impressed with his aspect, which was by no means prepossessing. His figure was short and stout, and his countenance unmarked with any peculiarity, except a very bushy mustache, beneath which he almost invariably carried a large soldier's pipe. He had, however, a shrewd expression in his eye, and a kindly smile ; and he was evidently popular amongst the troops. In person—and in mind also—he formed a strong contrast to his predecessor, General de Meza, whose strongly-marked features, quick restless eye, and slight military figure surmounted by a very peculiarly-shaped cap, rendered him a very striking individual.

General Gerlach very readily allowed Dagmer to be attached to one of the regiments serving at Sönderborg and Dybböl. Alfred Kinnaird did not at present desire any special appointment. He preferred to go about as he felt inclined, or as circumstances should lead him, and to act in any way by which he could be useful to the Danes. He did not feel himself at liberty to take any decided or binding measure, without his father's sanction.

To procure quarters was the next consideration, and this was found to be more difficult than to obtain a military appointment. All the houses in the city were already furnished with as many guests as they could accommodate ; and though death had made frequent vacancies, they had been immediately filled.

by fresh recruits. One source, and a very considerable one, from which the ranks of the Danish army were replenished, was the return of many natives of Denmark from distant lands, to volunteer for the defence of their beloved country, and to fight beneath the *Dannebrog*—the red flag with a white cross—which forms their national standard.

The Danes have a tradition that this highly-prized ensign was a gift direct from heaven in the thirteenth century, being sent down specially to encourage their king in a fierce engagement with the heathen Lithuanians. An order of knighthood was afterwards founded by King Waldemar, called the "Order of the *Dannebrog*," which has continued to the present time.

This ensign—the name of which signifies literally, *Danish cloth*—is endeared to the people by long association. Ships are called by this name, and the national flag is imitated in various ways, and used for various purposes. It may even be seen hoisted over the gardens of the peasantry, and forming the toys of their children; while soldiers on service frequently carry miniature *Dannebrog*s stuck into the muzzles of their rifles, and place them on the graves of their comrades who fall in battle.

Round this standard, which was now lifted up against the Austrians and Prussians, the sons of Denmark rallied. Wherever the cry of war reached them, they obeyed the summons, and came back to fight for their fatherland. Some came even from

distant American settlements to offer their aid, without hoping for advancement, or seeking for reward. And so it was that all the quarters in Sönderborg were occupied, and that Ludovic Dagmer and Alfred Kinnaird were billeted in an adjacent hamlet.





CHAPTER XVII.

BEFORE we proceed to tell of the progress of the siege of Dybböl, and the bombardment of Sønderborg, we must introduce our readers to the host in whose dwelling Dagmer and his friend took up their temporary abode.

Pastor Petersen, as we shall call him, has made himself a name in the history of that particular portion of the recent Danish war to which our story refers, not by deeds of arms, or heroic acts of military prowess, but by self-denial, and cheerful endurance—by kindness and hospitality, and Christian charity, that call for greater strength of mind, and a higher moral courage, than many deeds that shine more brightly in the annals of war. We find a pleasure in introducing such a character, and describing him as connected with this veracious history.

Well then, be it known that good Neils Petersen dwelt in a quiet and picturesque village, which we shall call Alborg, within a league of Sønderborg. The *Præstegaard*—priest's court or parsonage—was prettily situated among trees and fertile gardens, and

overlooked the scattered village of thatched cottages that contained the chief part of the pastor's flock. There was also a good view over the Fjord of Augustenborg ; and, from the upper part of the grounds, could be seen the town of Sønderborg, the shipping in Alssund Strait, and the more distant hill of Dybbøl, with its old windmill, and the forts which had grown up around it.

In time of peace this had been a favourite spot, to which the pastor and his wife often bent their steps on Sabbath evenings, and discoursed on many interesting subjects, both public and private, while they gazed at the pleasant and tranquil scene around them. But since the commencement of the war, since Dybbøl had become a garrison, and Sønderborg a military dépôt, and its houses a series of small barracks, the interest which Neils Petersen took in the prospect had greatly increased. He was a patriot and a philanthropist—had he not been a priest, he would have been a soldier ; and, as he could not now fight for his king and his country, he did all he could to further the good cause by assisting those who had devoted themselves to it.

The Præstegaard was thrown open to the Danish officers, even before any were actually quartered there ; and, when all the accommodations at Sønderborg were occupied, the priest's house was also crowded with military guests, who were constantly changing, as some were carried to their graves, some to the hospitals, and some removed to other stations.

Two vacancies had just occurred when Dagmer and Alfred arrived at Sönderborg ; and Captain Calthorpe, having failed to find quarters for them in the town, was glad to get them so comfortably housed at Alborg.

The strangers were most cordially welcomed by Petersen, and not less so by his active and sympathizing wife, whose cheerful kindness, and excellent management, prevented her many guests from ever feeling themselves a burden or a trouble, and made the Præstegaard *a home* to each and all. No threatened danger, no sudden alarm, ever daunted the courage of the genial, large-hearted village pastor ; and no commotion, however exciting, ever disturbed the quiet arrangements of Fröken Petersen. They were beloved and respected by all their parishioners ; and the same feelings were entertained towards them by all who dwelt, even for a brief period, beneath their comfortable roof.

Our volunteers were not slow in discovering and duly appreciating their merits : and the pastor and his wife also quickly discerned that their new guests were not ordinary men. A sincere friendship was established between them, and an earnest desire to promote the best interests of these young men, who were perilling their lives for a cause that was not their own, took possession of the priest's mind.

He lost no opportunity of introducing serious and improving subjects during the evening hours, when the military party returned from Sönderborg to gather

round his hospitable supper-table, or to fill his well-furnished drawing-room, or stroll out of the wide French window into the flower-garden and lawn.

A very charming retreat was this Præstegaard, after the noise and confusion of Sønderborg, or the toil and the peril of Dybbøl Hill; and Alfred Kinnaird never forgot the days during which it was his home, or the man who strove so zealously to make that period one of blessing to him.

With much satisfaction the good pastor discovered that Ludovic Dagmer had not lived a careless, thoughtless life, or even a merely moral and upright one. The young Norwegian had not come to risk his life in a righteous cause, animated simply by a courageous disregard of danger and of death. He had "counted the cost," and he knew that if he sacrificed his earthly life, and his earthly possessions, he had an enduring life, and a better inheritance secured to him.

But Alfred Kinnaird was not thus prepared for all that might befall him. He was constitutionally brave and high-spirited. No danger would have deterred him, no suffering or privation would have daunted him, in the pursuit of any object which he had at heart. But this was rather from recklessness of danger, and a determination that his spirit should never be conquered by his body, than from a preparedness for death, and for the life of the undying spirit after death.

Several times the pastor contrived to draw Alfred

into his study, or out into the garden ; and then he spoke to him in a manner at once so earnest and so kindly, that the young man's heart was deeply touched. He was not a proficient in the priest's native language, but, by the help of a little English and a little French, they were perfectly intelligible to one another ; and often, when the words of Neils Petersen were not clearly understood by his hearer, his meaning was fully conveyed by his animated countenance, and his expressive gestures. Even in the service of the church Alfred could follow him. His manner was grand and impressive, while he preached the truths of the gospel to his simple and attentive congregation ; and it was very striking to see the dignity of this man when in the exercise of his holy vocation, and to compare it with his easy and good-humoured manner, even with the youngest or the lowliest of his flock, at all other times.

His words and his example were not lost on Alfred. They recurred to him when their influence was most needed.

Day by day Dagmer and his friend returned to the scene of action. Sometimes they kept guard with the troops stationed in and around Sønderborg ; and sometimes they were engaged on Dybbøl Hill, assisting the garrison either in repairing the defences, or in repelling the attacks of their enemies.

For some days no great progress was made in the operations on either side. The usual cannonade from Broagerland—on which peninsula the Austrians and

Prussians were posted—was heard every morning by the inhabitants of Sönderborg and its vicinity; and the compliment was duly acknowledged from the batteries of Dybbøl Hill. It had been proved—as we have already mentioned—that Sönderborg was within reach of the long-range guns on Broagerland; and the inhabitants had once been seriously alarmed for the safety of their town. But the shells then discharged among the houses had been explained as only intended for the shipping, and the alarm had died away. Many thousand persons, of all ranks and all ages, were dwelling quietly and unsuspectingly in the city, and following their usual occupations. No one supposed that, in a civilized country, such an act of barbarity could be perpetrated as the bombardment of a town, filled with its ordinary inhabitants, and without any due and sufficient notice. Such a notice has ever been regarded as imperatively demanded by the laws of military honour—and who could have looked for a breach of that law in this age of civilization and refinement?

Yet so it was. On one fatal day the accustomed booming of artillery was heard; and it gradually grew louder as the day wore on. At noon a flag of truce was displayed, between the outposts, for the burying of several dead men of the enemy's ranks; but the guns on Broagerland were not silenced. The Danes, nevertheless, behaved with the greatest decorum and respect towards the dead Prussians; and five or six bodies were quietly buried by them

on the slope of Dybbol Hill. Not an article was stolen. Even the money was left in the pockets of the fallen foe, and their knapsacks were buried with them. Then a cross was placed on the grave, and the Danes returned to their batteries. Still Marshal Wrangel gave no sign of his cruel intentions!

In the afternoon the sound of firing became incessant, and people feared for the garrison on Dybbol Hill; but they did not fear for Sonderborg. At length an incident occurred which changed the current of their thoughts and feelings. Nearer and nearer had come those dull and heavy crashes that vibrated through the air, and made the ground to tremble. By and by, dead and wounded men were carried through the streets, who were not brought by the usual route from Dybböl over the bridges. They must have fallen in the town; and a bombardment had evidently commenced. It increased—shell after shell fell upon the houses, or among the terrified street-passengers. Soon the whole town was in an uproar: women shrieking, and flying from place to place in search of their husbands or their children: waggons rolling along laden with furniture and goods of every description, which the owners were endeavouring to save: sick persons carried on stretchers: children clinging with scared faces to the hands or the garments of their protectors: bodies of the dead or wounded borne along dreadfully mangled, and exposed to the public gaze! It was a fearful sight—and Alfred's blood ran

cold as he passed hastily through the town on his way from Alborg towards Dybböl Hill.

That morning he had remained at the Præstegaard to write letters, and to converse with Neils Petersen, whose society had become exceedingly interesting to him. Dagmer had repaired to Dybböl at early dawn; and his friend had no idea that the events of this day would be more disastrous than those which had preceded it. But when the booming of the cannon, and the bursting of the shells, and the varied sounds that rose up from the city, told that warmer work than usual was going on—he took the pastor's proffered horse, and hurried away to the scene of danger and excitement, attended by the good man's prayers and blessings.

Then Neils Petersen ascended the hill behind his house—but this time he did not take the Fröken with him—and he gazed long and anxiously across Alssund towards Dybböl. The view was magnificent, but awful and distressing to the pastor. Clouds of smoke rolled over the Danish works, and drifted across Vemmingbund; and masses of vapour, of many a dusky and portentous hue, rose up towards the clear blue vault of heaven. Then came the flashes of artillery, followed by the thunder of the explosion; and by and by the pastor knew that the town was bombarded, and that the innocent inhabitants were in direst peril.

He could not move from his post—he could not go to his usual avocations—neither could he feel justified in going down into the city, where, his presence would,

just now, be useless. So he stood leaning against a rocky eminence, with his eyes rivetted on the scene before him, until at length his faithful wife came to seek him where she well guessed he would be found, and to implore him to return to the Præstegaard.

But he resisted even her importunities; and he kept her with him—his strong arm encircling her trembling form, and his manly voice breathing words of hope and consolation in her ear, until the shades of night fell around them, and warned them to return to their home, to be ready to receive such of their guests as might come safe from the conflict. But still they lingered—still they watched the lightning flashes and the thundering roar of the artillery. Still they gazed at the fiercely blazing huts and barracks on Dybbøl Hill, which had been fired by the enemy's explosives—and at the shells that were aimed at the floating bridges across Alssund, and that happily missed their mark, and fell hissing into the strait.

