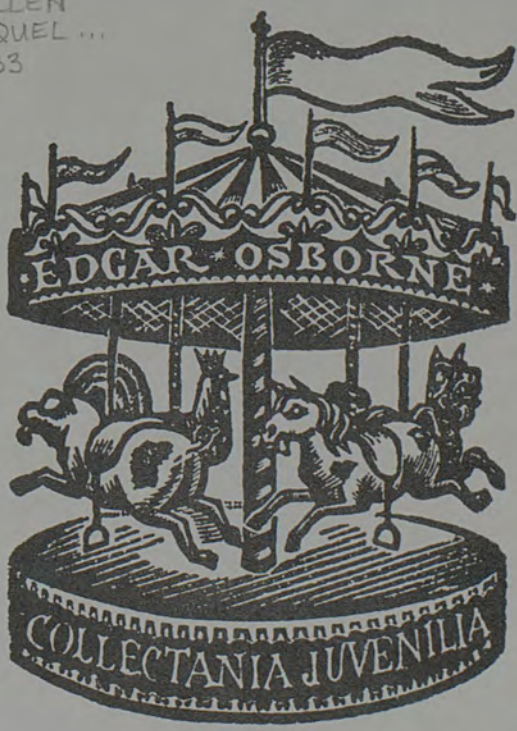
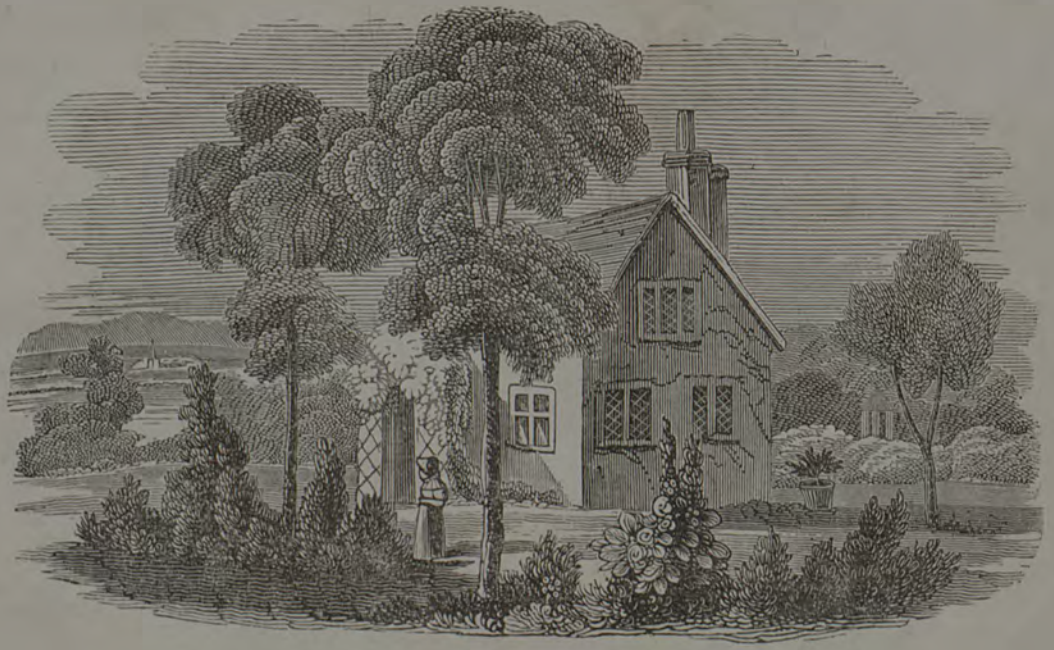


77



SEQUEL

TO

"THE WELL-SPENT HOUR;"

OR,

THE BIRTH-DAY.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF THE "WELL-SPENT HOUR," &c., &c.

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CONTENTS.

CHAPTER VIII.

CHAPTER IX.

CHAPTER X.

CHAPTER XI.

CHAPTER XII.

SEQUEL

TO THE

WELL-SPENT HOUR.

CHAPTER I.

RENEWAL OF ACQUAINTANCE.

It is four years since I gave my young readers an account of some of the well-spent hours of Catharine Nelson. Whoever read that little book at that time must now be four years older. To some the scene of existence has changed; but we believe they still live; they have left this world of time, and entered upon a life that has no end. They now know, better than any of us, the true value of a well-spent hour, the unspeakable blessing of a well-spent life.

There will be few of those who read this little volume, who, during the last four years, have not parted on the way with some companion and friend whom they loved. They have thus had the means of forming a juster estimation of the true value of life, of learning the great truth, that the length of our lives is not the thing we should be anxious about, but simply the manner in which we live; that an innocent heart, a knowledge of the character of Jesus, a holy trust in God, can make the death-bed a peaceful and even a cheerful and happy place, not only to the youthful spirit that is entering the immediate presence of its heavenly Father, but to the sorrowing friends whom it leaves behind.

It is a serious thought to us all, that we are four years older; and I feel authorized by the acquaintance my readers have made with me, to say a few words upon the thoughts awakened by this recollection. Let us sit down, and talk, and think, and reason together. You are young, and I am comparatively old; but we must all ask ourselves the same questions: Have we, during this time, acquired as much knowledge as we have had the means

of acquiring? as much knowledge of God, of his glorious works, of his holy will, as we could obtain? as much knowledge of Jesus and of his divine instructions, as much knowledge of our own particular duties, as much knowledge of our own hearts and characters, of our own faults, of our own powers, of the means of doing good to others, and of their wants and of their rights?

Have we acted up to our knowledge of God and of our duty? Are we more devout, more obedient, more faithful in the performance of our duties? Are we more humble, more charitable, more just? Are we more faithful followers of our Saviour? Has time passed over us like the invisible wind over a barren soil, bringing no fertility, and bearing away no fragrance? or has it visited our souls like the breath of heaven upon a cultivated garden, waking the flowers, and passing away, laden with their sweet perfume?

Have those of us who have received peculiar blessings during this time been as humble and grateful as we ought to be? Have we remembered that the blessing of lengthened

existence is only a greater call upon us for faithfulness in duty; that all which we possess is given us in trust, for the happiness of others as well as ourselves? Have those of us who have met with sorrows and severe trials borne them with patience and cheerfulness, remembering that it is a Father's hand which has afflicted us, and that his love surrounds us as truly in our sorrows as in our joys?

These are a few of the questions we should ask ourselves when reviewing our past years. Probably not one of us can, if we are strict with ourselves, answer them in the affirmative. But let us not despair of ourselves. If we have gained any thing, let us be thankful to Him from whom come all our powers, for the strength that he has given us; and if we have lost this precious time and gained nothing, still let us not despair; though our contrition should be deep, though we should grieve with our whole hearts for our wasted powers, wasted opportunities, wasted time, wasted happiness, still let us not despair. Let us resolve to redeem the time; let us pray to God for help; let us begin this very day, this very hour, to spend life well. Let us

send back no thoughts upon the past, but such as are necessary for a sincere repentance; let us fix our thoughts upon the present, and upon the future which depends upon it. Let us not wait for some great occasion, or desire to perform some great and uncommon action; but let us, in the place in which we are, be the circle ever so small, with the means which we have, be they ever so few, without any delay, begin to do with all our might whatsoever good our hands find to do. This is the best possible preparation for usefulness and happiness in the present life, the only preparation for happiness in the life to come.

There is in such a resolution, and in the life it would lead to, nothing of gloom; on the contrary, the heartfelt satisfaction it will yield, will shed a new glory upon the whole visible world, and give a new relish to every innocent pleasure.

"It is content of heart
Gives nature power to please;
The mind that feels no smart
Enlivens all it sees;

"Can make a wintry sky
Seem bright as smiling May,
And evening's closing eye
As peep of early day."

The thought expressed in these lines of Cowper, which I learned and loved when I was a child, and have so often repeated, reminds me of a very little boy, whose mother, being much occupied in the day, is in the habit of devoting an hour in the evening, just before his bed-time, to his particular amusement. Often when he asks for some attention which the want of time makes it necessary to refuse him, he says, with the assurance that it will then be granted, "When evening come;" and when he sees the darkness approaching, he claps his hands and says, "Now evening come;" and I cannot but think how often his mother's heart must pray that the evening hour will be thus ever joyful to him, and that he may so spend his day of life, that when its sun has set, and its last shadows close in around him, and he sees only the unknown stars of another world, his spirit may rejoice and cry out with gladness, "Now evening come."

But I think I hear the young friends whom in imagination I am talking with, say, "But we want to hear about Catharine Nelson, her brother James, little Lucy, and her cousin Julia. They also are four years older; what has happened to them? How will they answer these hard questions that we have been putting to ourselves? Have they all grown wiser and better? Has Julia cured her pettishness and selfishness? Is Catharine as good as she was? And Nancy Leonard, what of her and her sick mother?—Come, let us hear about them all." As I must acknowledge I have tried your patience with something like a sermon, I will, without any further preface, tell you all that is to be told about Catharine Nelson and her friends; and let you judge for yourselves how lasting were the effects of her well-spent hours.

CHAPTER II.

REVERSE OF FORTUNE.

We shall not give a direct answer to the questions we supposed our young friends to ask in the last chapter; but, taking it for granted that Catharine and those connected with her are also four years older, we shall proceed in their very simple story, leaving it for our readers to judge for themselves what progress they have made.

Catharine was now very nearly fourteen; Mr. Nelson occupied the same house, and she and her mother were sitting together one afternoon in the library, when the following conversation passed between them:

"A week from to-morrow, mother, will be my birth-day, and I shall be just fourteen years old. Julia told me to-day that she hoped I should have a little party, and that she meant to make me a birth-day present; what do you suppose she intends to give me, and what do you think of my having a party?"

"I cannot help you to guess what Julia's present will be," answered Mrs. Nelson; and with regard to your party, my dear Catharine, perhaps you will not be disposed or able to have one."

Catharine's mind at the moment was so full of other things that she did not fully attend to her mother's answer, or observe an expression of deep seriousness in her face; and she went on as follows: "I think, mother, it is altogether unnecessary for me to go any longer to school; Mr. Wilson says himself that I have learned as much as he can teach me to advantage in his school; and as my quarter is up to-morrow, I think I had better not go again."

"I think so, too, my child," said her mother; "I am very glad that you have improved the opportunity you have had of acquiring knowledge; it may be to you of even more value than you suppose, my child." There was something of sadness, and a slight agitation, that mingled with the peculiarly affectionate tone of voice with which Mrs. Nelson answered Catharine. Catharine immediately

perceived it, and looked anxiously in her mother's face as if to inquire the cause of it; she then for the first time observed her very serious expression, and, with the confidence of affection, which her mother had always encouraged, she earnestly asked if any thing was the matter.

"Yes, my dear, something is the matter," said her mother.

"No bad news from James, I hope, mother?"

"No, dear; it was only yesterday we received a letter from him, saying, that he was very well, and that he liked his school very much; and another from his master, saying, that he was one of the best boys in the school." As Mrs. Nelson said this, her eyes filled with tears.

"Father is well, and you, and Lucy, and James are well; what, then, can make you sad, mother?" said Catharine.

"Your father, Catharine, has met with great misfortunes in business, and has lost all his property!"

"Well, never mind that, mother; we can

be happy even if we are poor; we can all work, we can all do something; don't be sad about that, mother. Is that all?"

"I am not sad about that, my child; but your father thinks he must leave us; he has a proposal made to him by some friends, which, if he accepts it, will enable him to retrieve his losses; but it will be necessary then, that he should pass two or three years, or perhaps more, in England."

"And leave us all behind, mother?" said Catharine.

Mrs. Nelson made no answer, and for a while they both remained silent. Catharine's mind was divided between her own sorrow at the thought of her father's leaving them, and her desire to comfort her mother. She looked up in her mother's face—she saw that her eyes were full of tears. She wanted to say something, but she knew not what to say, and she wept too.

At this moment her father entered. He looked exhausted and sad, but perfectly calm and composed. He perceived that his wife and Catharine were in tears, and, without speaking, he placed himself upon the sofa

between them, taking a hand of each, and they kept silence together for some minutes. At last he said, "I perceive, Catharine, that your mother has told you of my misfortune. It is only misfortune; there has been nothing in what has happened that need make my children ashamed; my creditors are now, and I think ever will be, among my best friends. Do not weep, then; do not be troubled. You, Catharine, must now be your mother's greatest earthly comfort; have a strong heart, and a cheerful courage; in a few years, I hope, all will be well again. There is much to be done, many important things are to be attended to, before I go away; and this indulgence of sorrow will unfit us all for the performance of present duty."

Mr. Nelson had addressed Catharine, because he feared he should lose his own self-controul if he spoke to her mother. But his words, and the example of his composure, had the right effect upon both of them, and it was not long before they were consulting together upon their future plans and present arrangements.

It was decided that Mrs. Nelson should

take a house in the country, in the neighbourhood of James's school; that their house in town, all the furniture, and whatever they could dispense with, should be sold, and that this, if possible, should be accomplished before Mr. Nelson's departure, which would take place in a fortnight.

Mr. Nelson looked around the room at his handsome library. "It is hard," he said, "to part with our books, and they would be such a comfort to you all during my absence; but it must be so. But I think you, my dear Catharine, may retain the piano that your uncle gave you."

"No, father," said Catharine, "if you sell all your books, I will not be so selfish as to keep my piano. It is not necessary to my happiness that I should have a piano; mine is a very expensive one, and is as good as when uncle gave it to me, and indeed, father, I cannot keep it; I should not think it right to do so; let that be sold, too, father. Her father made no answer. After a silence of some minutes, Mr. Nelson said, "I have heard to-day of a house to let within half a mile of James's school; it is in good order

and may be entered immediately. If you approve, my dear," turning to his wife, "I will engage it, and by to-morrow week I think we may remove into it. I should then have the comfort of seeing you established before I leave you. The auction here might take place the day after we move, and then all things would be settled, and my mind would be easier; is this possible, and do you like my plan?"