Comparatively few of these destructive missiles were directed at the town of Sønderborg; but those few—computed by some at nine hundred—were sufficient to carry ruin and suffering in their wake. Many houses took fire; and, in the darkness of night, the flames shone with a vividness which even the thick and moving curtain of smoke could not greatly deaden. The thought of the misery and suffering that the conflagration might occasion, was too much for Anna Petersen. She drew her husband from the station which he had occupied for so many hours; and, while

tears ran down her pale cheeks, she said: "Come Neils, let us go home. My heart bleeds for the sorrow and the suffering of Sonderborg; but there I can do no good. At the Præstegaard I can prepare supper for such of our guests as return unharmed; and beds and other comforts for the wounded. May the good Lord send back our noble Norwegian volunteer, and his gallant young British friend in safety!"

"Yes, Anna, I trust that such may be His will. My heart is strongly drawn towards them both; but my chief anxieties are for young Kinnaird. Dagmer is ready—yes, well prepared—for every event which may befall him. If he lives he will adorn his station—if he dies he will surely go to occupy a higher one. But that young Briton is not like his friend—would to God he were! He has been well taught in his childhood, and he knows the truth: but he has not hitherto laid it to heart. He has not yet learnt the true value of time and the meaning of *eternity*."

"He listens to all that you say to him, Neils," replied his wife; pressing fondly the arm on which she leant—"and he cannot fail to learn the true faith from you. If, as I hope, he remains with us yet awhile, you will surely see him all that you can desire."

"It is true, dear Anna, he does listen with wonderful docility to all I say; and he does bear with great patience the searching questions that I put to him, and the reproofs that I venture to give him. This very morning we were earnestly engaged in a most serious conversation; and I was more than usually

pleased with his replies, when the sounds of shot and shell became so loud and frequent as to break up our conference. He is gone down on my good horse, Luken, and may God preserve him—and Luken too,” said the good man with glistening eyes and a slightly faltering voice.

Petersen and the Fröken reached their home, and immediately occupied themselves in preparations for their guests. Night had now set in, and the firing gradually ceased; and then the officers, who shared the hospitality of the pastor and his wife, began to drop in, and to tell of all that they had seen and heard, and of the hair-breadth escapes which they had experienced.

They came—but not all. One had fallen in the fight, bravely encouraging his men. This had been seen by another of the party; and young Heymann's fate was certain. But others were absent from that generally cheerful supper-table; and their absence could not be accounted for. Neither Dagmer nor Kinnaird appeared for some time after a thick darkness had overspread the face of nature; and Petersen and his wife looked at one another uneasily.

At length the pastor rose from table and went out to look for his expected guests; or rather to calm his own restless anxiety by action, for he could not see ten yards before him. A strong gale of wind was blowing, and heavy rain was driving across the scene. Neither moon nor stars were visible; and the only light which Petersen could discern was a faint lurid

glare that hung over Sönderborg, and told that the work of destruction by fire was still going on. The town itself was concealed from him by rising ground that intervened; and the howling wind and beating rain prevented any other sounds that might be issuing from the ill-fated city, from reaching him.

For a few minutes he walked forward on the well-known path that led to Sönderborg; and he braved the tempest for awhile, rather than return to the Fröken without tidings.

He was on the point of giving up all hope, and turning his steps towards his home, when he heard a voice calling him by name from the darkness. He knew the voice to be Dagmer's, and he sprang joyfully forward to welcome him, hoping to find Alfred by his side; but he only found his servant Hans with him. The lights in the Præstegaard had enabled Dagmer to discern the familiar form of the pastor as he moved across them, while he was himself invisible.

"Thank God you are safe!" exclaimed the pastor as he grasped the offered hand of the Norwegian.

"But where is your companion—where is our brave young Briton?—you are silent, Dagmer—surely he is not slain!"

"Not slain; but a prisoner," replied Ludovic sorrowfully. "His reckless courage carried him too far, and he fell into the hands of the enemy. But come, Petersen, let us go to the house. I am already drenched with rain, and exhausted with fatigue and

- anxiety. There is no need for you to be wet through also."

But Neils Petersen had not felt the wind and the rain while he listened to the account of his young friend's disaster. Now he hurried home, and quickly attended to all the wants of his guest; who did indeed look both worn and dejected. When he was furnished with dry clothing, and was ready to join the supper-party, the pastor preceded him into the dining-room, and briefly informed his wife that Alfred Kinnaird was a captive; but that by all the laws of war, he was safe—safer, perhaps than if he were at liberty, and able to take an active part in the continued siege.

The Froken said little; but she felt much. She busied herself with the duties of hospitality; but she turned aside occasionally to wipe her tearful eyes while Dagmer told the story of his friend's misadventure.

"You already know," he said, turning to his host, "that Kinnaird followed me to Dybbol Hill, mounted on your powerful horse. He joined me at the battery where I was stationed; and he told me that Luken's strength and activity had stood him in good stead as he passed down the crowded and encumbered streets, and over the floating bridge, on either side of which the enemy's shot and shell were falling fast—but doing little injury."

"I knew it—I knew it, when I gave him the good horse," exclaimed Petersen, and the pastor rubbed his hands, and smiled triumphantly.

"Would to God he had brought the young man back safely!" said the Froken earnestly.

"Kinnaird dismounted," continued Dagmer, "and having secured Luken in a place of safety, he came to my side, and he gave me good and efficient help. My men were greatly cheered by his words and his looks; and they were pleased to see a British gentleman fighting on their side. One of them looked him in the face, and said, 'why have we not five thousand of your countrymen here to help us?' I saw the honest blood mount up, and crimson Alfred's cheek and brow; and I saw the fire in his eye. He only said, 'If I had the power of bringing them they should be here;' and then he worked harder than before at one of the guns which was scantily supplied with men."

"God bless him for it!" ejaculated the Froken reverently.

"The conflict was well maintained. The Danish guns replied promptly to those on Broagerland; and no assault was made on Dybbol Hill. But many were killed, and many more were wounded; and these poor fellows had to be carried down the hill and across the bridges, and through the confused and noisy streets, shocking and terrifying the inhabitants by the sight of their mangled limbs, and their fearful sufferings. I will not dwell on this; I will tell you about Alfred Kinnaird.

"While we were thus busily engaged, another English volunteer—our friend Captain Calthorpe, whom you are acquainted with—came up to our

battery ; and, in a hurried manner, called our attention to a skirmish that was going on below our position, towards Broagerland. A Danish officer, and a few followers, were engaged with a superior number of the enemy, and Calthorpe was desirous of rendering them aid.

“Where is the horse that you rode up to day, Kinnaird ?” he said. “Let me have it, and I will ride down on those scoundrels.” But Alfred would not let another rob him of a deed of courage and humanity. “I will go with you,” he replied. “Then mount your own horse,” said Calthorpe, “and gallop down ; I will follow on foot. That brave lad will be overcome if he has not instant relief.”

“Kinnaird lost not a moment ; and the Danish officer heard the horse’s clattering steps, and looked round. Then I saw that it was our comrade, Franz Heymann—he who left this house with us to day—but who will never return here again ! I could not leave my post, or I would have rushed to his aid ; but Calthorpe followed his brave countryman, and I hoped the boy would be saved. His foes also saw that help was coming, and they pressed harder on the young Dane, who fought like a hero. Kinnaird came down upon them with speed and force, and Luken did his part valiantly.”

“To be sure he did !” said the pastor exultingly. “Go on, Dagmer—go on !”

“Kinnaird struck down two of the Prussians, and Luken trampled them under his feet.”

"My brave Luken!" cried the pastor.

"But they could not together save poor Franz," continued Ludovic. "Just as Captain Calthorpe came to the spot, the noble young fellow received a mortal thrust from one of his assailants, and fell to the ground. Calthorpe raised him in his arms; but he saw that life had fled, and he laid him down again, and had to defend himself with all his power. Once the Prussians surrounded him; and, in spite of the efforts of the few Danes, they would have disarmed him and made him prisoner. But Kinnaird again rode at them, and he and Luken succeeded in dispersing them. Again and again they endeavoured to close round our friends; but Luken formed a wall of defence, behind which Captain Calthorpe retreated up the hill until he reached an advanced outpost, and was safe. His sword-arm was wounded, and he could not any longer defend himself.

"The Danish soldiers also had retreated, and we hoped the affair had ended. But Kinnaird's British blood was excited by seeing the enemy return and commence plundering the body of poor Franz. Turning his horse's head, he rode down again upon the miscreants, and dealt a righteous vengeance on more than one. But he was alone and unaided; and his foes were now bent on his capture or his destruction. One of them seized the bridle, and severed it, while others hung upon him on each side, and hampered him, notwithstanding the good use he made of his sword. At length the blade broke in the midst; and

the contest was over. With wild cries of triumph—and abuse of Kinnaird, whom they called an English spy—the Prussians led Luken away with his noble rider. We longed to fire upon the captors of our friend ; but we feared to injure him”

“And Luken also—my good horse”—interrupted the pastor, with a heavy sigh. (Neils Petersen loved his horses and his dogs, and all his numerous four-footed companions with a peculiar earnestness of affection)

“Yes, Luken shares his rider’s fate,” replied Dagmer. “May it be a safe and an easy one ! They must both be ransomed or exchanged as soon as possible”





CHAPTER XVIII.

WE must leave the unfinished siege of Dybbol at this very interesting point, and inform our readers of the proceedings of our friends at Hamburg. Their numbers had been diminished by the departure of Mr. Severne to England, whither he was recalled by the alarming illness of one of his principal parishioners. - This would have rendered his daughter's position a very lonely and uncomfortable one, had it not been for the residence of the Lovells at Hamburg. They easily persuaded Mary Calthorpe to take up her abode with them, until her father could return to her, or until the conclusion of the war should enable her husband to join her.

This was a very pleasant arrangement for all parties; and Grace found in her friend more of a companion and of a sister, than she had ever expected to meet with again on earth. Circumstances soon caused their intercourse to become even more intimate and confidential than Grace had intended.

We have said that Harold Andersen left Dagmer and his party at Christiania, just before the marriage between Elena and Edward Kinnaird was celebrated. He proceeded from thence to Copenhagen, and then to Hamburg.

As soon as his more pressing business was accomplished, he hastened to call on Mrs. Calthorpe, with whom he was already acquainted; and who, he well knew, would be glad to hear from an eye-witness, many details respecting the siege of Dybbol, and the part which her husband had taken in it—which particulars his often hurried letters had not communicated.

Harold Andersen found Mary and Grace together in their pleasant sitting-room and he was very cordially welcomed by the former, with whom he was soon in animated discourse on what was to her the most interesting subject on earth. Grace also felt deeply interested in the conversation. She watched her friend's countenance as the Danish officer told—in very intelligible English—of Captain Calthorpe's courage and energy; of his popularity with those who served under him; and of the favour and confidence which were shown to him by those in command. She sympathized in her feelings of pride and gratification when his merits were alluded to; and also in those of painful anxiety and excitement which Mary's features expressed while Harold told of the dangers to which her husband had been exposed, and which she well knew he must again encounter.

But all that Grace felt was not merely sympathy with another's anxieties—by and by her own personal feelings were aroused. Harold Andersen had told the story of all that had occurred at Dybbol and Sonderborg, up to the time when Captain Calthorpe left the place to proceed to Copenhagen; very soon after which he had himself journeyed to Norway, and had visited Ludovic Dagmer at Roystadt, as already related.

The mention of Dagmer's name, and the place of his abode, immediately attracted Grace's undivided attention. She knew that he was the friend of Alfred Kinnaird, and that Roystadt was the place where the latter had gone to reside for' some weeks, and where she believed he might still be dwelling with his Norwegian friend; for no intelligence of his further proceedings had reached her for a very long time.

She longed to ascertain the fact; but, for some indescribable reason, she did not trust herself to inquire whether Harold had seen her countryman; and she listened with great anxiety, hoping that he would presently make mention of him. But as he proceeded to tell how Dagmer had declared his intention of offering himself as a volunteer to the Danes, and of conducting his sister to Christiania, there to remain during his absence, she perceived that he had then no guests in his house, and that he and Elena had been alone at Roystadt when Harold left them.

We may excuse her for feeling a certain desire to know something of the attractions of this Norwegian

maiden, of whom Alfred had spoken in such high terms; and we may also understand why her colour was a little heightened when she said to Harold Andersen :—

“I have heard much praise of Elena Dagmer; is she not very lovely?”

“She is one of the most charming girls that it has ever been my privilege to become acquainted with;” replied Harold warmly. “I have known her and her brother for years, and they are worthy of each other. I cannot say more for them.”

Grace felt a little uncomfortable sensation about her heart at this strong confirmation of all that she had believed already of Elena’s powers of attraction. But she preserved the composure which was habitual to her; and continued :—

“How very anxious she will feel about her brother while he is engaged in this unhappy war. I admire him for joining the Danes; but I almost wonder how he could leave his only sister, who, I believe, has no protection but himself.”