Mrs. Nelson silently assented; she could not trust herself to speak. "Will it," he continued, "be too great an exertion for you to make all necessary arrangements in so short a time?" "No, my dear," she answered."

"We must try," he said, "to think only of the time when we shall meet again, and endure this trial with cheerfulness." The truth was, that the consciousness which Mr. Nelson felt, that he was making the greatest sacrifice in his power for the good of his family; that he was to leave his country, his home, forego every domestic comfort, and part from all those he most truly loved in the world, for the sake of securing to them the means of living,

and of paying his just debts,—this noble feeling of self-sacrifice gave him a new and unthought-of power to endure his trials with fortitude, and to act with a cheerful and confiding courage. His wife and his children, for whom he was thus to labour and to suffer, had in fact a harder trial; they felt that it was for them he made these sacrifices. It seemed to Mrs. Nelson as if she had not her share in the privations and sufferings that were to be endured, and her noble soul felt half defrauded of its rights. But when her powers of reasoning began to recover from the weakening effect of her grief at the thought of parting from her husband, she saw that her trial called upon her for the exertion of as great though less conspicuous virtues; and she was satisfied that in the only strife she ever engaged in, that of good works, she might attain her full share of success and glory. She was not one who talked about duties, but who quietly performed them; not one who complained of difficulties, but who resolutely strove to overcome them. Her great maxim was, to think no duty too great, and none too trifling. And when she thought of herself

left alone, with very small means, and her children to support and educate, she could no longer undervalue her portion of the arduous duties and trials arising from her husband's misfortunes. As these thoughts arose in her mind, her courage arose too, and before the evening had passed, she had recovered the cheerful composure of her usual manner.

But we must return to Catharine, whose thoughts were at first so full of her birth-day, and who soon forgot every thing but her father's and mother's troubles.

"I am sure, father," said she, "that I could keep a school, at least if mother would take the superintendence of one. I could help her a great deal, and we might live very economically; and could not you then stay at home with us?"

"I could not consent to be an idler," said her father, "and I could not help you much in the school; and I have the means offered me of gaining a sufficient sum to pay my debts. If your mother should think well of the plan of a school, all you can so obtain, you want for yourselves. I must go, my child. I wish you would write a letter to

James, telling him of all that has happened, and of our future plans; or, my little Lucy, as you are James's correspondent, suppose you write to him, and do not tell him a very sad story."

Little Lucy, as her father commonly called her, had entered the room just after him, and had heard what he had said, but did not understand all that had passed, as she had not heard what her mother said to Catharine. "I do not know exactly what to tell James," said Lucy. "Tell him," said her father, "that I have lost all my money, and that I am going to England to get more; that your mother and Kitty and you are going to remove into the country, within half a mile of him, and that then he can live at home; and that we shall come out to-morrow week." "Why, that is Catharine's birth-day," said Lucy. "Then it shall be a happy one," said her father; "and tell James to come in the evening, that we may keep the evening of her birth-day together."

Lucy brought her little desk, her father mended her pen, and she sat down to write her letter. Let us peep over her shoulder

and read it; we may be sure that she has no secrets in it.

"Dear James,

"Father says I must not tell you a sad story, and so I will not; and yet it is sad, I think, quite sad. He is going to leave us, he is going to England, he is going in a fortnight. He has lost all his money, and he is going there, he says, to earn some more. I wish he would earn it here; I am sure that we had all rather be poor and live on nothing but bread and milk, than have him away from us. But he is going, and we are coming out to live in Mr. G.'s house, in the green lane, about half a mile from your school, and then you will be with us at night and at meal times; but father will not be with us. I should like living in the country, but I do not like father's going away.

"Only think, all our furniture and father's library are to be sold! I hope that Miss Edgeworth will not be sold; and yet, though father gave me her stories, I do not want to keep them if father sells all his books; and besides, Catharine says that her piano shall

be sold, so I ought not to want to keep my books. But if we should not have Miss Edgeworth, then, dear James, we will try to make up stories ourselves, as we used to do when you were at home.

"But dear father will not be with us to joke us about our stories, and to help us out with our plot; and mother, she looks so sad! Father says we must try to be a comfort to her, and be as good as we can; and so we will, James, and then perhaps she will feel happy, though she can't feel as happy, I am sure, when father is away.

"But I have come to the bottom of my third page; my writing is so large. So good bye, dear James; father and mother and Catharine send their love to you.

"Your affectionate sister,

"LUCY NELSON."

It took Lucy the remainder of the evening to write the above letter. She shewed it to her father. He smiled upon reading it, and said, "This will do very well, Lucy;" and folded and sealed it to send it to James the next morning.

CHAPTER III.

PREPARATION FOR DEPARTURE.

THE next morning found every individual of Mr. Nelson's family employed in making preparations for the auction, and for their intended removal. We will suppose ourselves using the privilege of old friends, going from room to room and looking in upon them as they are occupied with their respective duties. In one room two of the domestics were employed in taking down the glass and china, washing it, and then arranging it on a long table where it might shew to advantage. "This is the hardest work," said Rachel, "I ever did in this house." "Hard enough," said Patrick, "to see all this beautiful china and glass sold; much good may it do whoever buys it; I hope it will break before it is safely landed in their pantries." "Most like, if it breaks, Patrick, it will be before it is *safely* landed," said Rachel, who loved to notice poor Patrick's mistakes. "Now, Rachel," said Patrick, "that is just like your taking me up because I said that Mrs. Nelson

desired that when the sugar was all gone, you should tell her of it beforehand. You say such things only for the sake of making me uneasy. Nobody would know I was an Irishman if you would only just say nothing at all about it, and leave me alone to tell them myself." "Well, Patrick," said Rachel, "you'll not be long letting them know yourself; but I've nothing against your being an Irishman while you make my sister a good husband."

"Oh," said Patrick, after a short silence, "oh, if Mr. Nelson only had all his money back again; but it is never worth while to regret what we cannot help. But Mr. Nelson is as honorable and complate a gentleman, for an American, as was ever born out of Ireland."

In another room, a neat, quiet, intelligent young girl of about fifteen, was counting table cloths, napkins, towels, &c., laying them in separate parcels, and setting down the number on a piece of paper. She seemed earnest to do her duty, but she looked as if it was a sorrowful task she was performing. She breathed a long sigh; "Dear Miss Catha-

rine," said she, "who was so good to the poor, to come to poverty herself! she did so much for me, and what can I do for her?" Just then Mrs. Nelson entered; she had a number of Mr. Nelson's shirts in her hand; "I want you, Nancy," said she, "to look over these shirts; they want a few repairs, such as buttons, &c." This will be quite a help to me; I am glad you can sew so nicely." After a short pause Mrs. Nelson said," I think it but fair, Nancy, that I should tell you now that I shall not be able to perform my promise to you; you know I told you that when you were fifteen, I would pay you wages; I cannot do this now; my plan is to keep but one woman; and if, as is possible, I take the charge of a school, I shall then take a small girl to run on errands, and to assist generally. You cannot do the hard work of the family, and you can do something better for yourself than to take the place of the little girl."

"I know how to cook," said Nancy, "and I can wash; indeed I can do any kind of work. Let me stay with you, madam, and you will find that I do not mind hard work; only let me try. And do not," Nancy reddened, face,

neck, and hands as she spoke, "do not speak of wages. What would have become of us but for you and Miss Catharine, when mother was so sick? how could she have died in peace if she had not known that her child would be taken care of? Did you not take me in and clothe me, and feed me, and teach me every thing I know? You have been a mother to me ever since, till now; and now will you turn me away, when I have grown old and strong enough to be of some use? I shall feel as if I had lost my mother again, if you send me away." Nancy could command herself no longer; as she uttered the word *mother*, she wept like a child. Mrs. Nelson was herself overcome. As soon as she could speak, she said, "Be comforted, my good Nancy, you shall stay with me and be as a child to me, and I will not say any thing more to you about wages."

We will now see where our friend Catharine is, and how she is employing herself. She and Lucy were in the library busily occupied in taking down the books, dusting them, and making out a catalogue. It required all Catharine's habits of industry and at-

tention to perform the task she had undertaken, but she would allow of no question whether she was equal to it; and she found, as every one will who makes the experiment, that active and useful employment is the best protection against sad feelings. Catharine loved her father tenderly; she had formed at school many pleasant acquaintances and some friendships; and these had with her all the charm and uncounted value which "society, friendship, and love" have and ought to have with the young. Hard must be the heart that would nip in the bud these tender blossoms that belong to the spring-time of life: far from this, we would only so strengthen, and so prune the tree, as that when the wind bears away the flower, the young fruit shall remain unhurt, and shall grow and ripen in the summer, and bless the autumn and winter of life.

Catharine's taste, by her mother's care, had been kept simple and pure; her heart was true, for it had always been nourished with truth. Truth, if we may so speak, had always been around her like the vital air, and she had an instinctive dislike of every form

of falsehood, as of a distasteful and unwholesome thing. This was her protection at school; her mother gave her no directions, no cautions; she trusted entirely to her own good taste, her integrity and confidence in her parents. They felt sure that her habit of confiding every thing to them would always enable them to advise her at the right time and in the right way. Their plan had succeeded with Catharine; her school life had not injured her. She had formed fewer friendships than most girls, but they were stronger and better founded than they frequently are; and it was a real trial to her to be separated from many she loved in "dear Boston," as she called it. We have related this fact with regard to Catharine, because we know she will not say any thing about it herself; her mind is so entirely occupied with her father and mother, and the evils they have to endure; and we now return to her in the library.

While she was very busily engaged in copying rather a long title of a book, a tall, handsome-looking girl, very fashionably dressed, came in. Catharine did not notice her

at first till she was roused from her employment by these words: "Well, Catharine, what shocking large work are you studying and taking notes from; are you preparing a lecture for me, I wonder? for that is the only way I ever learn any thing about these dry things; you can make even a dish of metaphysics tolerable to me. By the bye, I heard a definition of metaphysics the other day, which is the only definition I ever heard that did not puzzle me more than the thing itself. A very witty lady who called to see my mother, speaking of metaphysics, said, 'they were to her either a collection of truisms that every one was acquainted with, or of absurdities that nobody could believe.' But you are so fond of such things that I really wonder that I love you as much as I do."

"I have often wondered what was the reason that you love me, Julia," said Catharine; "it puzzles me as much as metahpysics do you."

"Pray don't try to find out the reason," answered Julia, "it is so tedious and shocking to be always looking for a reason of things; it is just as when you are reading an interest-

ing passage in French, and have to stop and look out one word in ten in the dictionary. The only difference is, when I find my word in a dictionary I have learned something I want to know; but, to tell the truth, I never want to know the reasons of things. A thing is so, or it is not so, and that is all I want to know about it. People who are always reasoning never get along; you never know what they think. There is a man who comes to our house, who, when you ask his opinion of a thing, always answers, 'May be so and may be not;' they say he has a very thinking mind; I don't like thinking minds. There is another who always says, 'Such a thing is true, or it is false, in some respects.' These folks are like the ass in the fable, between the two bundles of hay. I like to have people go on and talk on, without a reason: I suppose if you were not my cousin, I should not like you, Catharine, you are so reasonable."

"I hope that you are unjust to yourself and to me, Julia," said Catharine. "I hope that you would love me if I were not your cousin, and that you are not such an unreasonable being as you describe yourself to

be. I for my part wish I had a little more of this reason that you abuse, to help me to do my duty; I shall have need for all I can obtain. We are going to leave Boston, Julia."

"What for? said Julia, "and what is the matter, that you look so serious? and what are all these books pulled down for?"

"Have you not heard of my father's misfortunes," said Catharine, "and that he is going away, and that we are going into the country to live, and that our library and every thing we can spare are to be sold?"

"Oh dear, no!" said Julia; "my father is at New York, and mother has been sick in her chamber, and I have not heard a word of all this; but Catharine, it cannot be that all your nice furniture and books are to be sold, and that you are going to be buried alive in the country; and that your father is so poor as to make this necessary. Oh dear, what will you do?"

"You know, Julia," said Catharine, "that I love the country: I am sorry to leave those I love in Boston; but I hope they will come and see me. As for the furniture, I care nothing about it; the books I shall miss, but it

is my father's leaving us that is the only thing I feel really sad about."

Catharine had taken no notice of the thing that troubled Julia the most, the fact that they were actually poor; for she had really forgotten it. She only thought of the present evils that were the immediate effects of it. She was so entirely above the narrow-mindedness of valuing money except as a means of happiness to herself and others, that the idea of any loss of consequence from the loss of money never came into her head, and she would have felt some degree of contempt for any one who had declared that she was of less importance in the eyes of the world from the circumstance that she was now the daughter of a poor, instead of a rich man.

Julia was sensible of this, and she did not dare to express all she felt, for she knew that Catharine would despise her for it. The truth was, Julia loved and respected her cousin. At school Catharine had been so attentive and industrious that she was the first scholar; she was so affable and so kind that every one loved her; she was so sensible, so modest, and so good, that every one

respected her. Catharine, unknown to herself, was a kind of queen among the girls of her acquaintance; Julia felt proud of Catharine, and the thought of her living in obscurity in the country, and being poor, which she considered the greatest of all evils, disturbed and mortified her. She sat silent for some time, looking at Catharine with unfeigned pity; she had nothing to say, for she had an instinctive feeling that there was nothing that she could say that would please Catharine.