“It was that consideration alone that prevented Dagmer from joining the Danish army when it first broke out,” replied Harold. “And it would still have deterred him had not Elena, with her usual generosity, and noble self-forgetfulness, insisted on his going, and proposed that she should be left at Christiania.”

“It will be a sad time of suspense for her;” said Grace thoughtfully. “She will be almost as anxious as our friend Mrs. Calthorpe.” And she looked kindly

towards Mary, who was absorbed in her own meditations, and hardly heard what was being said by Grace and Harold.

"No, Miss Lovell," replied the latter; "her case is very different to Mrs. Calthorpe's. She may indeed feel uneasy on her brother's account; but she has now a husband to take care of her, and to direct her thoughts from Ludovic's danger."

"A husband!" exclaimed Grace with much surprise; and—if the truth must be told—with no little relief. "I did not know that Elena Dagmer was about to be married. If so, why did she think of remaining at Christiania with Madame Hennemann?"

"Because," said Harold, "when that plan was formed, she had no idea that her marriage could take place for many months—certainly not until her brother had returned to Roystadt."

"And what caused this sudden change in her prospects?" inquired Mary, who was again attending to the conversation.

"It was a curious combination of circumstances," replied Harold. "Her affianced husband chanced to be at Christiania when she and her brother arrived there; and, when he heard of Dagmer's intentions, and Elena's destination, he used so much persuasive eloquence that he at length succeeded in gaining the consent of all parties to an immediate marriage. It was to be celebrated a few days after I left Christiania, and I believe the bride and bridegroom were to go for a time to Roystadt."

"It must indeed have been a very hurried affair ;" said Grace, smiling as she thought of all the usual preparations for a wedding ; which must, in this case, have been utterly ignored. Also she smiled because she felt particularly glad that Elena Dagmer was actually married—whether in a usual or an unusual manner.

"Yes," replied Andersen ; "there were no festivities—no *trousseau*—and, I fancy, very few spectators at the ceremony. But the bridegroom—happy man !—cared for none of those things. He is, Dagmer told me, a native of Great Britain—an Irishman—and I think the Irish are noted for their impetuosity, as well as for their eloquence.

These words sent a pang of sudden fear and doubt through Grace's breast.

"With a desperate effort she said, "What is his name ?" And then she stooped to recover a book which she wilfully let fall to the ground.

"His name is Kinnaird ;" answered Harold, quite unconscious of the deadly blow that he was inflicting on the young girl's heart. Grace rose from her stooping posture, and fixed on him one searching, agonized look—but he did not see it. Fortunately he had turned towards Mrs. Calthorpe, as he continued :—

"Perhaps you, or Miss Lovell, may know the name. Mr. Kinnaird was staying at Roystadt for several weeks during the spring ; and he and his companion had left the place some days before I arrived there. The younger of the travellers was captivated by the

sister of his host ; and they were betrothed before they parted. Then the happy man set out with the intention of seeking his parents, and asking their consent to his engagement ; while his companion proposed to go to Carlsbad. The unexpected meeting at Christiania changed their plans, as I have said."

Mary Calthorpe saw Grace's countenance when the name "*Kinnaird*" was uttered—and she never afterwards forgot its expression. Then she knew that her former suspicions with regard to the state of her young friend's affections were but too well-founded ; and she grieved as the conviction forced itself upon her mind that Grace's happiness in life was sacrificed.

She sat—poor stricken girl—still and motionless. Her face was deadly pale, and her eyes had a fixed and stony look that alarmed Mary Calthorpe. She feared to draw Harold's attention to her ; and, with admirable presence of mind, she kept him in conversation, until Grace had a little recovered from the shock. Then she quietly asked her to go to her own room for a sketch that she wished to shew to Harold ; and Grace rose mechanically, and left the apartment.

In the passage she met Mr. Lovell, who was returning from a long walk. He was struck with Grace's pallid features, and painful expression ; and anxiously inquired if she were ill ?

"O no, dear father," she replied, forcing a smile, "I am quite well. Go to Mary Calthorpe—you will find a visitor with her who will tell you a great deal

about the war; and also about . . . about friends of ours."

If Mr. Lovell had been struck by his daughter's pallor, he was now equally so at the sudden flush that overspread her features, and at the evident agitation of her manner. But he did not question her: he only looked earnestly at her as she hurried past him, saying—

"I am going for a drawing for Mary;" and then he hastened to the sitting-room to see whether he could there discover any clue to Grace's unusual appearance and manner.

Harold Andersen was introduced to him; and the interesting subject of the war soon so engrossed Mr. Lovell's attention, that he almost forgot his meeting with his daughter, and the momentary anxiety which she had caused him.

Presently Harold reverted to Dagmer, and told how nobly he had abandoned his home and his native land to give his aid to the oppressed Danes. He also spoke of his sister, and of her hasty marriage with a countryman of his hearer's.

"Mrs. Calthorpe thinks that the young man is a friend of yours, Mr. Lovell," he said. "His name is Kinnaird, and his family reside in the north of Ireland."

Did Mr. Lovell here discover any clue to Grace's strange manner, and distressed look?

"The Kinnairds of Croone Castle are my most intimate friends," he replied. "I am sorry that their son should have thus so hastily formed a connection with a foreigner, unknown to them."

"The circumstances fully warranted it," said Harold earnestly. "Mr. Kinnaird only acted as I think any man who was betrothed to Elena Dagmer would have acted. His parents have only to see her, and they must admire and love her."

"I hope so," replied Mr. Lovell, rather coldly. He was vexed and disappointed at what he had heard; and also he felt anxious as to the part which his brother Charles might have taken in this affair. He believed that he had accompanied or followed Alfred Kinnaird to Norway; and he knew that Alfred's parents looked to him as a guide and adviser, who would use all his influence to prevent their son from committing any act of imprudence.

"Had Mr. Kinnaird any companion with him?" he asked.

"Yes, he had a friend or a relative who accompanied him. I saw him at a distance in the street at Christiania; he looked older than Mr. Kinnaird, and had a fine beard."

"Mr. Kinnaird's travelling-companion is my brother," observed Mr. Lovell. "My half-brother;" he added, when he saw Harold's look of surprise as he glanced at the elder brother's grey hairs. "He is many years younger than I am."

"So I should suppose" replied Harold. "He is a very handsome man; and his look and bearing are quite those of a soldier. I could almost wish that I had got him as a recruit for Sönderborg, instead of his going to idle away his time at Carlsbad."

"Are you looking for recruits at Hamburg?" inquired Mr. Lovell.

"I am seeking for any aid that I can obtain for my adopted cause. I have persuaded a few volunteers to accompany me back to Denmark; and I would gladly add to their number."

"Then I think I can furnish you with one. He is a man of strength and daring. He has in former years, used those qualities for evil purposes, and to the injury of himself and his neighbours. But he is, I trust and believe, a changed man: and he is most desirous to join the Danish army during this present emergency."

"Let me see him," exclaimed Harold. "I will soon arrange it all for him. But," he added, "of what nation is he—what language does he speak? If he is one of your countrymen, I fear he will be of little use in the Danish ranks. He would understand no orders."

"He is an Englishman; but he also speaks German fluently, and Danish intelligibly. He has learnt both languages at the *Rough House*."

"Has he been under Immanuel Wichern?" said Harold. "Then he has been well taught. And, if the good Principal of that noble establishment considers him reformed, I shall gladly obtain for him a place among my own men. The *Rough House* is celebrated far and wide; and its former inmates are to be found among the most respectable of every calling, and in every part of northern Europe. Where can I find the man you speak of?"

"He is in this house at present," said Mr. Lovell; and he proceeded to summon James Collins. While the interview with Harold Andersen is going on, and arrangements are being made for the entrance of the new recruit on his military duties, we will follow Mary Calthorpe to Grace's room, whither she had repaired as soon as she had heard all that Harold had to tell concerning the hasty marriage at Christiania.

Mary found her young friend in the same state in which she had seen her leave the sitting-room. There were no tears in her eyes—no trembling on her lips. But she was as pale as marble, and her hands were almost as cold.

We will not tell all that Mary said to her. We leave it to those who have either known or witnessed such sorrow, to imagine what a tender, sympathizing, and most judicious friend would say and do to soften the grief that seemed to have turned Grace Lovell to stone. Long Mary talked to her, gently and affectionately; and earnestly she besought her to confide in her, and tell her all her trouble—but in vain. Grace made no reply—she hardly seemed to hear her. Only she held both her hands grasped tightly in her own, while her eyes were fixed on the blue sky and the distant hills to the north, which were visible through her open window. Was she following in thought Alfred Kinnaird and his happy bride to their pleasant home at Roystadt? Was she thinking of Alfred's Irish home, and of the changed feelings with which she should return to Croone.

Mary's gentle words and soothing caresses had failed to touch Grace's feelings in the way that she desired - but she was not discouraged. She knew of a power far greater than her own - she knew of a hand far gentler - and a sympathy more deep and touching than she could offer to the crushed heart of her friend. With her hands still grasped in hers, she knelt beside her; and in few and simple words she asked for her the aid of Him who knows all our sorrows, and can lighten every burden - however heavy, and however unendurable they may be.

Then Grace listened. Then the words seemed to enter her ears and her heart. Gradually her hands relaxed, her eyelids fell, and her head drooped on Mary's shoulder, while tears poured down her cheeks.

She did not any longer reject the sympathy of her friend, or endeavour to hide from her the cause, and the bitterness of her grief. It was greater than she had herself expected, and she was startled and surprised at finding what that blow, which she had so often tried to anticipate, was when it actually fell upon her. She did not know how utterly and entirely all her hopes of earthly happiness were bound up in Alfred. She had schooled herself into believing that she could bear to see him loving another—the husband of another. But she did not know herself, or the depth and unchangeableness of her own affections.

Not one word of blame would she suffer Mary to utter as to Alfred's conduct. That she forbade with an energy that shewed her sincerity, while she accused

herself of folly and weakness, for having ever believed that the attachment which Alfred had felt and manifested as a boy, could endure the trial to which it had been subjected.

Mary did not contradict her. She hoped that the belief in her own error of judgment, and the feeling of shame at having bestowed her affections where they were not fully returned, would assist in rousing her from her grief, and enable her to conquer it. On her return to the sitting-room, where she found Mr. Lovell alone, he questioned her about his daughter, and she did not deny that the intelligence communicated by Harold had been a shock to her. But she did not tell him of the agony of feeling which she had witnessed, and she entreated him to make no allusion to the subject.

Mr. Lovell could not quite agree in Grace's view of the case. In his heart he did blame Alfred, for he knew that his daughter must have believed very confidently in his attachment, or she would never have thus treasured up his remembrance, and suffered it to take such a deep hold of her affections. But he promised Mary that he would not speak to Grace with reference to her own feelings, and that if he mentioned Alfred, or his marriage, it should be in such a manner as to convince her that he considered the subject as one of no peculiarly personal interest to her.

Very gladly did Grace accept this conviction; and she learnt to hear the beloved name uttered, and reference made to the recent event, and to the prob-

able view which Mr. and Mrs. Kinnaird would take of it, without betraying her inward feelings.

She was glad when Harold Andersen left the place, for the sight of him, and the sound of his voice, recalled painfully the fatal words—“*his name is Kinnaird*,” which had shattered all her hopes for the future, and blighted the strongest feelings of her heart. She did not give way to those wounded feelings - she strove to hide them from her father's eyes, and to be as much his companion and his comfort as ever - and she succeeded. But she could not hide from him that day by day she looked more wan and languid, and that all she did and said was an effort to her. He saw it all, and his heart ached for his darling child - but he knew not where or how to find a remedy, save only in laying her sorrow before the Lord, and asking Him to remove it. What a solace is prayer!

To Mary the stricken girl told all her grief; and it was well that she should do so. Mary had won her confidence in the hour of her great sorrow, and she never withdrew it. Perhaps, but for this one ear into which she whispered her inmost thoughts, she might utterly have sunk beneath the shock which had fallen on her.



CHAPTER XIX.

HAROLD Andersen returned to Sonderborg, taking with him James Collins, and a few other recruits, who were very gladly welcomed by the weakened garrison.

The enemy had continued to fire at intervals into the town, which was now reduced to a very pitiable condition. All the hurry and confusion which had prevailed when first the dreaded shot and shells fell among the houses and their inhabitants, had ceased. The few remaining citizens had either removed their possessions, or had seen them hopelessly destroyed. On either side of the streets were to be seen ruined houses, with here and there a tall chimney left standing erect among shattered walls, and still smoking embers; while almost every house that remained bore the traces of the Prussian missiles.

The gloomy aspect of the once thriving town struck Andersen very painfully, as he passed through it to seek his quarters, which, happily he found still inhabited, and still in a condition to afford shelter to him and his recruits.

At night, the almost deserted streets looked even more terribly desolate, for they were partially lighted by a lurid glare from the still burning shops and dwelling-houses that had been fired during the day. Occasionally red flames leapt up from the smouldering mass, as some unconsumed beam fell into the fire within, and then the scene of ruin and devastation was suddenly illuminated, and the weapons of the sentries who paraded the streets gleamed brightly and fitfully.

Harold Andersen looked with sorrow and indignation at the spectacle around him. He thought of the agony and despair which had been endured in the now deserted town, before it was reduced to its present state, and he burned to resume his position on Dybbøl Hill, and to point his guns at the barbarous foe.

It was not until he returned to the battery the following morning, that he became aware of the misfortune which had befallen his English friend and fellow-soldier, Captain Calthorpe. He missed him from his usual place, and, on inquiry, was informed that he had received rather a severe wound in his right arm during the recent engagement, and was obliged to remain inactive.

In the evening, when the cannonading ceased, and repose was granted to the weary garrison, Harold returned to Sønderborg, and sought out his comrade. He found him suffering much from pain, but still more from vexation, at being compelled to abandon his

post, and also at being unable to write to his wife, who, he feared, would become very uneasy at not receiving the usual weekly letter.

"Fortunately," he said, "I wrote to her on the morning of the same day on which I got this unlucky wound. Had she received the letter when you left Hamburg?"

"No, she was anxiously expecting it when I last saw her," replied Andersen. "It was very pleasant to see her joy and thankfulness when your dispatches arrived. I fear she lives an anxious life; and it would be much worse if she had not the society of the Lovells. I dare say she has mentioned them to you."

"Indeed she has, and with warm expressions of praise, and of gratitude for all the affection and kindness which they have shewn her. We had a brave young countryman of theirs fighting with us for some little time, and he told me he was acquainted with Mr. Lovell and his daughter. He came with your friend Dagmer, and he did good service on Dybbøl Hill. But I grieve to say he has met with a sad fate, and all from his courage in the defence of others, myself among the number. Will you write a letter for me to my poor Mary? and I will tell you the story of my getting wounded, and you shall repeat it to her."

Harold readily consented; and the following letter was forthwith written, and sent off the next day by the well-managed *Feldpost*, or Field Post Office, which

is always attached to the Danish army, and conveys letters and parcels to the officers and men with great regularity and dispatch.

“My dear Mrs. Calthorpe,

“I beg of you not to be alarmed at seeing my handwriting instead of Captain Calthorpe’s. I assure you he is in excellent health, but his sword-arm (I should say his *pen-arm* to you) is at present disabled from a cut that he received on the afternoon of the day on which he wrote last, and he has deputed me to give you an account of the accident.

“The usual firing was going on, from which your husband was well defended; but he saw a young Danish officer, who was sent with a few men to relieve the outposts, suddenly attacked by a superior force of the enemy, who had been lying in ambush. Dagmer and his British companion were in a neighbouring redoubt; and Calthorpe ran to borrow a horse which the latter had ridden up the Hill on that day. The Briton, however, mounted it himself, and rode down to the rescue, while Calthorpe followed on foot. Their help was, unhappily, too late—the young Dane was killed, and his men driven back. It was mainly owing to the skill and bravery of the British volunteer that any of the party escaped. He and his good horse formed a tower of defence, behind which your husband retreated, but not before one of the enemy’s swords had reached his arm. He considers that he owes his life—at all events his liberty—to this friend in need.

“And now I must tell you who this young hero is, for you know him already by name, and you must hence-

forth regard him as your husband's preserver. He is no other than the Mr. Kinnaird of whom I told you such an interesting story—the happy man whom Elena Dagmer chose for her husband! Why he came to Sonderborg—why he so soon left his young bride, I cannot guess, neither can I ask. I see that Calthorpe knows nothing of his being a married man; and I begin to think that I ought not to have told of the hasty marriage at Christiana. May I, therefore, ask you not to allude to it. There may be family reasons why the young man may wish the event to be kept secret; and he probably only came to see his brother-in-law on business, meaning to return to Roystadt in a day or two.

“Unhappily, such an intention has been frustrated; and poor Elena must suffer all the torments of loneliness and suspense. Kinnaird is a prisoner in the hands of the Prussians. He was defending the body of the fallen Dane, after Calthorpe had regained the lines; and the enemy surrounded him and took him captive. It seems that they regarded him as a foreign spy, because he had several times descended the hill, even farther than prudence warranted; and he had been seen to use a spy-glass, and paper and pencil, as if taking a plan of the enemy's works. If this is the case, I fear it may go hard with him, and even his life may be in danger—for Marshal Wrangel is not likely to deal mercifully with reputed spies—especially if they should happen to be British subjects”

In this letter Captain Calthorpe enclosed a few lines to his wife—written with his left hand—to assure her of his well-doing, and to ask for her gratitude

towards Alfred Kinnaird, and her prayers for his safety.

Mary and Grace were together when the dispatch arrived ; and it was now Grace's turn to speak comfort to her friend. She was very much alarmed at seeing another hand-writing instead of Lionel's ; and not even his own assurances—which were eagerly seized and read before Harold's letter was looked at—could prevent her from feeling great uneasiness. Her hand shook, and her eyes grew dim with rising tears ; and she gave the letter to Grace, who read it to her until she came to that name which had power to stir her inmost heart. Then she stopped ; and her eye ran over the concluding lines, which her lips refused to articulate.

Mary took the letter from her, and hastily read the remainder ; and she felt that Grace was more to be pitied than she was, and that she must still exert herself to cheer and support her, and draw her mind from the contemplation of her own sorrow, to a consideration of the greater sorrow which must be endured by Alfred's bride.

Grace's character was a peculiarly unselfish one. The feeling of envy was almost unknown to her : and although she wished that Alfred had never seen Elena—she neither hated nor envied her because she believed her to have won the affection that she had once looked upon as exclusively her own. She did feel for Elena's imagined grief and anxiety—she did pray that strength might be given her to bear it—and

she did ask that *her husband* might be restored to her in health and safety. She could not do more.

But, at the same time, she felt how gladly she would have changed situations with Elena—how thankfully she would have taken upon herself *a wife's* anxiety, if she could have enjoyed *a wife's* confidence that her love was returned and appreciated! How thankfully would she have faced even bereavement and widowhood—if such must be the lot of Alfred's wife—so long as with that dread, she could also feel assured that the pang of separation would be equally shared by him, and that his last earthly thought would be given to her!

She endured the anxiety, the fear, the suspense—but she had now no right to manifest her sorrow. Alfred was nothing to her but the friend of her childhood—he never could be more. And she was nothing to him—perhaps worse than nothing—for she felt an inward and a very humbling fear that he must think of her as one who had loved him more than she was justified in doing; and whose love he had never really returned. That feeling she kept to herself—she did not even disclose it to Mary—but it rankled in her heart, and added bitterness to all her anxiety, and all her grief.

* * * * *

The firing on Dybböl Hill and on Sönderborg continued from the guns that faced the hill batteries, and from Broagerland. Waggon loads of wounded men were brought over the bridges, and conveyed to

the hospital at Augustenborg—and still their places were supplied—and still the same grave determination to do their duty, and to fight to the death beneath the *Dannebrog*, animated all ranks. It was no hope of pay or of booty—no love of war—that kept that little army together. Day by day these brave men saw their comrades torn to pieces by German shot and shells; and yet the defenders of Dybbol Hill were as firm and as resolute as ever; and even as patient and as cheerful.

Sometimes the shells from Marshal Wrangel's batteries were poured, for a day or two, in continuous showers, at the rate, it was computed, of more than twenty in a minute: and then the firing would subside to three or four shots in the same time, with occasional intervals of half an hour without a single report. The besieged then hoped that their enemies' ammunition was failing; and that, while they were waiting for more, the Danish troops would be able to repair the redoubts which were grievously shattered. But all such hopes proved vain. The Prussian engineers continued to erect fresh works; and the storm of projectiles became more terrible as day followed day.

As the enemies' fire increased, that of the Danes gradually slackened. The siege approaches were pushed forward from the Dybbol village towards the Hill. The shelling across Alssund became incessant; and several farms and peasants' homes around Sønderborg were thus wantonly and uselessly destroyed.

Had foreign help been vouchsafed to Denmark—as the Danes must have hoped and anticipated—the needless caution of Marshal Wrangel, in thus delaying the final assault upon Dybbøl, might have proved fatal to the besiegers. But no help came; and the heroic Danes were crushed by the superior numbers, and more powerful armament of their adversaries. A sad and unavailing sacrifice of life was made during the later days of the siege; when the defenders lost, on an average, in killed and wounded, one hundred men each day.

At this time it could have been wished that General Gerlach should have retired to Als, and thus have avoided the slaughter and the horrors of a general assault. He had held out as long and as bravely as could be desired or expected; and he knew that all hope was gone. The greater part of the Danish redoubts were destroyed or silenced; and it was evident that the enemy intended to take some decisive measures very shortly. Just then General Gerlach, unfortunately, met with an accident while riding out on horseback, which confined him to his room, and prevented his being an eye-witness of the progress of the siege. So the Danes still clung desperately to their indefensible position on Dybbøl Hill, and no one proposed, or even thought of a retreat.

Thus did Sunday morning rise on the doomed garrison—and it was, in degree, a day of rest—for no attack was made by the enemy; and the sun set

behind the western hills, unshrouded by the usual cloud of smoke and vapour. We borrow the graphic description of an eye-witness:—

“The night was beautiful. A bright moon shone upon Alssund, which sparkled with the gentlest of ripples. The hill-side lay calmly sleeping in a stream of silver light. Here and there could be faintly seen the Danish watch-fires; and an occasional shell flew across Vemmingbund. On the bridges were many passengers, for most of the reliefs were sent out under cover of darkness. Eight regiments of infantry, and the handful of gunners in the different redoubts stood opposite a mighty host. The artificial defences, that had enabled a small number to overawe and hold in check their assailants during two months, were now reduced to uselessness. Beyond the hill, at Dybbøl village—at Sottrup—and on Broagerland, was a murmur of expectant preparation. In the besiegers' batteries were stores of ammunition for a last and terrible bombardment. It was a night full of ominous foreboding for the defenders of Dybbøl.”

On Monday, April the 18th, all the sleepers in Sønderborg, and on the Dybbøl Hill were awakened at the earliest dawn by the sudden and deafening roar of Prussian guns. The number of shots increased each minute, until it amounted to nearly fifty in that brief space of time. The sun was hot and unclouded, and no refreshing breeze stirred the heavy atmosphere. It was a time of severe trial of the courage and

endurance of the Danish soldiers—but they did not fail.

At ten o'clock there was a pause in the firing on Dybbøl. The guns on Broagerland and Rægebøl still sent forth their dreadful missiles towards Sønderborg and the floating bridges across Alssund ; but the Prussian cannon were silent. What did this portend ? Surely no good—and the worn out garrison on the hill awaited in breathless expectation the coming storm.

It came. An overwhelming force assaulted the Danish works from end to end—and all was lost. Only from one redoubt could any guns now play upon the masses of Prussian infantry that advanced steadily up the hill from their sheltering trenches : and Dybbøl was carried by storm.

Then followed a hand to hand conflict. The exhausted garrison came forth from the shattered works which had given them a partial shelter during the bombardment ; and they bravely met the enemy, who poured in upon them, full of strength and confidence, and relying on their superior numbers, and superior equipments. The bloody and unequal conflict was ended in one fearful hour.

But in that short hour how many deeds of heroism were performed—how many acts of noble self-sacrifice were accomplished ! If courage and devotion could have saved the long-defended hill, it would never have fallen into the hands of the enemy !

But vain was every effort to repel them. Many a

gallant bayonet-charge was made by small parties of the Danish soldiers, led on by their officers: and once the small earth-works behind Dybbol Hill were retaken by a band of desperate men, headed by Dagmer and Harold Andersen. These friends had hardly met since the return of the latter from Hamburg; for they were attached to different batteries, and there was little time for social intercourse in those last days of the siege. Now, in the confusion of the assault, they met. One grasp of the hand—one friendly greeting—and they rushed, side by side to drive the enemy from the earth-works, followed by Dagmer's faithful servant Hans, by James Collins, and by a few of the soldiers who knew and respected them.