Catharine in her simplicity misunderstood her silence, and attributed it all to Julia's grief at being separated from her, and took upon herself the part of comforter. "Do not look so sad, Julia; you know you will come and make me long visits in the country, and I shall pass a week sometimes with you when mother can spare me."

"Oh dear," said Julia, "don't speak of my going into the country to make a long visit, it would kill me; the hens cackling, the geese hissing, the turkeys gobbling, and the frogs croaking, all at once—I should never recover from the effects of such a concert.

But it would be delightful to have you come and make us a long visit; there is some comfort in the thought of that; and then we will take music and French, and Italian lessons together; for, no matter if your father has lost his money; mine has not, and he will pay for you as well as me, and it will be delightful for us to study together."

Catharine's feelings did not harmonize with Julia's; she loved the country, and her father and mother had often carried her there that she might learn to feel and understand its beauties. Many a happy day had she enjoyed with them in the country, and it was to her like a friend. It was painful to her to hear Julia laugh at it. She felt, too, that Julia did not understand her feelings. She was thinking of the sufferings of her father and mother; she felt that new duties, new trials, awaited her; she was hurt at Julia's supposing that she could at such a time be thinking only of plans for her own separate pleasure. But she did not express this to her: she had within the last twenty-four hours become a more important, a more responsible being, and the consciousness of

this gave an unusual quietness and dignity to her manner.

She said very gently to Julia, as she returned to her labour of making out a catalogue of the books, "I am very fond of the country, and if my father were only to remain with us, I dare say we should be happier, after a little while, there, than even here in Boston, though I love my friends here very much. But I had rather be with my mother in a desert, than any where else in the world without her."

"Here," said Lucy, who had been anxiously waiting for an opportunity to speak, "is all Miss Edgeworth for you to write down in the catalogue." "This is a friend that it is hard to part with, is it not, Lucy?" "Indeed it is," answered Lucy; "but not harder than for you to part with your piano, Catharine."

"We must think of father and mother," said Catharine; "father has to part from all that he loves best in the world. If Miss Edgeworth could only speak now, out of all those books, she would say, 'Never mind, Lucy, I will come and see you and tell you stories again, one of these days; but I must

leave you now, so good bye, Lucy.'"
"Good bye, Miss Edgeworth," answered Lucy, "I love you very much, and I mean to be a good girl till you come back again." And Lucy ran away smiling, to dust some other books.

This cheerfulness and disinterestedness in Catharine and Lucy were not lost upon Julia; but these were virtues hard for her to acquire. She had never felt so deep a respect for Catharine; but she could not tell why. She would have said she pitied her; and yet she did not only pity but honour her. It was the involuntary homage which even those who think wealth and distinction the most desirable things in the world pay to the only true riches, the only real superiority—that which simple goodness confers.

She soon after bade her cousins good bye, with an expression of humility, and a tone of respectful affection, that were unusual to her.

CHAPTER IV.

A FINE LADY.

As soon as Julia returned home she went into her mother's apartment. "Have you heard, mother," said she, of Uncle Nelson's misfortunes?"

"Dear, no! Julia," answered her mother; "how can you frighten me so; what has happened? do hand me my cologne."

"He has lost all his property," said Julia; "they are going to sell off every thing; Mr. Nelson is going to England, and aunt and the girls are going to live in the country."

"Dear! dear!" said her mother, "your father will feel dreadfully about his brother; perhaps it is fortunate that he was not at home, for he would very likely have risked all his own fortune to save him. I am truly sorry for your aunt; and it is a great pity that Catharine should lose the advantage of society now. She will grow so old-fashioned in the country; she will not be fit to bring out when she is seventeen. We must have her here to pass the winter; she was be-

coming quite a belle. Oh dear! how nervous it makes me. I wish you had not told me till after dinner, Julia. Somebody ought to write to your father; I do not feel equal to it, so you had better, my dear; tell him that every thing is settled, that there is nothing now to be done. I am extremely sorry for them all. Poor Catharine, she is really a fine girl, it makes me sad to think of her. It is time now for me to take my drops."

After this, Julia's mother lolled back in her easy chair, as if to recover from some unusual effort, and before long she resumed a fashionable novel that she was reading when her daughter entered.

We have drawn this little sketch of Mrs. William Nelson, because we have thought it was but just to Julia to explain the cause of many of her faults. A girl who has a selfish, indolent mother, devoted to fashion and vanity, must not be judged as we should judge one whose mother was like Catharine's. Still this did not take away all blame from Julia. She had a noble, generous spirit; it seemed natural to her to love what was good

in others; and she might have been good herself, if she had cherished all her best emotions, if she had obeyed her best impulses, those that she felt and knew were her best. This knowledge, this consciousness that she could be something better, made her accountable for being what she was. She often had glimpses of this truth; she was gradually coming to the conviction that we must all be good for and of ourselves, in spite of temptations, in spite of obstacles, and that the only acceptable service of God is a free-will offering.

All that her mother had said upon hearing of her uncle's misfortunes had been painful and discordant to Julia. She truly loved Catharine and Lucy; she respected and loved her uncle and aunt; she was generous to excess in regard to money; her mother's satisfaction that her father had not been at home to assist her uncle had shocked her. Her wish that she should write to her father was the only thing that gave her pleasure in what her mother had said. She immediately wrote him the following letter :—

"My dear father,

"How I wish you were at home! Uncle Nelson has met with great misfortunes; he has lost all his money; he is going to England, to be absent three years; and Aunt Nelson is going to live in the country, and I shall lose Catharine's society, and you know that there is no one that I love so much, or that you like so well to have with me, as Catharine.

"They are preparing the furniture and the library to be sold by auction, just a week from to-day. I found Catharine this morning making out a catalogue of the books, and Lucy helping her; and they both looked so pleasant and good-natured, though rather serious, that you would not have thought any thing very bad had happened. But Catharine feels very sad about her father's going away. She intends to have the beautiful piano that you gave her sold. Now I know that she values it more than she will confess, because she thinks it right it should be sold; and without society in the country it would be such a comfort to her. If you will allow me to buy it at the auction and surprise her by sending it out to her—O dear, father! I can-

not tell you how much it will please me. I thought too, that I could do very well without the harp that you promised me, for I had really rather not learn to play, I only wanted it because it looked so pretty in the drawing-room; and I had much rather buy Catharine's piano, and send it to her. Oh how glad she will be to see it!

"If, dear father, you answer this letter as soon as you receive it, it will come in season for the auction; and I am sure you will, because I know how much you love Uncle and Aunt Nelson and my cousins.

"Mother is not much better than when you went away, and we miss you very much indeed. When will you return? Do, dear father, write directly.

"Your affectionate daughter,

"JULIA NELSON."

"Do you wish to see my letter to father?" said Julia, as she wrote the direction to her epistle.

"This novel is so interesting," said her mother, "I can hardly leave it." But her curiosity prevailed, and she read it. "That

will be a pretty expensive piano if your father pays for it a second time," said she, "and it seems to me, Julia, a great piece of extravagance. Why, is it not better for Catharine to come and pass the winter with us, and take lessons, and practise on your piano? Your father said the other day, that yours was becoming old and difficult to keep in tune, and that he should get you a new one soon, and then Catharine can have your old one."

"I would rather," answered Julia, "never have another piano myself than send her my old one. What good would it do her in the country to have an old piano that always wanted tuning, and no one to do it for her? You know, mother, that she loves music better than I do, and knows more about it; and it would be such a comfort to her, when her father is away, and she cannot see any of her Boston friends. I should think, mother you would wish her to have it. And as for passing the winter here, she loves her mother too much to leave her."

"That is more than can be said in praise of you, Julia," said her mother, "or you would not talk so loud or so fast when you

see I am sick and nervous. This whole affair has nearly done me up; I never could bear disagreeable things."

Usually Julia would have listened to the last remark of her mother with a sort of sulky expression, made no answer, and have done just as she pleased. But now she felt the sunshine of a good and generous purpose in her heart, and it made her gentle and respectful.

She answered, "I am sorry, mother, that you do not approve of my request to father; you forget that I do not mean to have the harp that he promised me, so I am not so very extravagant. And I am sure, mother, that whenever you like to have me with you, I should be happy to be with you. I am sorry to have spoken so loud and fast, when you are not well. I will remember next time."

Mrs. Nelson was too indolent to think any more of the affair; she was pacified by Julia's affectionate and respectful tone of voice, which, as it was rather unusual, was very gratifying to her; for she loved her daughter as well as a selfish woman can love any thing but herself.

The letter was sent off with her consent; and we now return to Catharine and her parents. Had a stranger visited the house during the preparations that were going on, he would have perceived no difference in the appearence of its busy inmates from what a common removal would occasion, except a peculiarly kind and affectionate tone of voice from one to another, that sweet sound of farewell kindness of friends who know they are soon to part, that tone which strangers in a strange land should always use towards those from whom they must part, they know not how soon.

Catharine's habits of industry and self-denial, that began in her first well-spent hour of which we gave an account, and had been gradually strengthening and growing from that time, made it easy for her to be of most essential service to her father and mother at this moment, when her services where so important to them. Every thing was so methodical and orderly in Mrs. Nelson's house, that it made the necessary preparations for removal much easier, and the trials of departure much more tolerable. A day or two

before their removal, Mr. Nelson received the following letter from James.

"My dear father,

"I am very sorry you have lost all your money, but I am more sorry you are going away. I only wish you could stay at home; I would be very careful of my clothes, so as to be of as little expense to you as possible.

"Indeed, dear father, I could earn something, as you will see when you open the little paper inside. You will wonder how I came by three dollars; but the truth is, our master has a large garden, and he saw that I and some more of the boys liked to work in it in our play hours. You know I always have liked gardening ever since I raised those beans that you laughed at me so for pulling up and looking at them every day. Well, Mr. B. said he would give us something for every wheelbarrow load of stones or weeds we carried out of the garden. I liked the fun of it, and worked pretty hard, and gave him an account every evening of the number of loads I had carried off; and the money he gave me I have saved, meaning to make

Catharine a birth-day present. But I know she would rather I would give it to you, and I am so pleased to think that I have something to send you.

"I am very glad that mother, and Catharine, and Lucy are coming to live near my school, and that I shall take my meals and spend the nights at home. But then you will not be with us. Dear father, can't you stay at home? No matter how poor we are, if we can only live together and have you with us.

"Give my love to my mother and sisters. Good bye, dear father.

"Your affectionate son."

It need not be said that Mr. Nelson was much affected by this letter, and the offering it contained form his son, of his little all, the earnings of his own labour. The idea that he had a great trial to endure, a great personal sacrifice to make, had braced up Mr. Nelson's mind to the state of composure and calm fortitude which he first displayed; but the disinterestedness of his children, the cheerful courage of his wife, while he knèw the sorrow

of her heart at the thought of his leaving them, for a few moments unmanned him. His tears fell on James's letter; he had not calculated the effect of such love; who can calculate the power, the touching loveliness of true goodness, of true and faithful affection?

Mr. Nelson felt impatient to shorten the time of preparation for their removal into the country, and they resolved to go one day earlier than they had intended, as every thing was ready sooner than they had supposed would be possible. Julia happened to be with them when this decision was made; and she immediately exclaimed, "Why, then the auction will be before"--she was going to say, she could receive a letter from her father; but she recollected herself and said, "The auction will be on Catharine's birthday." Mr. Nelson felt hurt at Julia's reminding him of so painful a circumstance, which yet ought not to influence his conduct at such a time. Catharine saw this, and said to her hastily, "Do not, Julia, speak of such trifles at this time. It seems so selfish when father is going away, to speak to him

of birth-days." Julia was a little hurt at Catharine's remark; but the knowledge that she was not the selfish being then which she appeared to be, was so comforting to her, that she bore the rebuke very well; and thus she learned how true it is, that the consciousness that we have done no wrong, gives us the power to endure the suspicions of our having acted unworthily.

Mr. Nelson, the evening before their removal, sent for all his domestics; and after expressing to them his regret at parting with them, his satisfaction with their conduct, and interest in their welfare, paid them their wages, and dismissed all but Nancy Leonard from his service.

We cannot omit the remarks of our good friend Patrick, upon the occasion. "This," said he to Mr. Nelson, as he took his money with something between a sigh and a groan, "this is the only bad money I ever took from you, Mr. Nelson." "Why, what is the matter with it, Patrick?" said Mr. Nelson. "Why, it is the last I am to have, and it comes out of an empty purse, which I am sure ought to be full for the good of the poor.

as well as the rest of us. It does not become the like of me to say all I feel, but I find it hard to say nothing at all when my heart's so full; and if you would only keep the money yourself instead of giving it to your creditors, who I can't think are real gentlemen, or they would not take it, why you would not find Patrick O'Neil lay his fingers upon it, though they are always ready for any decent kind of work."

"My creditors," said Mr. Nelson, "are all of them what you would call real gentlemen, Patrick; and have been very kind to me. They insist upon my retaining enough of my property to support my family comfortably while I am absent; and it is my duty to do the best I can for them; and to spend as little of what is now their money as possible. Yet it is but just that you, as one of them, should receive your wages, so faithfully earned, and which I pay you with so much pleasure. You must remember your wife and child, Patrick."

"I do, Sir," said Patrick, "or I'd not touch it; but if you plase to love me, don't call me a creditor of your honour's; I am glad to own

that it is I who am your debtor. So God bless you, and Mrs. Nelson, and Miss Catharine, and Miss Lucy, and Master James that's away."

The next day the weather was fine, and the evening saw them comfortably established at their new house in the country. James was with them; and they all felt so happy at being together, that they almost succeeded in forgetting the sad parting which must soon come.