At the bayonet's point they drove the Prussians from the lines of defence; and, for a few moments, remained masters of the spot. But they could not long resist the overwhelming numbers of their assailants. The works were again fiercely attacked by the enemy, and its brave defenders were driven back with considerable loss. Several men fell, killed or wounded; and their comrades could not carry them away. They were compelled to retreat—but Dagmer and Harold were the last to leave their position: and, as they did so, a rifle ball entered Dagmer's side, and he fell.

Harold caught him up in his arms; and, with a desperate effort bore him to a place of comparative safety, where several of their men rallied round them.

"Leave me," said Dagmer, in a faint voice, "and go where your strength and courage may still be use-

ful. My task is done ; and I am going to my home."

"No, not yet, please God!" exclaimed Harold. "You will live, I trust, to enjoy many peaceful days after this contest is over." And he gave the dying man a few drops from his flask of brandy. They revived him for the moment ; but all aid was useless. He looked up in Harold's face, and said with a sad smile :—

"I knew that I should never return to Roystadt ; but all is arranged for my sister's comfort. My poor Elena—she will feel this very bitterly."

"She is indeed much to be pitied," replied Harold ; thinking, as he said these words, of Elena's double cause of anxiety, for her husband, as well as for her brother ; and of her lonely grief when the news of Ludovic's death should reach her, and also that of Kinnaird's capture.

"The Lord will strengthen her," said Dagmer ; "and happy days are before her. Give her my last blessing, Harold—and tell her to keep this for my sake, and for her sake whom I go to rejoin in heaven."

So saying, he detached with trembling hands, a small miniature of a very sweet female face from the inside of his uniform tunic ; and, after gazing at it for a moment, gave it to his friend.

Then his eyes looked upwards, and his pale lips moved in silent prayer. The eyes became fixed—the lips became motionless—and Ludovic Dagmer had left his tenement of clay.

Brief time had Harold or the devoted Hans to

mourn over his untimely fate. Their love and care were now alike useless and unheeded by him ; and it was necessary to seek their own safety by a further retreat ; for the Prussians were approaching their place of shelter, in numbers that forbade all hope of resistance.

With much reluctance Harold left the body of his friend ; but he had no alternative. Beneath clouds of dust and smoke, the Danish garrison—all that remained of it after this last struggle—was falling back on the *tête-de-pont*, while the enemy pursued them, and drew up in force on the brow of the hill. Had they then rushed down upon the retreating Danes, and overtaken them before they crossed the bridges to Als, not a man would have escaped. But the enemy hesitated to come down the hill ; and the remnant of the Danish force retreated coolly and steadily, supported by the fire from the Church Battery, which played well and effectively upon the German ranks.

One of the bridges took fire, and blazed fiercely ; but across the other the defeated garrison continued to retreat in good order. The Prussian columns followed closely on the rear-guard, as if bent on destroying the brave men who covered the retreat of the main body. But the Church Battery kept them in check ; and by its well-directed fire, made wide gaps in the close ranks of the enemy. Column after column followed in support, and with admirable order and discipline. But at length they paused. The first column was broken by the shells from the Church

Battery, and retired in confusion. The guns were pointed at the second column ; and during this check all the Danes reached the island, and both bridges were in flames.

With fearfully diminished numbers, the battalions formed, and marched on to an open space behind Sönderborg. Some regiments were reduced to a few dozen men, with only a subaltern to command them. Half the garrison had been captured or put *hors de combat* ; but those who remained had not lost their courage or their characteristic composure of manner. They had marched over the bridge in regular order, carrying several wounded comrades, and even bringing with them a few prisoners. Most of the soldiers had their great-coats and blankets with them ; and many had secured their camp-kettles, and other useful articles ; and they lay down quietly to rest in the warm afternoon sunshine, and to talk over all the exciting events of the day.

These events had been watched with intense and painful interest by the good pastor of Alborg, from his elevated point of observation ; and we leave our readers to imagine what were his feelings when he saw Dybböl taken—the vain efforts of the Danes to repel their enemies—and their ultimate retreat. The flames that rose up from the floating bridges, and also from the burning houses in Sönderborg, were visible to him through the overhanging clouds of smoke ; and the roar of the artillery, mingled with the shouts of the victors came across Alssund with a deafening

sound that sank like a dirge upon Neils Petersen's heart.

When all was over—when the garrison had reached the island, and the Germans had retreated to the summit of Dybbøl Hill—where they gathered in a solid mass—then the pastor wended his way sadly and slowly to the new camping-ground of his vanquished countrymen. He feared and yet desired to know the fate of those in whom he felt a personal interest. Many had fallen; and could he hope that his own friends had escaped? He knew that Alfred Kinnaird was a prisoner, and that Captain Calthorpe was still disabled, and in hospital. But would he find Dagmer—the gallant Norwegian volunteer—safe and unharmed? And the rest of his guests—would they again surround his board, and stir his heart with their tales of heroism and long-suffering patience?

Harold Andersen was known to the pastor; and, as he approached the camping-field, he recognized him. Harold was on his way to the Præstegaard, to inform Petersen of what had befallen their mutual friend. His countenance at once declared that he was the bearer of evil-tidings; and a few words told the pastor all that Harold had to tell, or that he cared to hear.

"I knew he was ready for the summons," he said; "come when it might." And the good man brushed a tear from his eye as he turned away to hide his emotion. "His spirit has gone to a world where there are no fightings—no cruel oppressors; but where

all is joy and peace. We must not, however, leave his body in the hands of the enemy, if it is possible to recover it. Ludovic Dagmer must be buried by his friends."

"I would have brought him away from that bloody battle-field, had it been in my power: and Hans would have aided me at the risk of his life. But it was impossible. We must take measures to have him brought over. I will charge myself with that duty: and also the more painful one of writing to tell his sister that her only brother is dead. Poor Elena!" continued Harold—rather to himself than to the pastor—"Her lot is a very sad one just now!"

Then he took leave of Neils Petersen, who returned to the Præstegaard even more sadly than he came; and the young soldier retraced his steps to the spot where Hans and James Collins were preparing their evening meal, and where he intended to remain all night, as a belief was entertained by many that Marshal Wrangel would attempt to cross Alssund during the coming darkness.

The ruined town was occupied by a guard of Danish soldiers, and a few skirmishers lined the shore of Alssund, and kept up an occasional firing of rifles with the Germans on the other side. But all the great guns were silent, and hospital orderlies could be seen on the hill-side, bearing small white flags, and searching for the wounded among the piles of dead that strewed the field.

It was a melancholy sight even for the victors;

but, nevertheless, there was great rejoicing on Dybbøl Hill. The long-protracted siege had been gained, and their brave opponents were vanquished. Hundreds were dead or dying, and hundreds more were being marched away as dejected broken-hearted prisoners. But for this the Germans had fought—and for this they now exulted with cries and shouts that were heard in Als, where all was gloom and sorrow, and sad foreboding of evil yet to come.





CHAPTER XX.

ANDERSEN entered into conversation with Hans and with his English recruit, James Collins. He knew the devotion of the former to his late master, and he had discovered the energy of character, and the sagacity and shrewdness which marked the latter. He hoped that both might be useful in the object which he had at heart ; and he was not disappointed.

The men had already been talking together about Dagmer's death, and regretting that his body should be left to the mercy of the enemy, who would undoubtedly plunder it, and would most probably, not bestow upon it a very reverent burial. They entered eagerly into the views of the young officer, and they volunteered to go in the darkness of night, and bring away the honoured remains, before the work of plunder and desecration should begin. They could, they said, go in a small boat across Alssund, at a point below where the German sentries were now posted ; and, by a circuitous route, they could as they

hoped, reach the retired spot where Dagmer had breathed his last.

"We will take white ensigns and show them, if need be," said Hans. "The Prussians will not fire on us if we are unarmed, and if they should capture us, why—we must endure it, like many more brave men."

"I think I could pass for one of themselves," observed Collins. "I can speak their language like a native, and I know a good deal of their ways. Let us get the uniforms of two of the German prisoners and try what we can do. I have often worn a disguise and assumed a false character, in my younger days, for bad purposes—and I have succeeded in my attempts. I believe I shall be enabled to do at least as well when it is for a good purpose. Have we your consent Captain Andersen?"

Harold did not immediately reply. He was reflecting on the dangers which these men might encounter, and on the possible consequences of their attempt.

But he had seen how little respect was paid by the Germans to the bodies of their fallen Danish foes, and he could not bear the idea of Dagmer's mortal remains being subjected to such indignity. He also felt great confidence in Collins's self-possession and coolness, and he trusted that he would return successful. The night promised to be cloudy, and the victorious troops, who now garrisoned Dybbøl Hill, were too much elated to keep up a very strict watch on all the ruined outworks.

"Go in God's name," he said, to the brave men who

waited for his decision, "and may He defend you and bring you back in safety. You will find me on this spot. I shall go and visit Captain Calthorpe, and return here before midnight."

Hans and his comrade hastily finished their scanty meal, and then set off to make preparations for their proposed adventure; and Harold went to seek his friend to tell him of many things which he was prevented from being an eye-witness of, and to condole with him on having had no share in this last glorious—though unsuccessful—struggle of the Danish garrison. He found the temporary hospital in Sönderborg utterly demolished by the shells of the enemy; and such of its inmates as could be saved from the ruin and destruction had taken shelter in some neighbouring buildings that still possessed a roof. Among these was Lionel Calthorpe, and he very warmly welcomed his friend Andersen. He congratulated him on his safety, and he very earnestly lamented his own absence from the fight.

"This unlucky arm," he said, pointing to the wounded limb, "has given me more trouble than I expected. It is greatly inflamed, and the surgeon threatens me with the possible loss of it if I do not keep quiet. But how is a man to keep quiet through such a day as this has been? I was strongly tempted to go out and see what I could do to help those brave fellows with my left hand. But it would not do—the pain, and still more, the impatience which I have endured of late, have made me so weak that I am fit

for nothing. Where is Dagmer?" he continued with a sudden look of anxiety. "Why do I not see his kindly face as usual? He is not hurt?—not——" and he paused as he saw the cloud on Harold's brow.

"He is gone," replied the latter. "He fell after making a noble effort to recover one of the earth-works—and he succeeded for the moment. But a Prussian bullet laid him low, and he died in a few minutes afterwards."

"You were with him, Andersen," said Calthorpe, "you shared his brave attempt—and you saw him expire. I envy you; and I thank God that you did not share his fate. Was the body brought away?"

"It could not be effected; but his servant and an English recruit are going to try to recover it to-night. I pray they may not fail." And he told Calthorpe of the plan which Hans and Collins had formed, and which appeared to Calthorpe even more hazardous than Andersen had thought it.

"You cannot remain in this shattered tenement all night, Lionel," said Harold, changing the subject of the discourse. "I must find better quarters for you in your present feverish state."

"There are few better to be found in Sønderborg, I fear," replied Calthorpe, looking up at the broken ceiling, and around at the cracked walls and unglazed windows.

"You shall go to the Præstegaard at Alborg," said Harold, after a moment's reflection. "Poor Dagmer's place is vacant now, and pastor Petersen will be glad

to fill it with one of his friends. He had the highest opinion of Dagmer—and he was quite right. I have known him for years, and I have met few like him.”

“That young Englishman who came to Sönderborg with him—and who is now unhappily in the hands of the Germans—seemed to resemble him in character. They were like brothers, and appeared to be as much attached as brothers.”

“Now that poor Dagmer is no more, and Kinnaird is a prisoner, I may tell you in confidence that they were brothers. A hasty marriage took place at Christiania, between Kinnaird and Elena Dagmer. Her brother could not leave her unprotected, but the marriage appears to have been kept a secret—and also the reason of Kinnaird’s coming to Sönderborg after taking his bride to Roystadt. She must be in a state of very painful suspense; for, of course he intended to return immediately. I have undertaken to inform her of her brother’s death; and I think I shall send off my letters to-morrow, when I hope to tell her that we have recovered the body. As I was at Christiania when the marriage was decided on, I must also condole with her on her husband’s captivity.”

“She is indeed much to be pitied,” said Calthorpe. “A soldier’s wife has need of much courage, and much faith.”