CHAPTER V.

THE AUCTION.

On the day of Mr. Nelson's removal into the country, Julia's impatience was relieved by a letter from her father, giving his free consent to the purchase of the piano, advising her to limit the sum that should be bid upon it to two hundred and fifty dollars, as the price when new was only three hundred. He expressed his great regret that he

had been absent from Boston at the time of his brother's misfortunes, and that important business made it impossible for him to return at present.

Julia's next difficulty was to find some person to bid for her at the auction; after a few moments' consideration, she thought of Patrick, who, she was sure, would very gladly do her the service, especially when he knew what her purpose was in purchasing the piano. She knew that he was to remain at her uncle's house till after the day of the auction, and she resolved to go there after the family had left it, and make known her wish to Patrick. She found Patrick, the picture of despair, standing in the room in which was collected the most valuable furniture, and, among other things, Catharine's piano. "Good morning, Miss Julia," said he, as she entered. "A sorrowful sight for eyes to behold that are blinded with tears, as I'm sure mine are looking at it. Miss Catharine's piano too; if the creditors could only hear her when she herself is playing on it with her own blessed fingers, as she did last night for the last time, why, hard-hearted as

creditors are, they'd not be so cruel as to take it from her."

"I have come, Patrick," said Julia, "to ask you to do something that I think you will like to do, but it is a secret."

"Let alone Patrick for keeping a sacret," he answered before she could explain herself; "and be sure I'll do your pleasure. For if it was any thing that did not plase me, I would like to do it for you, Miss Julia, because you are a friend of Miss Catharine's."

"I want you, Patrick," said Julia, "to bid for Miss Catharine's piano (instead of myself) to-morrow, at the auction."

"But you are not going to be so cruel as to take it yourself, Miss Julia, like a creditor?"

"No, Patrick," said Julia; "I want it to send out to Miss Catharine. To-morrow is her birth-day, and I want to make her a birth-day present, and I thought her own piano would be the most acceptable thing I could give her."

"Now God bless you, Miss Julia, for that very thing, and let alone Patrick for bidding it off at the auction; and if any of the credi-

tors get it, why then Patrick O'Neil was not born in Ireland."

"You must not bid," said Julia, "more than two hundred and fifty dollars, as the price of it when new was only three hundred. It may not bring so much as that, but you may bid up to that sum; and you think, Patrick, that you can do me this favour?"

"No favour at all, Miss Julia, but to myself, and I am pretty used to auctions. Mr. Nelson has sent me once or twice to bid for him. So don't you fear Patrick, Miss Julia; you 'll see that the creditors will never hear the music of Miss Catharine's piano again; sorrow take every one of them."

What Mr. Nelson had said to Patrick in defence of his creditors had no effect in convincing him that creditors might be honest and good men; he spoke and thought of creditors as a distinct order of beings, and seemed to think that they had none of the rights of men. Catharine's piano was in his estimation sacred to her use alone; and he would not have believed any means just

and honourable, by which it was placed in another person's hands. He thought Julia's conduct just and proper, but he never would have thought of it as generous.

"Miss Julia," he said to himself as she went out, "Miss Julia is a real lady; how plased Miss Catharine will be to see her piano coming out to make music to her in the country, and glad am I that the creditors are not to have it!"

This thought consoled poor Patrick so effectually, that his melancholy mood gave place to his usual cheerful manner; and there was nothing uncommon in his appearance except a slight expression of self-satisfaction and consequence from the knowledge that he possessed a secret, and had a most important affair to transact.

He dressed himself the next day in his sunday's best, to go to the auction. "I must," said he to himself, as he went from room to room before the purchasers came, "I must be prudent and asy, and not let them know that I am Patrick O'Neil, and let them see that I don't care much about the things, especially about the piano." So saying, he

rubbed his hands and pulled down his sleeves, which was his constant habit when he had on his best coat.

The auction began; he saw one thing after another knocked off at prices that perfectly shocked his feelings; for he had no doubt that every thing in Mr. Nelson's house was the very best in the world of its kind, and in his opinion no money could be a fair equivalent for it.

He had, however, the grace, and this is saying much for Patrick's self-control, he had the grace to be silent, at least not to speak loud enough to be heard by all present; but as a compensation for this sacrifice, he indulged himself in a sort of muttering, which amid the noise of the auctioneer and the hum of the crowd he thought would not be heard. But Patrick was not so entirely unobserved as he hoped. His fidgety manner and his continual muttering attracted the attention of some gay young men who were laughing at the auction, and for mere amusement they followed Patrick about to listen to his remarks. We will give our readers a specimen of a few of them. A shrewd-looking, hard-

featured woman, who evidently aimed at gentility, took up an elegant cut-glass dish, and tried it as a dealer in crockery ware would do, to see if it was cracked. "They often pass off cracked dishes at auctions," said she, "for whole ones;" and then turning to some one, "Do you calculate that this is real cut-glass, or sham?" "To be sure," muttered Patrick to himself, "it's they that ask the question that are shams; it's too much for Patrick O'Neil."

Another time, an ordinary and very affected lady was examining an elegant looking-glass; "Rather a handsome frame," said she, "but quite a poor plate; every thing looks crooked and unnatural in it." "It's too true to plase," muttered Patrick.

A man of rather a questionable appearance took up a gold watch, and after turning it every way, he said, "I wonder if this is pinchbeck or real gold?" "A raal gentleman would know," again muttered Patrick.

He was so much occupied with his own cogitations, that he thought no one heard him. At last the piano was under the hammer. As soon as Patrick thought it ad-

visable, he began to bid. It was impossible for him to affect the indifferent tone of voice and manner which an experienced bidder at auctions would have adopted. Patrick's nature was too much for him; he bid with a loud, determined manner, as much as to say, "I mean to have it, cost what it will." One of the young men who had been amusing themselves with his remarks, meant only for his gratification, immediately bid over him. "I see he's determined to have it," said he to his companions, "so there's no risk, and we'll see how high he'll go." Before they were aware of it, the sum had amounted to two hundred and fifty dollars. Patrick stopped a second, and then said, too low to be heard, "I'll not mind Miss Julia's limits while I have a dollar that's my own and not another's; I sha'n't sleep to-night if Miss Catharine does not hear her own piano making music at her birth-day." His stopping for a while, to think whether he would bid again, alarmed the young man, lest his jest should turn out an expensive one, and the piano was knocked off to Patrick at his next bidding. He was too happy; he could not restrain his expressions of satisfac-

tion; he rubbed his hands, pulled down the sleeves of his coat, and was the personification of contentment. "Now," said he, "I'll be for getting it sent out to her." The young men who had been amusing themselves with Patrick's appearance asked him, with great gravity, whether the piano was for a real gentleman. "That it is," said he; "for it's for what's more; it's for a raal lady, God bless her. But I'll not let any body know, till she, who it's for, knows it herself," and away he went to tell Julia of his success.

"I 've got it, Miss Julia," said he, as he entered, breathless with running, and with impatience to tell her the good news. "I bid up to your limits, Miss Julia; but it was not in me to stop there, for there was a young creditor who seemed to be determined to have it; and so, after thinking a bit, I made up my mind to bid away all my wages, rather than not get it out of his clutches; and it's most like he saw my sacret resolution, for he never bid again; and so it was knocked off to me at two hundred and fifty-two dollars, and the two dollars over I am more proud of than any I ever parted with in my life."

It was in vain that Julia expostulated with Patrick; she found that he would be too much grieved if he was deprived of the privilege of paying the last two dollars, which he considered the real purchase-money for the piano. She was too happy to quarrel with any one, and least of all with Patrick; so she determined to let the good fellow have his own way, and make it up to him in something else. She thanked him over and over again, and praised his address and cleverness, to his heart's content; for as is often the case with all of us, Julia desired the piano so much, that she feared every one else was as anxious as she to obtain it; and she really was convinced that Patrick must have managed very skilfully indeed to secure the piano at that price. "Now, Patrick," said she, "we must get it out to Miss Catharine this evening; this you know is her birthday."

"That is the very thought of my own, Miss Julia," said he; birth-days won't stop till to-morrow, when they come to-day; so it must be there this evening. The auction will soon be over, and this afternoon the

people will be after coming for their things, and my wife and Rachel will be there to see them delivered and that every thing is done dacently, and I can carry out the piano. I know where I can get a little horse and waggon that will take it out asy, so as not to make it lave its sweet music on the road."

This was agreed upon. Patrick returned to his duty at the house, and Julia, whose heart was too full of happiness to be contented to keep it to herself, went to her mother's chamber to tell her of Patrick's success, as she considered it. There she found her mother as usual in her easy chair, but instead of reading a novel, she was trimming a cap. This was the greatest mental effort that Mrs. Nelson ever made, and nothing would have tempted her to strain her faculties so far, except her abhorrence, as she termed it, of bows made by Boston milliners.

"Julia," said she, as she entered, "I am almost dead with this bow; it has an expression, in consequence of the tasteless way it was put on at the milliner's, that it will never get rid of. Julia, my dear, you must indeed attend a little to this art of making bows; for

when I am too weak to make bows, you must make them for me. I cannot stand these things made in Boston any longer. One would think that they took the church in Chauncy Place or the dome of the State-house for the models of all their bows; it makes me nervous to see such a fright as that; do look at it!"

"It is not very pretty," said Julia; "but, mother, I have come to tell you, that I have got Catharine's piano. Patrick succeeded in purchasing it for two hundred and fifty-two dollars, only two more than father said we had better bid for it; and I am going to send it out this afternoon by Patrick, and she will have it for a birth-day present; and it will make her and uncle and aunt so happy! Are you not glad, mother?"

"I should be glad," answered her mother, "if I could fix this bow; that is all I can really think of now, my dear. As for the piano, you know what my opinion was about that when you first proposed it, and I seldom alter my mind about any thing; but if you are pleased, I am glad of it, Julia. But it makes me feel unpleasantly to think of sister

Nelson's being buried in the country; I must do something for her if I can, by having Catharine here. Catharine has a pretty taste, too; she pins up a bow very well; I wish she was here now. There, that is a little more as it should be now, is it not? Let me put it on your head, Julia, and see how it looks."

Julia felt disappointed at her mother's want of sympathy with her feelings; but there is no coldness, no selfishness in another, that can effectually chill the heart that is glowing with the warmth of a truly benevolent feeling: and Julia, instead of expressing any dissatisfaction at such a request from her mother at such a time, placed herself on the cricket before her, and very good humouredly held up her head for her to try on the cap.

"You look remarkably well to-day, Julia," said her mother; "the bow is quite tolerable now. But I beg of you, my dear, don't read much, especially fine print; it will make you frown. You have no frown in your face to-day; I should advise you to take notice of your expression now, and try to retain it; it is your very best."

"It must be," said Julia, laughing, "because

I feel so happy to think that Catharine is going to have her piano again. How good father was to let me buy it for her! Oh dear, how glad they will all be to see Patrick coming out with the piano this evening! I wish I was there!"

So saying, she jumped up suddenly from the cricket, and away went the cap and the bow on the floor. She would even have put her foot upon it, as she did not see where it fell, but for her mother's cry of "Oh, dear! oh dear! the labour of my whole day will be lost. I have been trying to get strength to trim this cap for a week, and you came within a hair's breadth of treading upon it. O, Julia, your raptures make you so rude, they make me quite nervous; do give me the cologne."

Julia handed her the cologne, told her she was very sorry for her carelessness, and soon after commenced a note to Catharine, for Patrick to take out to her with the piano.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BIRTH-DAY PRESENT.

THE day after the removal of Mr. Nelson and his family was one of those beautiful days in June, which those who live in the country receive as a special blessing; when the whole visible universe appears full of hope and promise; when there seems to be a voice of gladness in every thing; when the aged rejoice like children, and the children like birds and butterflies; when every animate and every inanimate thing takes its part in the universal song of grateful love to Him who made the heavens and the earth, and all that is therein.

Just as the sun rose, Mr. Nelson knocked at Catharine's and Lucy's door. "Come, Catharine, come, Lucy," said he, the sun is up; it is the most beautiful day that ever shone; the birds have been singing this hour; come and take a walk with me before breakfast."

"In a few minutes, father," said Catharine, who was already up and dressed, and was then fastening Lucy's frock.

"I am ready," said Lucy; "why shall not we go now, Catharine? it is so beautiful. I hear the birds, and smell the sweet-briar under our window."

"Come, girls, this minute," said James, with another harder knock at the door; "we are going to walk; we cannot wait."

"You had better go, Lucy," said Catharine; "you know there is no one to put our room in order, and we have made a resolution to do it every morning before we leave it; but I can do it very well alone this morning, Lucy, and you can go and walk with father and James. It seems unkind for both of us to refuse them, so you had better put on your bonnet, and run down and say that I will come to meet you in the lane on your return."

The idea of the walk was so pleasant, that Lucy at first forgot every thing else; she had tied on her bonnet, and was drawing on her gloves, when the sight of Catharine making their bed without her assistance, changed the current of her feelings.

"It is a shame for me to leave you to do that by yourself," she said, "and I will not go till you can go too. I can help you more than

you think I can, Catharine, and we will soon have our chamber in nice order, and I know father would rather wait."

She accordingly ran to the door with her bonnet on, and opened it to speak to her father. As soon as James saw her, he took hold of her hand, and half pulled her down the stairs, in his eagerness to get her out of the house. At any other time, Lucy would have been half angry at James for his violence; but the sunshine and joy of the morning, and the sunshine and joy in her own heart, would not admit of any cloud, and she simply and gently said to him, "In a few minutes, James, we shall be ready; but we must make our bed and put our chamber in order first, and then we will go with you, if you will wait."

"We will wait," said her father; and Lucy flew like a bird up stairs again, and the bees in the honey-suckle did not appear more busy or more pleased with their occupation, than she and Catharine were at their morning task.

"How nice our room looks!" said Lucy, when all was done; "and how glad I am I

stayed to help you, Catharine!" and she took hold of her sister's hand, as they went down the stairs together, with that feeling of satisfaction which is ever the reward of doing right, even in a trifle, and which puts the mind in tune for every innocent pleasure, but more especially prepares it for the enjoyment of the glorious works of God. The clear blue sky looks more pure and beautiful, the birds seem to have a sweeter song, and the flowers to send forth a more delicious perfume to the good and benevolent, than they do to the selfish and the unkind.

Although Lucy felt glad to think she had not been selfish, she was not aware how much this little conquest over herself had to do with her enjoyment of her walk. Her delight was beyond all expression; she had never before been in the country at that early hour of the day; she was full of fancy and feeling. To her, the birds had never sung so sweetly before; the brooks, she said, were telling pretty stories; the cobwebs on the grass she called fairy tents; the dew-drops were diamonds; the butterflies were flowers in the air, and the flowers were opening their beautiful leaves to

enjoy the delicious morning, and there was no discordant note of self-reproach in her own heart to spoil the general harmony.

Lucy and James left their father and Catharine far behind them in their walk. Catharine, although she enjoyed the beautiful morning with all her heart, felt more sympathy with her father, and preferred walking slowly along with him.

"I think," said Mr. Nelson, after a silence of some minutes, "that you will all be very happy in the country, and I shall feel much easier in leaving you here, as I know your mother's health is better in the country. I depend much upon you, Catharine, as an assistance and comfort to your mother in my absence."

Catharine put her hand into her father's; she made no promise, she could not; but none that she could have uttered would have been so binding upon her as was the silent vow of her young heart, to live a life of love and devotion to her mother. Mr. Nelson felt and returned the pressure of her hand, and understood what she would have said, and

spoke no more upon the subject. They enjoyed their walk in silence together, till they were within a few steps of home, when Catharine said to her father, "I wish Julia could come and live in the country."

"Why," said her father, "you know that she does not love the country, and would find no pleasure in it."

"Oh she would learn to love it," answered Catharine, "and that would do her good. Aunt is trying to make her nothing but a fashionable belle, and there is a great deal that is good in Julia; she is very generous, and she is very sincere. I am certain that mother would cure her of all her faults."

"I think a great deal of your mother's power to cure faults," said her father; "but I fear, Catharine, that you overrate it now, if you think she can cure Julia's."

"You do not know Julia so well as I do," answered Catharine; "she has an excellent heart, and she desires to be good, and I cannot give her up; I love Julia."

"That is right, my child," answered Mr. Nelson; "*you* may do her good, your love

may prove a blessing to her. Situated as she is, we ought to be very charitable towards poor Julia."

They now entered the house, and found Mrs. Nelson at the breakfast table, waiting their return.

"Oh, we have had such a beautiful walk, mother," said Lucy.

"Here are some flowers for you, mother," said James; "see, the dew is still on them," and putting them in a glass, placed them on a table by his mother.

"I wish you had been with us, mother," said Catharine.

"I have enjoyed the fine morning in the house," said Mrs. Nelson; "the sweet-briars and the honey-suckles almost come into the windows as soon as I open them, and the birds have been regaling me with their music from the trees in our little garden; and then, you know, that Nancy Leonard is a young cook, and wants an adviser."

"Mother," said James, "Catharine and Lucy say that they shall be your chamber-maids; now I mean to be your footman, and we shall do admirably. Oh if father could

only be at home, how happy we should all be!"

This remark of James's produced silence for the remainder of the breakfast. All thought and felt the same thing,—if their father were only to remain at home, how happy they should be. But they felt that it would be painful to their mother and to their father to have the subject of his leaving them spoken of, and yet they could not think of any thing besides.

The hour of James's school time arrived, and each one of the family was soon employed about some necessary arrangement for their comfort in their new abode. Little Lucy, especially, was very busy in unpacking and arranging her clothes in drawers, while Catharine was assisting her mother in labours that were beyond Lucy's strength. Once she ran down stairs on purpose to say to her mother, "Mother, I had rather work in the country than play in town;—don't you hear the birds singing all the time? Oh how pretty it sounds to hear that man whetting his scythe in the field the other side of the road!" Then she would run back to her

employment, and perhaps return in ten minutes on a similar errand.

Dinner time came, and brought them all together again.

"We are nearly settled now," said Mrs. Nelson; "Catharine and I shall soon finish our labours. Although we brought so little furniture, I should be sorry if we had more."

"This is the day of the auction," said Lucy, "and if you will believe it, I never thought of it till this minute. I suppose Miss Edgeworth is sold by this time."

Catharine looked at Lucy as if she wished she had been silent; and James, who had the same feeling, immediately said, "There is something else we have all forgotten."

"What is that?" asked Catharine.

"It is your birth-day, Catharine."

"Well, it is not strange that you forgot it," said Catharine.

"Yes, it is," said James, "and now we will do something to keep it this evening. Shall we have a sail, father? the pond is only half a mile off, and Mr. B. said I might have his boat whenever I wanted it, if no one else was using it; and there is a moon."

"I do not think it would be well for your mother to go on the water this evening," said Mr. Nelson; "she is not quite well, and must be very much fatigued."

"What shall we do to amuse ourselves, then?" said James.

"Let us tell stories," said Lucy, "by moonlight. Oh, that will be so beautiful!"

"So we will," said James, "if father and mother and Catharine will agree to it, and tell a story in their turn."

James's and Lucy's proposal was accepted, and they arose from their frugal repast with no other sorrow in their hearts than that which they could not but feel at the thought of the approaching separation.

After tea the children begged their mother to go out with them into their garden, and take a little walk before sunset, and see what a pleasant place it was.

"If you could, mother, said Lucy, "just come and see my little brook, and hear what a pretty noise it makes;—it is not far."

Mrs. Nelson gladly consented, and they all set out.

If our readers have kept a good account of

time, they will be aware that Patrick must now be on the road with the piano, and that it is even time that he should have arrived with it; indeed, they had not been out of the house more than twenty minutes, before Patrick's good-humoured face was seen protruding into the open door of the kitchen, looking round to see who was there. As soon as he discovered Nancy, "That's as it should be," said he; "Nancy all alone by herself, and no one with her."

"Is that you, Patrick?" said Nancy; "I am glad to see you; but how did you come here?"

"Why, on my feet, to be sure, when I did not ride," said Patrick; "but tell me whether Mr. and Mrs. Nelson and the young ladies are at home?"

"No," said Nancy, "they are all gone to walk, and will not be at home till sunset. I am very sorry, for I know they would like to see you, Patrick."

"Well, but I am glad for that very thing," said Patrick; "you must know, Nancy, for there's no hiding it from you, that I have brought out Miss Catharine's piano, which

Miss Julia and I myself have saved from the hands of the creditors; and sure enough, as Rachel would say, it is as a brand plucked out of the fire. Now I want to get it snug into its own place in the parlour, looking just if it had never thought of laving Miss Catharine, before she comes home from her walk; but I can't bring it in alone, and you are not strong enough to help me."

"What will you do?" said Nancy.

"Why, the best that I can, and that's just nothing at all, at all," answered Patrick, half in despair.

Just then the man with milk came in, and relieved poor Patrick from his perplexity by very good-humouredly helping him to bring in the piano.

Patrick moved the piano from one side of the room to another two or three times, dusted it over and over, looked at it from every direction, and at last went out into the kitchen to take his tea, as Nancy had invited him, saying to himself, "It stands asy now." He begged Nancy to let the doors be open that led to the parlour, that he might hear the first word Miss Catharine would speak when she saw her piano.

It was not long before Patrick, who sat near the door, listening with all his faculties, heard footsteps in the parlour, and a minute after, which seemed to him an hour, the exclamations of "Father! Mother! Lucy! come in and see what is here! what can this mean? It is, indeed it is, my beautiful piano! how did it come here? who has done this?"

Lucy ran into the kitchen to seek from Nancy Leonard some explanation of the mystery, and there she found Patrick standing at the door in a listening attitude, and rubbing his hands with delight.

"Oh Patrick! here is Patrick!" said she, "he can tell us all about it; come into the parlour, Patrick! I know it was you that brought the piano."

Patrick did not wait for a second invitation, and immediately presented himself in the parlour. His pleasure at seeing them all, his true sympathy with what he considered their great misfortunes, his self-satisfaction at the thought of having been in some measure accessory to their present happiness, and his heartfelt joy at witnessing it, all these feelings filled his heart over-full; and Patrick stood

at the door without a word to say, and his bright eyes twinkling with the tears he strove in vain to suppress.

They all shook hands with him, expressed their pleasure at seeing him, and repeated the inquiry, "How did the piano come? did you bring it?"

As soon as Patrick had recovered himself, he answered, "Why sure enough, I did outbid the creditor that was after getting it for himself."

"You, Patrick," answered Mr. Nelson, "how could you bid for the piano?" "Why, your honour," said Patrick, "I dressed myself in my Sunday's best, and I walked about the room with my hat on, not minding any body, just as if I did not care for any thing but myself, so that I might pass for a gentleman. I kept myself asy and never said a word till the piano was going off, and then I kept bidding over the young spark of a creditor, who I saw meant to have it, just as if I did not care a potatoe for the money, and sure enough I got it. But here is a note from Miss Julia to Miss Catharine, that I had almost forgotten."

Catharine opened the note, and read as follows:

"Boston, June 10, 1831.

"My dear Catharine,

"I received a letter yesterday from my father, giving me permission to purchase your piano, as a birth-day present for you. I need not say to you, my dear cousin, how happy this kindness of my father's has made me, and I know that you will love your piano now better than ever on this account, and as a proof of my love for you. Perhaps you have forgotten that this is your birth-day, but I hope I shall never let it pass unnoticed. I cannot be reconciled to being separated from you; I am sure that I never loved you so truly as I do at this moment; I shall miss you more and more every day.

"I employed Patrick to bid for the piano, and without his assistance I very likely should have lost it to the "criditors," as he calls them; you must praise him for his skill and management of the affair.

"When I went to your house yesterday afternoon, to engage his services, I found him

seated on a table, contemplating the confusion around him with such a rueful visage, that he would have done for a personification of despair, or for Marius amidst the ruins of Carthage.

"However, though I jest about it, I sympathized so heartily with poor Patrick, that I shall always feel an affection for the good fellow when I remember the scene. If he had possessed the money, I doubt not he would have quarrelled with any one for the honour of purchasing it for you. He waits for my note; so, dear Catharine, good bye. I trust that your piano will say to you all the pretty things that I would say to you on your birth-day.

"Your affectionate cousin,

"JULIA."

It would be vain to attempt to describe Catharine's feelings upon reading this note. The pleasure of again possessing her piano was the least present to her mind. Her uncle's and Julia's love and kindness to her, Patrick's simple-hearted devotion, the thought of her father's misfortunes, which had led to

all this, the remembrance that he was so soon to leave them—all these thoughts together pressed upon Catharine's heart. She handed the note to her father without speaking; he read it and gave it to Mrs. Nelson. "I rejoice," my dear child," said Mr. Nelson, as he finished reading it, "to see that you are more just than your father." Due acknowledgments were made to Patrick for his exertions and success, and then Catharine played him all the Irish tunes she knew, which the poor fellow thanked her for over and over again with tears in his eyes. "Now I must be after going home," said Patrick; "for although I told Betsy not to be expecting me till she saw me, she may be unasy if I am not there in good sason." So bidding them good night, and praying for a blessing upon them all, he set off in his waggon for Boston.

"Now let us begin the stories," said Lucy. "First," said Mr. Nelson, "as you have treated Patrick with his favourite tunes, Catharine, it is but fair that you should do me the same favour, and sing and play something for me, that you think I shall like." After a few moments' thought, Catharine sang the

following hymn to the tune of "Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled":

"God, who dwellest every where,
God, who makest all thy care,
God, who hearest every prayer,
Thou who seest the heart;
Thou to whom we lift our eyes,
Father, help our souls to rise,
And, beyond these narrow skies,
See thee as thou art.

"Let our anxious thoughts be still,
Holy trust adore thy will,
Holy love our bosoms fill,
Let our songs ascend.
Dearest friends may parted be,
All our earthly treasures flee,
Yet we never part from thee,
Our Eternal Friend."

A deep silence in this family of friends, soon to be separated, followed the singing of this hymn. It was a very favourite tune of Mr. Nelson's; and when sung to him by his child at such a moment, he could not controul the emotions it awakened. Still he, and all of them, felt comforted and strengthened by the religious sentiment it expressed.

CHAPTER VII.

CONSCIENCE.—THE RUNAWAY NEGRO.

MR. NELSON was the first to break the silence. "Come, my children," said he, "now for the stories. As you, Lucy, proposed the entertainment, and as the youngest judge speaks first, suppose you begin."

"Oh no," said Lucy, "my story is not ready yet; let James begin."

"Nor mine either," said James; "I had rather not begin."

"I am in a still worse predicament," said Mr. Nelson; "I have not even thought of a story, and it would not be fair to call upon Catharine first."

"It seems to be left to me to begin," said Mrs. Nelson; "and rather than Lucy should not have her stories, I will try to remember an occurrence I witnessed, that I shall pass off for my story, and thus give you all time to prepare yourselves for something better deserving the name."

"There is the beautiful moon," said Lucy,

"shining clear across the room through both the front windows; I can see every body's face; now is the time to begin, mother."