“Elena has both,” replied Harold, emphatically. “She is as a woman, all that Dagmer was as a man.”

“Then Kinnaird is very fortunate; and I trust his

liberty may soon be restored to him, that he may go to comfort his afflicted bride."

"If Marshal Wrangel believes him to be a spy, as was reported, he will not readily release him. Some of his own countrymen ought to be called on to bear testimony to his character and position, now that a truce is likely to take place."

"Mr. Lovell, with whom your wife is now residing at Hamburg, knows him well," exclaimed Harold. "He has been intimately acquainted with him and all his family for many years. Surely he could be of use to Kinnaird in this emergency; and I am quite convinced of his readiness to do so. He seemed extremely interested in all that concerned him."

"I will write to Mary immediately on the subject—that is, you shall write for me, if you will, Andersen. I think no time should be lost. Just now, while the Germans are flushed with victory, they may be inclined to be more lenient. Dagmer's sister must be considered for his sake as well as for her own."

While they thus conversed Harold Andersen was supporting his disabled friend as they walked slowly towards the Præstegaard at Alborg. When they reached it they found Neils Petersen and the Froken still sorrowfully discussing the events of the day, and more especially that sad event which had deprived them of a favourite guest and a valued friend.

Very cordially they received Captain Calthorpe, and assured him and Harold Andersen also, that they

would be welcome guests, as their rooms were not now filled as they had so lately been.

"Any friends of Ludovic Dagmer, or of his British comrade, Mr. Kinnaird, would be doubly welcome," said the Froken, with tears in her kindly eyes. "They were brave, and they were good, and they were *gentlemen*," she added emphatically.

So it was agreed that Calthorpe should remain at the Præstegaard, and at once occupy Dagmer's little chamber, and that Harold should return the following day, and take up his quarters there as long as it suited him.

Before he returned to Sonderborg to spend the night with his men, he wrote to Mary Calthorpe at her husband's dictation, and urged her to impress upon Mr. Lovell the necessity for some active measures being taken for effecting the release of Alfred Kinnaird, whose near connection to the lamented Dagmer was made an additional reason for anxiety on his behalf. His marriage to Elena was now known to all the parties concerned in this dispatch, and therefore it was alluded to with interest and sympathy, in which Lionel felt assured his wife would share, and which he hoped would also be felt by Mr. Lovell and his daughter, and would lead them to use all their influence in favour of the unfortunate young bridegroom. Harold added a few lines to this letter, intimating, in guarded terms, his uneasiness at Captain Calthorpe's continued suffering, and the inflamed state of his wound. He expressed his conviction

that this was mainly owing to the anxiety and restlessness which he had endured during the last days of the siege; and he also assured his wife that he believed he would soon recover if he could enjoy her society and her nursing, and be removed from the distressing sights and sad associations of Sönderborg.

Having done this he took the letter with him to be dispatched by the *feldpost*, and left Calthorpe to the rest which he so greatly required, and to the medical care and skill of the Fröken. She conversed with him about her late guests, and she was soon made acquainted with the plans which Calthorpe and Andersen had been devising for the release of Alfred Kinnaird. She entered very warmly into all his hopes, and when she found that his English friends were at Hamburg, she insisted on their all being invited to the Præstegaard.

"Your wife will be a better nurse to you than I can be, Captain Calthorpe, and I can take care of the young lady, while her father exerts himself for our friend. As soon as the roads are open my husband shall write to Mr. Lovell on the subject."

Joy sparkled in Calthorpe's eyes as he thought of the possibility of so soon again beholding his beloved Mary. But he would not allow his own feelings to carry him away. Marshal Wrangel's intentions towards Als must be very definitely declared before he could allow his wife to set foot on the island, or advise Mr. Lovel to bring his daughter thither.

* * * * *

We will now follow Hans and James Collins as they wended their way to the shores of Alssund in the prosecution of their scheme. They had succeeded in obtaining Prussian uniforms from the prisoners, and had engaged the services of a fisherman and his son to row them across the strait, and to await their return from Dybböl Hill with their expected burden.

Harold saw them depart with some anxiety. Had he done wrong in allowing them thus to risk their liberty or their lives? But then he thought of Dagmer's dying smile; he recalled his fine features, and his manly graceful form, and he thought what Elena's feelings would be if she knew that that beloved form had been in any way dishonoured. All other considerations gave way to that one, and Harold wished that he could himself have gone on an errand in which his peace of mind was concerned. But his duty kept him on the camping ground that night, and he could only hope and pray for the success of his emissaries.

The boat met them at the foot of the Mill Battery, to the south of Sönderborg; and in the darkness of a cloudy midnight they were rowed gently and silently for about a mile in a south-westerly course, keeping at a safe distance from the shore of the peninsula. Then, when they perceived the dim outline of the first of the chain of redoubts that ran across the point of land from Vemmingbund to Alssund, they drew to the shore, and commenced their ascent towards the works immediately behind the old windmill.

As they approached the battery they were challenged by a sentry, but Collins replied with confidence, and with so correct a pronunciation, that the man, who little dreamed that any of the vanquished foe would be found near Dybbøl, had no suspicion that they were not genuine German soldiers.

"What do you want here?" asked the sentry.

"We are looking for booty," replied Collins. "We have been unlucky to-day, and did not get our rightful share. Now we are trying to find a Danish officer or two, whose accoutrements may be a good prize to us."

"There are none but common fellows hereabouts," said the sentry with a rude laugh, that made Collins feel inclined to flog him to the earth. "The officers fell lower down, and I fancy their valuables are all disposed of already. But go on; I wish you good luck."

So saying he turned to walk back along his appointed beat, and Hans and Collins hurried forward to the spot they so well remembered. This spot was a retired one, and not visible until the ruined enclosure was entered. Thither Harold had dragged his dying friend; and there he now lay stiff and cold, but untouched by cruel hands.

Quickly but gently the two men enfolded the body in a large cloak which they had brought for the purpose; and then they waited in breathless anxiety for the moment when they could venture to bear it from the sheltering earthworks. Hans mounted the ruined embankment, and kept watch on the movements of

the sentry, and when he had again approached the spot, and again turned back, he leaped down, and he and Collins took up their precious burden, and carried it as far away from the sentry's line of march as possible. Before he turned they laid it down, and threw themselves also flat on the ground ; and by repeating this manœuvre several times, they reached such a distance from the chain of ruined batteries as to assure them of safety. Then they turned southwards, and made direct for the shore at the point where they had left the boat.

The faithful fisherman was there ; and he and his son assisted in placing Dagmer's body on a bench, and covering it from the spray, as carefully as if he were still conscious of their kindly services. They all then took their seats, and pushed off from the beach.

Just then three Prussian soldiers ran down to the spot where they had embarked, and called loudly to them to return and give an account of themselves. Unfortunately the old fisherman shouted out a taunting reply, and his accent and manners at once betrayed his nationality. With a loud curse the Prussian fired his rifle at the fast receding boat. He missed his aim, but his companions followed his example, and one bullet passed through the wrist of the younger fisherman, and caused him to drop his oar.

It was the only indication of the pain he suffered. Not a cry or even a groan escaped his lips.

Collins almost threw himself overboard in his sudden effort to catch the oar ; but he succeeded, and

immediately took the lad's place, and rowed with a strength and dexterity that showed he was not new to the work.

"Well done, Christian!" said his father approvingly. "The dastards did not know they had hit you. I would not have had them hear a cry of pain from my son."

The boy looked up proudly, but his cheek was very pale and his lips quivered. Hans gently bound up the wounded arm in a handkerchief, and the fisherman and Collins strained every nerve to reach the island quickly. As soon as they landed they repaired altogether to the camping field, carrying the body with them, in which they were assisted by several Danish soldiers, who were glad to do honour to the remains of the brave Norwegian volunteer.

Young Christian's wound was duly attended to, and it was supposed that he would in time almost entirely recover the use of his wrist. His father was offered a good reward for the part he had taken in the dangerous adventure, but he resolutely refused it.

"When foreigners come to help us in our time of need," he said, "it is right that they should receive all honour and respect at our hands, whether living or dead. This Norwegian gentleman left all to come and fight our battle, and he lost his life in our cause. It would be hard if every Dane were not ready to save his body from being plundered by those who slew him."

The following day all that remained on earth of

Ludovic Dagmer, was conveyed to Alborg, and placed in a grave which had been made ready in the picturesque churchyard, where tall trees cast a shadow on the group of mourners, while the pastor performed the funeral service with much reverence and feeling. There was a priestly dignity about Neils Peterson at such times, which contrasted, not inharmoniously, with the natural *bonhomie* of his manner, and his cheerful hospitality to his guests.

In that churchyard—*God's acre*, as the northerners so beautifully call it—were other graves that told of former struggles between the Danes and their German invaders. Harold saw several monuments to the memory of those who fell in the war of 1848; and the Island of Als might be proud of the blood which her children had poured out to preserve her independence.

After the funeral, Harold despatched the faithful and mourning Hans on his return to Roystadt. There was no more for him to do in Als; and he longed to see his young mistress and his home once more.

He took with him a letter from Harold, expressive of much sympathy in her sad bereavement; and also in the great anxiety and distress which her husband's present position must occasion her, and his hearty hope that his liberation might soon be effected. Hans was also charged with every memorial of Dagmer that Elena could value; and especially the

treasured miniature which he had confided to Harold with his latest breath.

Great was the shock which the news of her brother's death proved to Elena. He had for so many years been the object of her fondest affection, that his loss would indeed have left her desolate, had she not now been possessed of another source of comfort and support. To Edward she clung in her deep sorrow ; and on his love she relied for all the consolation that this world could afford. But from Ludovic she had learned, both by precept and example, to look above this world for strength and solace in every trial ; and now she found the worth of his instructions. For him she dared not mourn—for surely he had only passed from death into life eternal : and for herself, she would check her grief for Edward's sake, and for the sake of those who would henceforth be dependent on her : for very soon she was made aware that Ludovic had bequeathed to her and to her husband all that he possessed.

Elena read Harold's letter a second time, then she observed what had before almost escaped her notice—the allusion to her husband's being a captive in the power of the Germans.

“Dear Edward,” she said, “what can Harold Andersen mean?—‘my husband a prisoner—and I in anxious suspense on his account’—surely there must be some strange misunderstanding.”

Edward took the letter, and read it thoughtfully. Then he said hastily, “send for Hans. No doubt he

can explain all this. It must be—I fear it must be Alfred who has been captured ; and the name has misled Andersen.”

Hans was summoned ; and his evidence confirmed Edward's supposition. Dagmer's friend, Mr. Kinnaird, had indeed fallen into the hands of the enemy, and some anxiety was felt as to his safety.

“ We must go to Copenhagen at once, Elena ;” said Edward. “ No means must be left untried to effect Alfred's speedy liberation. I know that you are prompt in action. Can we leave Roystadt to-morrow ? Already several days have elapsed since this letter was written.”

“ At daybreak we can start ;” replied Elena, decidedly. “ Active occupation will be better for me than remaining idly here, where all reminds me of what I have lost. Yes, we will go to Copenhagen, and then to Als—and there I shall hear from Harold every sad particular—and there I shall see my brother's grave. How can I ever repay our good Hans, and that brave Englishman for bringing away his body !”

Elena checked the fresh tide of grief that rose in her heart, and hastened away to give the necessary orders for a speedy departure from Roystadt ; and Edward wrote a letter to his father, telling him of Alfred's capture, and begging him to use all the influence which he possessed in aid of the efforts that might already be at work for his liberation.



CHAPTER XXI.

IT is long since we have heard anything of the actual hero of this history. He was, however, not far distant from the spot on which our interest has been concentrated. He could hear the booming of the guns on Dybbøl Hill, and the yet louder reverberations of the powerful artillery at Ragebøl, from whence the Prussians sent their fearful shells on the devoted garrison from the west, while Broagerland assaulted it from the south.

The village of Ragebøl had long been occupied by the enemy; and they had erected strong batteries in its immediate neighbourhood, and furnished them with guns of such a range as to carry shells over their own siege works to the west of Dybbøl—over the shoulder of Dybbøl Hill itself—over Alssund—and to the farms and homesteads near Sønderborg—several of which were thus destroyed.

In a strongly-secured and well-guarded room in Ragebøl sat Alfred Kinnaird. Thither he had been conducted when he was captured on the hill-side;

and there he had remained in loneliness, and in irksome inactivity, during the remainder of the siege.