"My anecdote," said Mrs. Nelson, "has no interest, except what it derives from its truth, and the moral it teaches; and may be told in a few words.

"Some years since, when I was passing the day at a friend's house in Boston, there was a ringing at the door, and a very poor but very respectable-looking man entered. I was struck with the serious, almost devotional expression of his face as soon as I saw him.

"'I have come here,' said he to the gentleman of the house, 'to ask you where I may find your sister,—Jane, I think, was her Christian name. Have you such a sister, and where does she live?'

"'She lives,' answered Mr. B., 'out of town, about four miles from Boston.'

"'Then I can walk,' said the man, 'and return in the course of the evening.'

"'Hardly,' Mr. B. replied; 'the roads are almost impassable. You had better take the stage if you must see her yourself; but I

shall go there to-morrow; cannot I do your errand?'

"'I would rather see her myself,' answered the man; 'I shall not be satisfied if I do not see her myself, and to-night; I should sleep better, I think. I am too poor to ride, so I must walk.'

"'It seems strange,' said Mr. B., 'that you can have any thing to say to my sister that you cannot say to me; I will promise faithfully to deliver your message.'

"'I think,' said the man, after a long pause, 'I had better walk out; will you direct me, sir, to the house?'

"'It is now seven o'clock,' said Mr. B.; 'it is raining, and the snow and ice are ancle deep; and you look like a sick man.'

"'My home,' answered the stranger, 'is fifty miles from Boston; I must leave here to-morrow at day-light, and I cannot return till I have performed this duty. A friend brought me, and has promised to carry me home; but he goes to-morrow-morning early. I wish I could see the lady; but as I cannot, I must tell my errand to you. I must be willing,' said he, in a broken voice, 'to

take all my punishment.' His countenance changed to death-like paleness as he proceeded with the relation of his errand. 'Twenty years ago, sir, I made some shoes for your father's family, and called at his house for my pay. He was sick, and sent his daughter to the door with the money. In paying me, she accidentally paid me two five-dollar bills instead of one. I saw it; I was the father of a young family; I was very poor; I was tempted; and I received the money, knowing and feeling that it was dishonest. I could not forget my sin; till at last I determined I would return the money as soon as I had the means. Then I fell sick, and I have never since had five dollars that I could call my own. Every thing has gone wrong with me; and the thought of my dishonesty still follows me wherever I go. I have not now five dollars in the world. I am sick and I am poor; but I thought if I could see the lady I took the money from, and confess my sin to her, and she would forgive, that then I should feel more certain that God would forgive me, and my mind would be easier. My character, with my town's-

people, stands fair. It is hard to confess this my sin before so many; but I must take my shame as a just punishment. If ever I have the means, I will restore the money; but I still hope for her forgiveness, though I cannot make restitution.'

"The gentleman assured him that he knew that his sister would freely and gladly forgive him, and would not desire him to restore the money. He would assure him, in her and in his deceased father's name, of their forgiveness, and that he could not but honour him for the proof he had given of the sincerity of his repentance.

"The poor man looked weak and exhausted, but much happier; and, thanking the gentleman for his kindness, left the house.

"There were three or four of Mr. B.'s children present, and their mother, and myself, to witness this poor man's confession of his offence; and I think I may say that we all felt nothing but respect for him, and thus learned the great lesson, that it is not money, or success, or importance in the world, or even a perfect freedom from sin, that is necessary to insure respect; but that it is a

simple and earnest desire after perfection, a free confession and a true and hearty repentance of sin, that constitute the true dignity of such weak and tempted beings as we all are."

"How much better he must have felt when he went away!" said Lucy.

"And how glad Mr. B. must have been," said Catharine, "to be able to comfort him!"

"But I hope," said James, "I shall never have to make such a confession."

"Though you may not have exactly such a confession to make, James," said his mother, "you remember that you may still have to confess faults, that, in you, are perhaps as great offences as what this poor man had committed, when you consider what his, and what your temptations are; and you ought only to desire to be able to imitate him in his truly manly as well as Christian conduct."

"I think, children," said Mr. Nelson, after a short pause, "that I must try to imitate your mother's magnanimity, and relate, without much preparation, a story that has just come to my mind, which interested me very

deeply at the time, and which I heard told by the person who is the subject of it.

"Some years ago, I was on a journey, and was passing a few days at Newbern, in North Carolina. A gentleman one morning came into the inn where I had taken lodgings, and said that a negro woman and two boys had just been brought into town, and carried to the public-house opposite, and that they were the strangest looking objects he had ever seen. He asked two or three gentlemen, and amongst them myself, to go with him and see them. I followed him, and we found a young woman with her two children, miserably clothed and sadly emaciated. The mother had an expression of deep sorrow in her face, and the children started and looked up as we entered, as if they were upon the point of running away. When we spoke to them they made no answer, and when their mother repeated our questions to them, which she did in a low tone, they answered her in a whisper. They neither of them stood up, but squatted down close by their mother.

"After the mother and children had taken food, for they were hungry, the poor woman

was induced by our intreaties to relate her story, which was this:

"Her owner (for she was a slave), about seven years before that time, had removed to the Western country, and carried with him all his slaves except her, who, rather than be separated from her husband, who was owned by another person, ran away with her two children, one an infant at her breast, and completely escaped the vigilance of her pursuers.

"This part of the state abounds in marshes and fens, overgrown with weeds, and interspersed in some places with stumps of pine trees. In one of these dreary retreats she found means to conceal herself, and to obtain subsistence for herself and children, partly by her own exertions, and partly by the assistance of her husband, who occasionally made her a visit and brought them food.

"The manner in which this poor woman concealed herself and her children from discovery was very curious. By the strictest care and discipline she prevented them from ever crying aloud. She never allowed a sound above a whisper. This may appear

strange and difficult to believe, but it is certainly true; and as a proof that there was no deception in her account, I afterwards satisfactorily ascertained, that when they had been in town for more than a month in the company of noisy children, they were not known, in a single instance, to raise their voices higher than a soft whisper. Another proof of the truth of her account was the appearance of the children. It was with great difficulty they could stand or walk erect, as their mother had always kept them in the posture in which they then were by her side, squatting down and taking up as little space as possible. When they did attempt to walk, it was with a low stoop, the bust inclining forward, and with a hasty step, like that of a partridge. But their favourite position was that in which we first saw them. In this posture they could remain for hours without any apparent weariness, and, at a given signal, would move, one after the other, with great facility, and, at the same time, with so much caution, that not the least noise could be heard from their footsteps.

"The account she gave us of their means

of subsistence was very extraordinary. Sometimes, she said, her husband would fail to bring them supplies; and whether the fear of detection, or conscientious motives, prevented her from intruding on the rights of others, I could not ascertain; but, in this dreadful exigence, she would, for the support of herself and children, have recourse to expedients which nothing but the most pressing necessity could have suggested.

"Frogs and terrapins were considered as rare dainties, and even snakes were gladly taken to satisfy the calls of hunger. It was the custom, said this poor negro woman, in their little family, when they made up a fire in the night, which was only in the coldest nights of winter, for one to sit up while the others slept. As soon as the youngest was old enough, he took his turn. The one who who watched had a double duty to perform, not only to stand sentinel and give the alarm in case of danger, but to watch for mice and catch them for food; which was effected in the following manner: the young watchman spread a few grains of corn, or peas, or crumbs of bread, on the ground; over these

he placed an old handkerchief, and then kept perfectly still. A mouse would soon creep out from his hole in search of a repast; but as soon as the little fellow saw him fairly under the cloth, he would very dexterously clap down his hands upon the thief, and secure him for their breakfast the next morning. He often succeeded in catching a number.

"They not only eagerly devoured all the mice they could catch in this way, but they made use of the skins; they carefully preserved them, picked off the hair or fur, and mixed it with locks of wool or cotton that they picked up in the bushes, where it had been blown by accident, and made themselves stockings and mittens of it. These little boys, taught by their mother, managed to spin it into yarn by means of a stick about six or eight inches long. This they held in the left hand, while in the right they kept the materials to be spun. They gave us a specimen of their adroitness in this art; and the youngest of them could manage his stick with surprising dexterity. Several pairs of stockings and mittens were shewn us, which the mother of these little negroes had knit of the yarn

they had made during their sad, though voluntary, exile from the rest of the world.

"How much longer this poor mother with her children would have remained in the comfortless savannas of North Carolina, I know not, had she not been deserted by her husband. His visits ceased, she knew not why. Deprived of the only solace she had in the world, and of the scanty subsistence she received from his hands, her situation became too miserable to be endured. For seven years she had patiently borne cold, and hunger, and perpetual anxiety, for she had her husband to comfort her; but now that she had lost all hope, she lost her courage, she lost her fear of slavery for herself and her boys. Emaciated by hunger, she crept with them to the public road, and gave up herself and her two little boys, her only treasures, to the first person she saw, who happened to be a man with his cart going into town.

"My feelings," said Mr. Nelson, "were divided between my compassion for this poor woman and her suffering children, and my admiration of the noble fortitude they had displayed during this long period of privation

and misery, of their ingenuity, their self-denial, their self-controul; but more than all I honoured and admired the tender and faithful affection that had enabled a weak woman to endure with patience and constancy such evils from simple devoted love for her husband. The thought that she was deprived of this blessing, which had taken the place of all others, was more affecting to me than any part of her story.

"Numbers visited her and her children. I could not but hope that every one who saw her and heard her story, and who had ever failed to do honour to the immortal nature of the negro, or had been unfaithful in his own affections, might come away instructed and rebuked by the example of this humble, living martyr to affection.

"A purse of money was immediately made up to provide for the present comfort of her and her boys. I learned afterwards that a gentleman who heard her tell her story, and who happened to know that her master was dead, wrote an account of her to his son, who, in consideration of her sufferings, and from his grateful recollection of her kindness

to him when a child, gave her and her boys their freedom."

CHAPTER VIII.

EBERSTEIN. — ROSETTA.

"I HAVE thought of my story," said James; "it is very short; it is an anecdote of a German Emperor, that our master related to us last winter, when he made us all try to remember remarkable anecdotes from the histories we had read. After we had told all we could think of, then he rewarded us by telling us some that he remembered; and this was one of them:

"Under the reign of Frederic II., in the beginning of the thirteenth century, the German empire was in a state of great disorder and confusion. The Pope, who was his enemy because Frederic would not submit to his authority, had, by every means in his power, incited the people and the princes of Germany to revolt from the emperor. He absolv-

ed his subjects from their oath of allegiance to him, and succeeded even in making his son Henry revolt from him. But the Emperor conquered and pardoned his son, and by his great wisdom and courage defended himself and the empire against his enemies. Frederic had another son, whose name was Conrad, who resembled his father more than his brother. He was one of the faithful few who stood by the Emperor in the midst of his great struggles and contests. When Frederic died, Conrad ascended the throne. He also found the empire in a terrible state of confusion and civil war. He made the greatest exertions to restore peace, and order, and justice in the nation; but he met with enemies in every quarter. At one time, Albert of Portingau, the Bishop of Ratisbon, stirred up a rebellion against him. He marched against Albert, and subdued him. Peace was restored, and the Emperor Conrad, rejoiced at the prospect of an interval of rest, determined to pass the Christmas holydays in Ratisbon. The Emperor had taken up his abode at the house of a friend; and, full of confidence that no danger could befal him

in the midst of Christians, who were keeping the festival of the Prince of Peace, he was enjoying the long-desired happiness of safety and rest.

"One evening after the Emperor had retired to rest, Eberstein, his most faithful friend, rushed into his bed-chamber, and told him that the Bishop had secretly surrounded the house by a strong body of armed men, and that the assassins were already breaking through the outer doors. He said that his followers were too few to defend the house, that escape was impossible, and that there was but one means to save him from instant death: he must immediately hide himself under the couch, while he took his place within it. The Emperor positively refused to save his own life by the sacrifice of his friend's; but Eberstein continued to urge him more and more, earnestly representing to him that the safety and welfare of the whole empire depended upon him; that he must not think of himself as one man, but he must think of the welfare of his whole people, who would lose every thing in him, their last, their only support. And before he could

again refuse, he almost forced the Emperor into the hiding-place. Eberstein instantly laid himself down in his bed, and calmly awaited the assassins.

"It was not long before they rushed in, and as he lay still and quiet as a slumbering child, they stabbed him, thinking, as he had hoped they would, that it was the Emperor asleep."

"That's a noble story," said Mr. Nelson, "and you have not only remembered it accurately, James, but you have remembered your master's words, and told it very well. What is all the bravery that was ever displayed in battle, compared with the deliberate, magnanimous courage of this man, who so calmly laid himself down, a voluntary victim, on the bed of death; with no one to witness the act, but him for whom he died, — and that great Being who ever marks the humblest as well as the greatest act of self-sacrifice!"

"I love to think of such a man, father," said James, "though I don't like the Emperor for letting him take his place, and though I cannot bear to think he was killed."

"It appears to me," said Mr. Nelson, "we have chosen rather grave subjects for our stories, considering they are told in honour of Catharine's birth-day. I hope, Lucy, you have thought of some story not so tragical. What are you going to give us?"

"I cannot remember any thing," said Lucy, "but a little fairy story, that my aunt told me, the last time I passed the day with her."

"That will be just the thing now," said her father; "let us have it, Lucy."

Lucy began as follows:

"I was complaining to my aunt of having to study so hard, in order to keep my place in my class at school. I said I had not time enough to play, and I was tired of study and books. She asked me if I thought I should be happier if I did not study at all. I told her I thought I should, if I could keep my place in my class, and have my teachers think well of me. Then she said she would tell me a story, and I will try to remember her words as well as James did his master's, though I am afraid I shall not succeed.

"There was once a little girl, whose name

was Rose. She had good sense and was very good-natured and well-disposed. She loved dearly to frolic and play; the day was never long enough for Rose. She would have played and laughed half the night, if she could have kept her eyes open, and her mother had consented to it. Rose had been praised for her smartness at school; she had a good memory; but she was vain. She took great pains to be the first in her class, and she easily succeeded. She gained one medal after another, till at last, one day, she brought home on her neck medals enough to have dressed out an Indian queen. Rose's vanity was much gratified by the great show; she danced about the room even more than usual, in order to hear the medals jingle together. Had you read what was written upon them, you would have seen unquestionable proofs that she had as many virtues and as much knowledge, as a little girl of eight years of age has ever been known to possess. Rose was greatly delighted at the thought that she had more medals than any girl in school; but she soon found that she must work very hard to keep them. The very

next day she lost the medal for grammar, and it was only by great exertion that she regained it. So much study did not suit Rose; she wanted more time to play. She found she was obliged to study the whole time, or she would lose her place in her class and all her medals, and that Charlotte, who was her rival in school, would outstrip her. Still she did not really love study, and she began to grow fretful and unhappy.

"Rose was very fond of dressing dolls; she loved to have pretty ribbons and feathers, and to put them on her doll. One little jointed doll, especially, she was very partial to. It was about six inches high, and had blue eyes and flaxen hair. It had such a knowing and pleasant expression in its face, that Rose used to say, she was sure that it knew her and loved her. She loved it very much, and called it Rosetta. One afternoon she had by hard study succeeded in learning all her lessons, and had an hour left for play. She immediately took her little doll to talk to, and dress anew for the next week. She put on her blue silk frock, and a blue silk hat with a white feather in it, that fell gracefully

over the doll's shoulder, and then set her up before her, against her work-box on the table, to look at her. 'Oh my dear little Rosetta,' said Rose, 'I wish I had not any thing more to do than you have. I have to study from Monday morning till Saturday night. I am so tired of study, I never want to see a book again. Oh! if I could only keep my place in my class, and my medals, so that Charlotte would not get before me and laugh at me, and yet not have to study so all the time, I should be happy; but now I feel so tired and so dull, and I am so unhappy; and I know that the reason is, because I have no time to play. I never have any play at all,'—and Rose actually began to cry.

"But what was her astonishment when she saw her little favourite doll raise itself upright, and with a little toss of the feather in her hat, begin, in a very small, soft voice, to speak to her!

"'Do not be alarmed,' said she to Rose, 'I am only a fairy. The queen of the fairies, who is very fond of playful, good-humoured children, has heard your complaint. She

has observed that of late you do not play, and are not so happy as you used to be, and she has given me leave to come to you, and comfort you, and assist you in any way I can, if you will accept my services;' and here the little doll smiled and made a graceful courtesy.

"Rose had read about fairies, and she had often thought, how pleasant it would be to have her favourite Rosetta turn into a fairy. But now when she actually heard her speak, half frightened and half delighted, she sat without speaking for a minute, then turning her ear towards her, she said, 'Can it be that Rosetta spoke to me?' and she eagerly listened to hear if she would speak again.

"'What would you have me do for you? Why are you unhappy? said the fairy, in a voice as soft and sweet as the sound of a musical box.

"Rose raised her head, and looked thoughtfully at the fairy awhile, and then she poured forth all her troubles to her. 'Then,' said the fairy, 'you are unhappy because you cannot remain at the head of your class, and keep your medals, without studying all the time. Should you like to play all the time?'

"'Oh, yes,' answered Rose, 'but I should lose my place, and Charlotte would laugh at me, and get before me; I don't care for any thing but that. I had rather play than read and study; but I like to be first at school, and I cannot be, without working so hard at home, that I am so unhappy, and so tired, that I had rather be almost any thing than myself.'

"'Our queen,' said the fairy, 'who sent me to you, I suppose knew all this; she told me to come to you, and if this was the reason why you were unhappy, she gave me leave to help you in any way I could, upon condition that you should become happy and good-humoured again. You used to dance, and sing, and play, and we fairies were pleased to see you; but now you are very dull and afford us no pleasure.'

"'But what can you do to help me?' said Rose; 'or how can you expect me to dance, and sing, and be happy, with so much study? My brains are not strong enough to bear it. If you could help me study I might be happy.'

"'That is beyond the power of any fairy,' said Rosetta; 'but if you will put me into

your reticule, when you go to school, I will tell you the right answer to every question that is asked you. You have only to raise it a little toward your ear, and you will hear me; you will soon get used to my voice, and no one else will notice it. I shall speak so that no one can hear me but you.'

"'And I not study my lessons at all?' said Rose. 'Not at all,' said the fairy, 'unless you please. I will always give you the right answer.' 'But my written exercises?' said Rose. 'You have not many to write,' said the fairy, 'and you need take no pains about them; I will see that they are correct and well written; that is easy work for a fairy.' 'Then,' answered Rose, 'I can play the whole time, except when I am in school?' 'Certainly,' said the fairy; 'I shall always attend to my duty, and you need have no fear.' Rose began to clap her hands and dance about the room. After a few skips, she returned to the fairy doll, who she saw was waving the feather in her little hat again. Remember,' said the fairy, 'that I am permitted to do this for you, my friend, upon the condition, that you are truly happy. If

you become discontented and unhappy, I shall leave you directly; you will speak to your little doll, but she will give you no answer.' 'Oh, never fear, my beautiful fairy,' said Rose; 'why, that is all I want, not to have to study, and to have time enough to play; how can I help being happy? Suppose I try asking you one question after you are put into my work-bag?' 'You are welcome,' said the fairy. Rose accordingly opened her reticule and was going to take the doll up very carefully, and put her in, when the fairy, lighter than a grasshopper, popped in herself before she could touch her. She then asked her one of Colburn's difficult questions, and put her ear to the work-bag, which was nearly closed; and what was her delight when she heard, in the fairy's sweet voice, the right answer!

"Rose's joy was beyond all expression; she opened her reticule, and the fairy flew out and stood up again on the table. 'I must say farewell to you now,' said the fairy; 'I have to do an errand from our queen to a little girl in China, and it is getting late, and I must return before midnight. I shall quit your little doll till to-morrow at your school-

time, when I shall take possession of her small head again, and perform my promise to you. But you must remember the conditions; you must be happy and good-humoured; and you must not tell any one that I assist you. We fairies do not like to be be stared at and talked about. Farewell, Rose.' Immediately the little doll fell back against the work-box; but it seemed to Rose as if she still heard the fairy's silvery voice, saying 'Farewell, Rose.' Fortunately she was just then called to supper, or poor Rose's wits might have taken flight after the fairy, she was so much astonished at all she had seen and heard.

"Rose was determined to try the truth of what the fairy said; so she thought no more of her lessons till it was time to go to school the next day. Then she went to the little drawer in which she kept her favourite Rosetta, with her work-bag open, and quick as lightning the doll jumped in. Rose felt queerly, as she went to school, to think she had a fairy in her reticule. As soon as the master asked her a question, Rose just stooped her head a little, and heard, in the softest

tone that could be imagined, the right answer. She immediately repeated it; but she blushed all over, partly with admiration of her fairy doll, and partly at hearing her master praise her for giving such a correct answer so soon. Rose felt a little guilty about it, but still she was so much delighted and astonished at her doll's answers, that she was not unhappy. The fairy answered all the questions that were put to her, and Rose not only kept her place, but received another medal. One thing troubled her, however. Charlotte said, that she must have had her answers written down, and that she had them in her work-bag. But Rose denied it; she was known to be honest, and no one doubted her word. But Rose could not tell the whole truth, and that troubled her. As she went home, the fairy whispered to her, that she need not stoop so near the bag, and that she must not look confused, lest her secret should be found out. Rose felt troubled to think she had something to hide, and that she must study her looks; but the thought of having a fairy, and having so much time for play, comforted her. She put away all her books, and

brought out all her play-things; she dressed and undressed all her dolls; she cut out new dresses and new bonnets for them; she danced and skipped about, and really was quite happy the first day, and very good-natured.

"The next day the fairy answered all the questions that were put to Rose, as well as she had done the day before. Rose took care not to put her ear so near the bag, and to try not to look so confused; but when her master praised her again for always giving the right answer, she could not help blushing; and as Rose went home from school she was thinking how much more she enjoyed his praise before she had the fairy in her reticule to tell her the answers to the questions he asked her. But she still had so much work to do for her dolls, that she was for that day tolerably happy, and very good-natured.

"The third day she felt still more ashamed of receiving praise that she did not deserve. At first, the strangeness of having a fairy had taken up her attention; but by the third day she began to be conscious that she was a deceiver. Still, she loved play so much, she

thought she would try to be happy, and keep the fairy with her. Rose's dolls were now all new-dressed, all her playthings put in order, and she had nothing to do; she could dance and skip as much as she pleased. She tried very hard to enjoy herself, but it was all in vain. 'Still,' said she, 'I can be good-humoured, and try to be as happy as I can, and then the fairy will stay with me. It is very strange that I am not happy; I suppose it is because I am not used to having a fairy; I shall become used to it soon; I will be happy to-morrow. I am not tired to death now with study, as I used to be; why should not I be happy?' Then Rose tried to play, but nothing really pleased her; she was tired of skipping-rope, of cup and ball, of dolls, of every thing; she grew sleepy early in the evening, and wanted to go to bed an hour earlier than usual.

"When she went to school the next day, with the fairy in her bag, to answer the questions that were put to her, she made a great effort to feel happy. 'I have just what I wanted,' said Rose; 'I ought to be happy. I will be happy.' She succeeded in appearing

cheerful, and she began to think that she was happy. In the next seat to Rose was an industrious, excellent little girl, who very seldom won a medal, and who never succeeded in rising to the head of her class. 'I wish,' said she to Rose, just before they were to recite, 'I wish I could study as hard, and remember as well as you do. I am sure that you can never have any time to play; you must be very good, you must love study better than I do. You are praised every day; but I never am praised at all.'

"Rose felt truly ashamed of this good girl's praise; she was too generous, too honest to feel happy that day. 'I am,' said she to herself, 'an idler at home, a liar at school.' She felt perfectly miserable. When a question was asked her, she listened, but her fairy was silent, and Rose could give no answer; the question was passed to Charlotte, and she answered it. So it was with all Rose's lessons; she lost her place in the class, and all her medals; Charlotte got to the head of the class, and Rose returned from school disgraced and miserable.

"She put her reticule on the table, and

then laid her head down on her hands, and sobbed bitterly. Presently she felt a gentle touch on her head; she raised it, and saw her little Rosetta standing on the table, and looking more beautiful than ever. 'Do not be so miserable, Rose,' said she; 'dry up your tears, and be happy; and then you know I can be with you to-morrow, and all will be well again.'

"'Never, never,' said Rose; 'I will never be a cheat again; I had rather be any thing;' and she started away from the table, as if she was afraid of the fairy. 'I am not happy at home either; I wish I had never let you answer my questions for me; I liked my little Rosetta better when she was not a fairy.'

"'We fairies,' said Rosetta, 'never remain with any one that is out of humour; so I shall quit you now, Rose, as you are so displeased with me. A week from this I shall visit you again, and be ready to do as you bid me. Our queen says, that then will be the moment that will decide your fate. Farewell, Rose,' she said, and the fairy was gone.

"Rose was a little sorry she had been cross to her fairy, but she was glad she was

gone. 'Now,' said she, 'I must study for myself again, and have less play; but I shall not be a deceiver.' She accordingly studied hard again that day, got her lessons pretty well, and was astonished to find herself much happier. She knew that it would be almost impossible to get above Charlotte again; for she now had the highest place, and was really a better scholar than she was; but Rose found herself happy enough in a place below her. So she went on for a week, studying as she used to do, till the day the fairy was to come again.

"As she was studying her lesson with Rosetta on the table, she saw her rise up, and heard her sweet, soft voice, saying, 'I have come again, Rose, to do your bidding, as I promised you. It is pleasant to see you now, you look so smiling; I should be very glad to serve you now in any way I can. Shall I not help you to-morrow? Then it will be decided who will be first in the class.'

"'I do not care so much about being first in my class,' said Rose, 'and I would not be a cheat again for all the world. Besides, I find I have been happier since I have

studied my own lessons, and had something to do at home.'

"'But,' said the fairy, 'would you not like that I should assist you only for to-morrow? Then, after rising to the head of your class, and winning your medals back again, you could keep them; and that saucy Charlotte would not boast over you any more.'

"Rose heard the fairy silently, and then quietly answered, 'No; I had much rather she would have the first place, and all the medals, and even boast over me, than be a deceiver again, even for one moment, and receive praise that I do not deserve. She is a better scholar than I am, and ought to have the first place. I am happier now than I ever was when I was the first in the class.'

"Then the fairy clapped her hands with joy. 'Farewell, dear Rose,' said she, 'now all the good fairies will rejoice. I was allowed to assist you in the gratification of your foolish wish, that you might learn by experience that it would only make you miserable; and that we cannot enjoy recreation which we have not earned by labour, nor praise which we have not deserved.'"