This state of anxiety may be better imagined than described, as he listened, day by day, to the gradually increasing fire of the assailants, and the evidently decreasing reply from the Danish batteries. He burned to know the real condition of his friends, and to use his powerful arm to aid their noble efforts. But he was a prisoner, and denied all communication with any except his guards; and they were not disposed to indulge him with any information further than a few general remarks on the desperate and hopeless state of the garrison.

No books could be procured; and no writing materials were allowed him. Even the pocket sketch-book, which he always carried—and in which he had made several hasty sketches of the scenery around Dybbøl, and of the Prussian siege-works, which were distinctly visible from the hill-side—was taken from him, and delivered to the authorities in proof of his being a spy.

At first this accusation gave Alfred little uneasiness. He expected that an opportunity would speedily be afforded him of explaining his position in the Danish camp, and his perfect innocence of the offensive charge laid against him: and he hoped that his release would not then be delayed. But he was mistaken. His captors had no intention of allowing a British subject to return to the Danish army, even though he did not belong to it officially, and did not

even wear its uniform. The plea of his being a spy was a very convenient one for rendering his captivity more severe, and for refusing him all intercourse with the Prussian officers; and it also gave his guards an opportunity of endeavouring to alarm him by threats of a very summary punishment—such as has commonly been executed on captured spies.

The threat was often repeated; and instances were quoted of a similar fate having been awarded to similar offenders; and, at length, Alfred began to believe that his life was really in danger, and that he might never leave his place of captivity except to die by martial law. Earnestly he asked to be permitted to write to his English friends—or, at least, to address an explanation to Marshal Wrangel: but his request was refused. Whether this was done with the knowledge of the authorities, and whether the situation of the prisoner was actually as critical and perilous as he was led to believe, he never was able to ascertain.

On the day of which we speak a special effort had been made by one of Alfred's guards to shake the composure of the captive. This man was irritated by Alfred's self-command, and apparent indifference to his painful and trying position; and he delighted in bringing to him every disastrous report connected with the Danish garrison, and every suggestion as to his own ultimate fate, that he hoped would unnerve and distress him. He had succeeded in convincing him that he must prepare for the worst, and that his

days on earth might be very few. But he was disappointed in his expectation of arousing any visible manifestation of fear in the young Briton. There were very few circumstances—very few, at all events, connected only with his own personal fate—that could have done that. And the soldier left the room with a muttered curse, and locked the heavy door with an unnecessary noise, as he retired to carouse with his comrades, and to give vent to his malicious feelings towards the unfortunate prisoner.

And what did Alfred really feel beneath the composure which he so well maintained? Was he actually indifferent to the prospect of a violent and humiliating death? Far from it. The thought of leaving the world, and all whom he so dearly loved and prized—the thought of relinquishing all the happiness to which he had so long looked forward—and of laying down his life in the prime of his youth and his strength, was very agonizing to his human feelings. But there was another thought which was far more agonizing. Alfred knew that he had not lived in preparation for death. He knew that he had neglected opportunities, and failed to improve advantages—the value of which he now felt as he had never done before. He knew that he was unfit to stand before his Maker, or to join the ranks of the redeemed in Heaven.

These were the thoughts that now weighed most heavily on his heart, and caused him to press his throbbing temples convulsively between his hands.

He had always been courageous—and, hitherto, very reckless of life—and very thoughtless of death and eternity, and of the only way of salvation in which a dying sinner can trust. Knowledge he had possessed; and a respect for all that is “excellent, and of good report,” had always animated and influenced him. But it was only since he had known the pastor of Alborg that “the light of the glorious gospel, as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ,” had been revealed to his soul, and a real desire to embrace that gospel had entered his heart.

Since his captivity he had reflected much on all that Neils Petersen had said to him; and he had endeavoured to apply it to himself, and to derive strength and encouragement from the holy and blessed doctrines from which the good pastor derived such joy and peace. But his conscience was now fully awakened to his past negligence, and his sinful self-confidence; and, for many days, he only became more aware of his own lost state by nature, and his own heavy responsibility for having practically refused the only offered way of escape; and he was, consequently, only more unhappy.

His situation was a very trying and a very painful one. What would he not now have given for a few hours more of converse with Neils Petersen, who had so fully understood him, and so well met and answered all the difficulties and doubts that had, almost unconsciously, dwelt in his mind, and held him back from advancing in his spiritual course! But he had

now no human help to turn to, and no earthly resource from which to derive comfort : and he at length sought it where it is ever to be found. Alfred had always prayed—that is, he had always observed the form of prayer—but now his spirit prayed. He sought from God the gift of a true and saving faith ; he turned heartily to the only sure refuge, the only stay for the soul—the immortal soul—in its extremity. He felt that he could face the death of the body with comparative calmness ; but *the soul—the soul !* What would be its fate—where would be its abode—if it were sent into the presence of God unchanged ?

Alfred rose from his seat ; he paced the room with rapid steps ; he looked out over the desolated fields and ruined villages ; he thought of the war and the misery that surrounded him, and into the midst of which he had voluntarily thrown himself ; and he recalled the scenes of his own peaceful native land, his happy home, his parents, his sisters ; and, dearest of all—most regretted of all—arose the image of Grace Lovell, in all her beauty and purity, and all her affection for him. Would she mourn him long ? Would she ever love another ?

Earthly thoughts and cares contended with higher and more spiritual anxieties ; and the mind of Alfred Kinnaird was torn as by a whirlwind. But again his heart was lifted up to God ; and now he was able to cast his care on Him, and to trust in Him for his preservation in time and in eternity. A sense of pardon through the blood of Christ, and of joy and peace in

the knowledge of salvation, now gradually entered his soul, and stilled the wild storm of emotion. Then Alfred knelt on the floor of his prison, and he thanked God for all the trial, and all the danger, and even the present apprehension of death, which had been instrumental in opening his eyes to his actual state, and leading him to this surrender of himself into His hands; and which had brought to him at length that "peace which passeth understanding."

In life or in death Alfred now felt that he was the Lord's; and he earnestly asked that if life were yet accorded to him, his new and blessed feelings might never fade away.

The night that followed this mental conflict was one of such calm rest and sleep as the prisoner had not enjoyed since his capture; nor was his mind ever again a prey to those torturing anxieties and fearful doubts which had then so sorely beset him.

Days passed on, and no change was made in Alfred's outward condition. At length the siege was gained, and the rejoicing at Rægebøl was as loud and as triumphant as on Dybbøl Hill. Then the prisoner was told that an armistice was in contemplation; but the guard gratuitously added that this would not take place for many months, and that the prisoners of war would be removed to some distant place, until all preliminaries were arranged.

This was very vexatious to Alfred; but it was also a very intense relief to him to believe that his life was no longer threatened; for he could not believe that,

even as a suspected spy, his captors would venture to execute capital punishment upon him after the siege was gained. Hope sprang up again in his breast—hope of happiness on earth. And a blessed assurance now reigned in his once troubled spirit—the assurance that a greater and more enduring happiness would, through God's continued help, be his portion hereafter. No wonder that the days passed by less wearily, and that Alfred's guards saw, and marvelled at, the wonderful change which appeared in their prisoner's countenance and manner.

A report soon reached Alfred through one of his guards, that the German forces were about to march northward, and had abandoned the siege of Frederica to avoid the loss of time and men ; and he feared that he should also be conveyed away with the army, and be kept for an indefinite time in "durance vile." The period which had originally been fixed by his parents for his foreign travels, and for the probation of his love, was rapidly drawing to a close ; and very ardently did he look forward to its expiration, and for the liberty which would then be accorded to him of openly declaring to Grace his unchanged and devoted affection. If he were to be still considered a prisoner of war, and moreover suspected of treacherous designs as a spy, it might be very long ere he regained his freedom ; especially as no means were granted him of representing his case either to his enemies or his friends.

His satisfaction may therefore be readily imagined when—on the evening of the very day on which he

had heard of the projected march of the German army—his guard delivered to him an order of release. The man was not very cordial or communicative; but the prisoner got from him the information that some of his English friends had heard of his situation, and had used their influence to persuade the German commanders that he was not a spy, nor in any way a dangerous individual; and that they had graciously taken the matter into consideration, and had decided on ridding themselves of the trouble of his detention.

Also he informed him that one of his own countrymen had brought the order, and was awaiting him at the door of his prison-house.

Eagerly Alfred followed the soldier; and very curious was he to see who had sought him out, to bring the glad tidings of his release.

It was James Collins who stood at the door, holding in one hand the bridle of the horse on which he had ridden to Ragebol—and which Alfred immediately recognized as belonging to pastor Petersen—and, in the other, that of the well-known Luken.

Alfred looked inquiringly at Collins; but the man was an utter stranger to him.

"I come from the Præstegaard, sir," he said. "There are many friends there who will welcome you back."

"Is Dagmer there?" asked Alfred eagerly—"the brave Norwegian gentleman?"

"You will not see him there;" replied the man, with a changed and sorrowful countenance. "He lies

in the churchyard at Ålborg. He fell on the last day of the siege."

Alfred asked no more at that moment. He mounted the good Luken, bade adieu to his guards, and rode away with James Collins, who was furnished with a pass to enable them to go through the lines of the Prussians.

A barge was waiting to convey them across Ålssund, and they were soon riding through the ruins of Sønderborg and along the well-remembered road to Ålborg. Then Alfred asked of James Collins all the particulars of Dagmer's death: and the narration of his brave effort to regain the Danish earthworks, his fall, and the recovery of his body, so engrossed Alfred's interest and attention that he spoke on no other subject. He well knew the kind feeling which both Neils Petersen and the Frøken entertained towards him, and he knew how gladly they would welcome him again to the Præstegaard. He therefore concluded that they, and some of his former comrades, were the friends to whom Collins had alluded.

They reached the Præstegaard; and Petersen and his wife met them at the gate, and very cordially congratulated Alfred on his freedom.

"And Luken too," said the pastor, with some emotion, as he threw his arm over the good horse's neck; and Luken bent to receive his affectionate caress. "My faithful horse—it was a sad day that brought me the news of your capture, and it would have been a yet sadder day if I had heard that

you had been marched away with the Prussians, and perhaps had been degraded by carrying one of those dastardly invaders. But come in Kinnaird," he added, as he gave the bridle to Collins. "I must not keep you here when you would gladly meet your friends, who will be agreeably surprised to see you this evening, as we had no idea that that energetic fellow would have succeeded in effecting your release until to-morrow morning."

"Who is he?" asked Alfred. "He seems to have been much attached to our poor friend, Dagmer."

"He is an English recruit. He came with Harold Andersen from Hamburg, where I think he was in the service of the very friends who have worked so effectually for your release."

"I really do not know to whom I am indebted for my freedom," replied Alfred. "I was too much interested in the account of Dagmer's death to make any other inquiries of your messenger—who, I believe was as ignorant on the subject as I was myself."

"I think some of the party are in this room," said the pastor, as he entered the house with his guest, and led him to the pleasant sitting-room that opened into the flower garden. "They will tell you all."

As Alfred entered, Neils Petersen retired, and left him to converse freely with his English friends, and to learn from them all the particulars of his liberation.



CHAPTER XXII.

“**G**RACE!—you here! This is indeed an unexpected pleasure!” exclaimed Alfred, as the door closed behind him, and he beheld the object of his long-tried affection standing by the open window that led to the garden, and another lady, who was a stranger to him, beside her.

Grace turned quickly round at the sound of the well-known voice; and—as her eyes fell on Alfred’s altered, but never-forgotten form and features—all her face became suffused with a crimson flush, which as rapidly receded, and left her deadly pale.

She knew that he was free, and that she should see him; and she had striven to teach herself to meet him with friendly composure. Even as she stood by that window with Mary Calthorpe she spoke to her of the coming trial, and assured her that she could bear it without betraying her feelings. And Mary believed her—for she knew her habitual power of self-command, and she also knew that the more she had suffered from Alfred’s apparent forgetfulness, so much the

more would she endeavour to hide her feelings under the mask of indifference.

But Grace did not expect that her task would have to be performed so soon. Alfred was not looked for until the next morning; and Mr. Lovell had gone out, with Captain Calthorpe and Harold Andersen, to walk to the pastor's hill of observation, and to look at the ruins of Sonderborg, and the shattered works on Dybbol Hill.

Grace and her friend were alone; and, when the sudden surprise of Alfred's entrance came upon her, she was glad that no other eyes were there to observe her countenance beside Mary's.

Her voice and manner were more under control than her expressive features were. She advanced a few steps to meet her old playfellow and friend; and she extended her hand to him, which he eagerly grasped, and would have held. But she withdrew it, saying, in rather a low voice:—

"It was quite unexpected by us that you would arrive at the Præstegaard this evening. Our faithful Collins must have exerted himself admirably."

Alfred fixed his eyes upon her sadly and reproachfully. Could this be his beloved Grace, on whose unchanging affection he had placed such implicit confidence?—could she be thus altered towards him? An icy chill fell upon his heart; and his own manner at once became restrained.

"Are you not glad to see me again, and to know that I am free, Grace? And yet I believe that I owe

my release mainly to your father's kind exertions in my behalf."

"I rejoice very sincerely in your freedom," replied Grace—and now her lips quivered, and tears rose unbidden to her eyes. "Indeed, Alfred, both my father and I, and also our friend, Mrs. Calthorpe, have been most anxious on your account. And we have felt so much for poor Elena."

Alfred thought she wished to turn the subject from himself; and, checking a sigh, he answered:—

"Yes, she is indeed to be pitied. She was greatly attached to her brother."

"I was thinking of the dreadful suspense that she must have suffered on your account, Alfred."

He looked astonished; but Grace did not see the expression of his countenance. She had resumed her position near the window, and her eyes were fixed on the flower-beds.

"No doubt," replied Alfred, somewhat coolly; "she has been kindly anxious about me since she heard of my being a prisoner. But I cannot flatter myself that she would be very much engrossed with thoughts of me. She has had other occupations, and other pleasant interests to divert her mind from my lonely captivity."

And Alfred thought there was *another* who might have felt a far keener anxiety respecting his welfare and safety than even the sister of his friend—the wife of his brother—could do.

"What interests or occupations could divert a

wife's thoughts and anxieties from a husband in captivity and peril?" exclaimed Mary Calthorpe, almost indignantly. She had listened to the conversation so far; and she had marvelled at Grace's outward composure. She believed that Alfred Kinnaird was acting a part, and endeavouring to conceal the fact of his marriage, and she was resolved to bring him to acknowledge it, and thus at least to lessen the awkwardness of the interview.

"I do not understand you," said Alfred, with a confused and astonished look, that only confirmed Mary's suspicions.

"When shall you see Elena?" said Grace, more firmly than she had yet spoken. "Are you going to Roystadt immediately?"

Alfred looked more and more confused.

"I expect to see Elena and her husband in Als very shortly," he replied. "Your messenger brought me a letter from Edward, telling me that they were at Copenhagen, working for my release, and that they should come on to Alborg as soon as possible."

"Her husband—Edward!" murmured Grace, as she turned round and looked Alfred full in the face. Then she pressed her hand on her brow, and sank into a chair, saying faintly—

"What does it mean, Alfred?"

Her eyes were fixed on Alfred's countenance; but the expression scared him. Her lips were parted, and her whole face had a pallid and agonized look which wrung his heart—but for which he could not account.

He sprang to her side, and took her cold passive hand in his.

"Speak to me, Grace—my own Grace," he said. "What has happened that can thus distress you?"

Grace tried to speak, but she could not articulate. Hopes and fears were struggling in her breast, and they choked her utterance. But Mary came to her aid.

"Mr. Kinnaird," she said, very decidedly, "this is no time for concealment or deception. Are you not the husband of Elena Dagmer?"

"I the husband of Elena!" exclaimed Alfred. "O Grace—my darling Grace—have you believed this? Have you thought of me as faithless? And I have loved you—you only—with my whole heart and soul."

What a ray of light shone over Grace's countenance! What joy beamed in her distended eyes! The rapid change that was expressed by her features was too much for her over-wrought feelings; and now she burst into tears.

They were alone—for Mary Calthorpe had passed out into the garden as soon as she heard Alfred's earnest denial of her charge. She wisely deemed that these reconciled friends would come to a mutual understanding much more readily and pleasantly without any witnesses, and we so entirely agree with her that we shall leave them to their explanations, and follow Mary's footsteps.

She went out through the garden and passed onwards towards the spot whither she knew that her

husband and his companions had gone, and she soon met them returning to the Præstegaard, and told them of the pleasant discovery that she had just made.

Captain Calthorpe was still an invalid, but he had recovered his strength considerably since he had been under the good pastor's roof; and more especially during the few days that had elapsed since his wife had joined him there.

Harold Andersen's letter, and Neils Petersen's pressing invitation, had decided her to repair as quickly as possible to Alborg; and the Lovells were very willing to accompany her.

Before he set out from Hamburg, Mr. Lovell wrote letters to several influential friends in England and abroad, earnestly asking their aid in effecting Alfred's release. It is certainly true that the personal regard and interest which he had always felt for his young friend had been by no means increased since he had heard of his hasty marriage. That event had disappointed him in various ways, more than he could have anticipated it would do; and it had lowered his opinion of Alfred. Still he would not suffer any change in his own feelings to damp his exertions on behalf of the son of his most valued friend, and one on whom the happiness of many others so greatly depended.

We have seen that his efforts—combined with those which Edward and Elena made at Copenhagen—were successful; and both he and Grace rejoiced at it. Had Mr. Lovell known the depth and

intensity of Grace's feelings, he would probably have taken her away from Alborg before Alfred's arrival, and have left Mrs. Calthorpe with her husband. But he believed that his daughter's affection had gradually died away under the influence of time and absence, and that the news of Alfred's marriage must have entirely extinguished it, and therefore he acceded to her wish to remain in Als until the Calthorpes should remove from thence.

All the party—including Dinah Collins and her nephew Harry—were located either in the Præstegaard or in other dwellings in the village, the inhabitants of which were very ready to accommodate any friends of their beloved pastor. Indeed they vied with each other who should be allowed in this, or in any other way, to testify their respect and affection, and their gratitude for the devotion which he had shown to his people during all the recent dangers and alarms.

Immediately after Dybbol was taken, and when fears were entertained that Marshal Wrangel would suddenly appear some morning on the other side of Alssund, many of the pastor's friends urged him to withdraw from the island. But the only answer of this brave and good minister was, "I will not desert my flock." And he remained to the last.*

* Several weeks later the armistice ceased, and Als was conquered; and then the good pastor whom we have named Neils Petersen, shared the sad fate of nearly eighty Danish clergymen of North Slesvig. He was driven from the parish where he had laboured for thirty years, and the pretty Præstegaard was disposed of by the invaders. We trust it may be restored to him.

For a short time he sent away his unwilling wife, and also his precious books and plate to a place of security. "They are my treasures," he said to Harold Andersen ; "and she the greatest of them all."

Before the Lovells and Mary Calthorpe arrived, the Froken had returned to her happy home, and everything was as cheerful and well ordered as before. The village indeed was greatly changed. No longer was it crowded with soldiers billeted on every house. They were all gone, and the little field hospital was removed from Alborg. Only a few stray uniforms could be seen in the quiet village street, and all traces of war were nearly obliterated from its outward aspect, and what had been a scene of so much excitement and busy activity, was now subdued and tranquil.

But in the Præstegaard there was still the same active preparation constantly going on ; and its numerous guests were as hospitably received as during the time of war. The simple and primitive habits that were therein observed were both surprising and amusing to the Lovells and Mary Calthorpe ; but they most willingly accommodated themselves to the ways of the household, and rose at five o'clock to enjoy the early morning air ; were ready for breakfast at six, and for a well-arranged dinner at twelve. Supper was served punctually at seven, and it was expected that all should retire to rest at nine.

It might be these early hours, or it might be change of air, or it might be other causes that brought about

so desirable an end ; but so it was that Grace Lovell very rapidly regained the bloom on her cheek, and the elasticity of step and brightness of manner that were natural to her. Mary had never seen her gay and light-hearted, and she marvelled at the change which a short time effected. She need not have marvelled : happiness is a very powerful remedy for many ailments.

And Grace was happy, more entirely happy than she had expected ever to be on earth. She was happy because she saw and felt that Alfred loved her, and she knew that he had never changed or wavered in his true affection. And she was happy, gratefully happy, because she perceived also that the heart which was *unchanged* towards her had experienced a very blessed change with regard to spiritual things, and was now even more devoted to his God and Saviour than to her.

Grace thought that her satisfaction was complete. Nevertheless, it did receive a very considerable addition when, two days after Alfred's appearance at the Præstegaard, a large German carriage drove up to the door, and from it alighted Mr. and Mrs. Kinnaird, followed by Edward, and a very lovely and interesting girl, in deep mourning, whom he proudly introduced as his bride.

Many, and very heartfelt, were the greetings which took place ; and much was there to be asked and answered with regard to Alfred's release, and other subjects yet more interesting to him. He had not

broken his pledge—he had not asked Grace to be his wife—he had only shewn what he could not hide—his deep and constant love for her. Who could blame him for that?

Assuredly his parents did not do so. They looked at Grace with admiration and affection; and his mother whispered to him that all his weary probation was over, and that she and his father would thankfully receive his beloved Grace as their daughter.

Then her happiness was indeed complete; for then she knew why Alfred had so long kept silence, and why she had been subjected to so long a period of suspense, and, at last, of disappointment.

While her father and the Kinnairds were engaged in earnest conversation, and she and Alfred were at least as much interested in their own separate discourse, Edward led Elena to the churchyard. He knew, from Hans's description, where to find the grave of Dagmer in that picturesque burial-ground; and it was gratifying to Elena's sad heart to find it well tended, and tastefully adorned. The Fröken had not neglected the spot where the favourite guest of the Præstegaard lay. And there were many other graves on which Edward and Elena looked with interest, and which shewed that Als had been the scene of other deeds of Danish heroism, and that her inhabitants gloried in the fact—and none with more patriotic pride than the pastor of Alborg. He now wore a *Dannebrog* order on his breast, bestowed upon him for his many worthy deeds; and the good man gloried

in the distinction, which had rather a strange effect in the eyes of his English friends, when seen in close association with a cassock and ruff!

How hospitably he still entertained all his numerous guests! and how kindly both he and the Froken pressed them to remain at the Præstegaard as long as they could make it convenient to do so! The cheerfulness and hearty good-humour of this excellent couple were the same now that Dybbøl had fallen, and Als was threatened, as they had been during the excitement and the hope of the contest. A fund of inward peace and joy dwelt in their own hearts, and all who were around them unconsciously shared it.

Very happy days were passed at the Præstegaard by the assembled party—but they could not last for ever. It was time for that party to break up, and return to their homes; and all the guests left their kind hosts with sincere regret, and heartfelt sympathy.

There was quite a little procession of horses, and vehicles of divers forms and sizes, to convey away the numerous party and their appendages. A cordial parting took place, and an earnest blessing was pronounced by the good Christian pastor, and then the cortége set forth. Alfred was again mounted on his old friend Luken; and Edward and Harry also rode two of the pastor's horses. But Captain Calthorpe was yet unequal to horse exercise, and he and the rest of the party filled the German waggons that had been procured for the occasion.

Thus they left the Præstegaard; and they watched

the pastor and his wife, as they stood at the door of the pretty thatched dwelling, until they were out of sight. They then proceeded to Horup Hav, a port on the south of the island, where they embarked in a vessel bound to Lubeck. From thence to Hamburg was an easy journey, and there they found Ellen and Sophy Kinnaird anxiously awaiting them. Their parents had left them there in the charge of a friend, while they hurried on to Copenhagen in consequence of Edward's urgent letter. In the Danish capital they had met their younger son and his bride, and had very readily accorded to him the pardon that he asked, for his rather precipitate conduct; and from thence, as we have seen, they all travelled together to Als.

And now, what more can we tell our readers that they cannot divine for themselves? Shall we tell how the Kinnairds and the Lovells returned to their native land, with a promise from Mary Calthorpe and her husband that they would, if possible, be present at Croone when a certain interesting event took place, which would unite the two families yet closer—how Charles Lovell soon joined his brother in Ireland, and declared his hopes of future felicity as the husband of Catherine Vivian—how Dinah Collins rejoiced in the happiness of her dear young mistress; and how her now highly-respected brother James, and her very promising nephew Harry, shared in her satisfaction—how, in short, life looked very bright to many of those whose trials and temptations

it has been our lot to chronicle? All this can be imagined.

So very short a time has elapsed since the last events narrated in this history took place, that we cannot tell whether all the pleasant anticipations then indulged in have been fully realized. We heartily hope that such may be the case, and that the colony settled at Croone, and in its neighbourhood, may be permitted to enjoy many years of usefulness and happiness.

THE END.

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