Lucy, in her earnestness to remember the whole story, and to relate it in her aunt's words, had taken fast hold of Catharine's hand, who was sitting next her, and, as if she thought in this way to help her memory, had leaned upon her till she was almost in her lap. As she ended, Catharine put her arms round her neck, and kissed her; "Thank you, thank you, Lucy," said she, "for your pretty story. I ought now to do my very best in return for the pleasure you have all so kindly given me. But, Lucy, you will, I am afraid, have to give up your favourite moon-light, and let me bring in a lamp to read my story. But I will sit in a corner by myself, and you may look at the moon while I am reading. You know the German gentleman who has so kindly given me some lessons in his own language. One day we had been reading something relative to the War of Independence in his country, in the year 1813, in which he himself served as a volunteer. He related many affecting instances of patriotic virtue and self-sacrifice, that occurred there during the war. Among others, he told me a story of a German girl, which interested

and pleased me so much, that I begged him to write it down for me, which he was kind enough to do. He gave it to me only a few days since, and now is a good opportunity for me to read it."

Catharine soon brought her lamp, and her story, and began to read.

CHAPTER IX.

THE GERMAN GIRL.

"In a city of Germany, there lived a lady whose name was Bertha, who took into her service a girl called Catharine. She was about sixteen years of age, and had lately lost both of her parents. They had lived in great poverty, and when they died they left to their daughter nothing but a parent's blessing, and an example of faithful industry and unspotted honesty.

"Long before Catharine entered Lady Bertha's service, when she was yet a little girl, her parents used to send her out every

day, to do errands for other people, or to be of service in their families, that by her earnings she might contribute something to the relief of her poor and infirm parents, and at the same time fit herself for future usefulness and honest independence. Her father had lost all his property in consequence of his opposition to the injustice of the government, and he wished to secure to his daughter a capital of her own, out of the reach of avarice and oppression. From her father's lips, and from her father's example, Catharine had early learned the great lesson of life, 'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might.' 'God has given you health and strength, my child,' he would say; 'remember that much is required of them to whom much is given.' 'Much indeed is required of you, my child,' her mother would say; 'but when your strength and your heart fail you, remember Him who heareth prayer, and helpeth our infirmities, and your own experience will teach you that much is given to those of whom much is required.'

"Catharine laboured with all the devoted zeal of a loving child for her poor and sick

parents; and she daily thanked God who had enabled her to provide by her little strength for the wants of those whose love she thought her best reward. Her father died when she was fifteen; and her mother, who had spent her strength at his bed-side, found consolation in the thought that she should soon meet him again, in those mansions of peace where sickness, poverty, and the hand of oppression cannot come. During his last sickness, she frequently entertained him by reading to him the history of excellent men who had died as martyrs for their principles. The very last story which, in the presence of Catharine, he begged her mother to read to him, was the account of Simon Marechal, of Langres, and his wife, who, when she approached the flames in which they were both condemned to die, said to her husband, 'Dear husband, our marriage has been but an engagement; but now our true wedding is at hand, when, after this trifling torment, the Son of God comes to marry us for eternity.'

"One of the last things which Catharine's mother did, probably in the anticipation of

her approaching end, was the engagement she made for her daughter to enter the service of Lady Bertha. Catharine attended her mother in her last sickness. A few moments before her death, she raised her head from her pillow, and after straining her eyes in vain to see her child once more, she seized Catharine's hand, and said, 'I must leave you, my child; I leave you with a heart full of sorrow, indeed, but without fear. Life is but a day, my child; think, then, it is morning now, and I send you out, once more, as I used to do, to bear the heat and toil of the day in the service of others, hoping to see you come back to us in the evening, with the earnings of your industry in your hands, and with the smile of a good conscience, the promise of heaven, in your face. Go hence, then, my child; work, serve, endure to the end; and then make haste, come with your hard-earned wages, come with your smiles! Your father's lips are ready to bless you, the eyes of your mother seek you; she longs to look on you once more with that fulness of joy with which she looked on you for the first time.'

"Soon after her mother's death, Catharine

entered Lady Bertha's service as a chamber-maid, on the same conditions with the other domestics in the family, to whom she was an entire stranger. To her mistress she soon became known as a most useful servant, performing every task with cheerful and devoted obedience; yet without that forward and favour-seeking humiliation, under which the other domestics knew how to disguise their cross and selfish dispositions. Catharine did all she could to please them; but they soon perceived that there could never be an intimacy between them, and so they saw, in her very readiness to serve them, nothing but a contrivance to keep them more effectually at a distance. This dislike of the other domestics toward Catharine increased the more she gained the confidence of her mistress, and the less pains she took for it. They took every opportunity to injure her in the good opinion of the lady; and though they could not induce her to give credit to their artful insinuations, yet they made her somewhat more guarded in her conduct toward Catharine; and her usual kindness was mixed with

a reserve which, though less expressed than felt, prevented all intimacy.

"There was something in Catharine's appearance which, notwithstanding her low and retired situation, soon became a subject of remark and admiration, not only in Lady Bertha's family, but among many persons in the town. Her bright yellow hair, which, when it was not confined, fell down to her feet in soft ringlets, was of such uncommon beauty, that several ladies of high rank, who visited in the family, had offered her considerable sums of money for it. But Catharine declined every offer. Her hair had been the delight of her mother, who would never have allowed her to part with this beautiful vestment with which nature had adorned her poverty. This constant refusal had raised Catharine in Lady Bertha's esteem; though one of her fellow-domestics had assured her that she knew Catharine only waited for a still higher offer to sell it. This was only one of the many petty vexations which Catharine had continually to endure. She was every day exposed to the malignant insinua-

tions or sarcasms of those among whom she was obliged to live. But all they gained by mocking her was sometimes a starting tear, which was soon overtaken by a self-reproving blush, and followed by increased kindness towards her persecutors.

"But although the true character of Catharine remained unknown to the mistress, as well as to the servants, there were some persons in the house who perfectly understood it. And who were these deep searchers of human nature, these 'best philosophers,' these 'eyes among the blind'? Who else but Lady Bertha's simple-hearted, affectionate children! No selfish jealousies, no prudential fears of disappointment, no scruples of rank, prevented them from giving their hearts truly and wholly to the modest, neglected Catharine. They well perceived, that their friend was not looked upon by others as she was by them; which made them only the more anxious to shew her by their conduct, that she held in their hearts, what was denied her in the family, the place of an elder sister.

"Such was the situation of Catharine at

the house of Lady Bertha, when, in the year 1812, the great French army, under the command of the Emperor Napoleon, was retreating in great haste from Russia. Moscow, the old capital of Russia, in which the French thought to pass the winter, and then subdue the whole country, had been burnt by the Russians themselves, and now, having sacrificed that which was most sacred and dear to them as a nation, they furiously attacked their enemies. With the assistance of their best natural ally, the Russian winter, they succeeded in destroying the greater part of the French armies, and driving the rest out of their rescued land.

"The great news that the French power was broken in Russia, and retreating into Germany, roused the spirit of liberty on the continent of Europe, which was still under the galling yoke of Napoleon. The Germans, whom he had exhausted by his taxes, and obliged to fight his battles, and thus to confirm their own slavery,—the Germans looked upon the burning capital of Russia as Moses did upon the burning bush, out of which the voice of God called him to deliver his people

from their task-masters. But Germany was then in a desperate condition. The greater part of the country was still occupied by the enemy, who had emptied the public treasuries and magazines, and in whose army many thousands of Germans were actually enlisted. In this great calamity they put their trust in God; but, recollecting that God helps those only who strive by all means to help themselves, they endeavoured to make up for the public wants by private exertions. The spirit of self-sacrifice which prompted the men, and even the boys, to seek death for themselves, and freedom for their country,—the same spirit moved the women to encourage their departing sons, and brothers, and dearest friends, and to devote themselves to the care of the wounded, whether friends or captive enemies. The rich sent their gold and silver plate to the mint, and their jewels to a public auction, to increase the national treasury. In return for these patriotic gifts they received from the national government rings of iron, on which the words were engraved, 'I exchanged gold for iron.'

"Lady Bertha, although she lived at a

considerable distance from the scenes of war, participated with her whole heart in the great struggle for her country's liberty; and when in her own town also, as in all the other parts of Prussia, a public auction was held for the benefit of the national treasury, she sent to it her most valuable articles of dress and furniture. Many of her rich and noble acquaintances, who had hitherto looked coldly upon the public distress, because Providence, they thought, had taken care of them, were incited by her example to emulate her liberality.

"But of all those who felt for their devoted country, there was none more willing and none less able to contribute to the public good, than our poor friend Catharine. Her feelings were too deep and ardent for useless words; and convinced of her inability to express them by actions, she concealed them even from her mistress, who ascribed her silence to a want of those lofty and enlarged sentiments to which, from her low condition and education, she had probably remained a stranger.

"One morning when Catharine was attend-

ing to the children in the presence of their mother, the youngest of them exclaimed, in a tone of anxious surprise, 'Dear Catharine, what has become of your hair?' The other children immediately looked at her and anxiously repeated the same question. Catharine blushed, and was not able to answer; and Lady Bertha, observing her embarrassment, immediately suspected that she, being a poor girl, had at last accepted one of the repeated offers for her hair, and actually sold it. She therefore silenced the children, and determined to speak no more about it. At that moment little Ferdinand, a son of Lady Bertha, who had been out at the public auction to see the furniture of his mother sold, hastily entered the apartment. The ardent little Ferdinand cast an enthusiastic glance at the silent Catharine, and went with quick steps to his mother. 'Mother,' cried he, 'mother, they have just sold Catharine's beautiful hair at the auction. Uncle William told me that she had carried it there herself early this morning; now they have sold it by single locks, to make rings and bracelets of,

and it has brought more money, mother, than all our precious furniture together.'

"Lady Bertha, who had listened with silent astonishment to the triumphant story of her patriotic boy, rose and went toward the blushing, weeping, trembling Catharine; and looking at her for some moments, and at the tearful eyes of her children, she took her by the hand and kissed her with a mother's fondness. 'Catharine,' she said, 'you are no longer my servant, but my friend and my daughter. Come, children, come and embrace your dear sister!'"

CHAPTER X.

THE PARTING.

WE hope that our readers had a reasonable share in the entertainment provided for the evening of Catharine's birth-day, and that they would gladly have joined in the affectionate "good night" with which they parted

at the conclusion of the story of the German Girl.

One of Catharine's occupations the next morning was writing a note to Julia, telling her of the delight they all felt at receiving the piano. After speaking of their feelings at the sight of it, and of their visit from Patrick, she added, "I have described the pleasure you have given us, dear Julia, because I know that this is the only thanks you would be willing to receive, the only return you desire for your kindness."

We now very unwillingly approach the time appointed for Mr. Nelson's departure, that sad moment, which they knew must come, and which they all knew it was their duty to meet with cheerful resignation.

Happily they all had much to do. Useful occupation always brings a blessing with it; it seems to be one of the appointed means to enable us to bear many of the inevitable evils of life. Mr. Nelson had yet many things to arrange before he could be satisfied to leave his family and his affairs for two or three years. Mrs. Nelson had his wardrobe to complete for the voyage, and her household

concerns to attend to. Catharine and Lucy were learning how to be useful to their mother, and to find time also to devote to their studies; and James employed every moment he had to spare from his lessons, in doing errands and working in the garden.

It is not only true that he who is faithful in little will be faithful in much; but it is equally true, that he who is faithful in much will be faithful also in little. Mrs. Nelson's habits of order, her religious sense of responsibility when she had great means, enabled her to perform her duties now, when her means were small, with the same ease, and without a murmur at the change. Neither she nor her husband had ever thought, as some rich people do, that the Father of the human family had singled them out as his favoured children, but they knew that all they possessed, whether more or better than others, was given to them in charge for the good of others, as truly as for their own; and that if they were unfaithful to this sacred trust, they would have to render up a strict account in the great day of retribution. When they assembled together every evening after a day

of cheerful and active duty, each, from little Lucy to Mr. Nelson, communicating their thoughts, their experiences, their pleasures, or their troubles, or all listening to a song from Catharine, accompanied by her piano, if we could have looked into their hearts, we should have seen, that, but for this thought of parting, they were as truly happy as they had ever been.

So passed the time till the day before Mr. Nelson's departure. He was to sail in a packet from New York, and wished to be there a day or two before, in order to see his brother; and he was to leave them early the next morning. A stranger would not, perhaps, have noticed, on the evening of his departure, any thing peculiar in the appearance of the family; an intimate friend would have perceived a determined composure, a suppressed tenderness, in every word and action of the father and mother, and in the children a continually watchful devotion to their parents, and an unconquerable desire to please them. Every thing was now said that ought to be said, every thing was done that ought

to be done, every thing but that saddest of all duties, to say "Good bye."

After an unavailing effort at conversation, Mr. Nelson took little Lucy in his lap, and asked Catharine to play to him, which she did till it was time to retire to rest. Mr. Nelson kissed his children, and as he bade them good night, said, "I shall set off by daylight; God bless you all, my children." Lucy, who was in his arms, and whom he strained to his bosom almost unconsciously, burst into a violent flood of tears, and put her arms round his neck and refused to leave him. Catharine, who saw that her mother could not speak, tried to take Lucy away, but was overcome by her own feelings, and fell upon her father's neck, and wept with her sister.

"Come, Catharine, come, Lucy," said James, "you ought to go now; this is wrong, you make it harder for father to leave us. Good night, father," he said, as he pulled his sisters away; but his feelings almost choked him, in the effort he made to speak in a cheerful tone.

We shall give no account of the parting

between the parents. We feel that the privacy which the tenderest earthly friendship seeks for and desires at such moments, is too sacred to be violated by a description. We will not attempt to put into language the efforts they made to call up in their own hearts and to inspire each other with all that religious trust, that Christian resignation, which it had been the purpose of their lives to acquire, and which alone could support them in this trial.

Mrs. Nelson and her children assembled at breakfast, the next morning, with heavy hearts, and with a serious and even sad expression in their faces. The social meal, in a truly happy family, is intended to contribute not more to the nourishment of the body, than to the refreshment of the spirit, and to the nurture of those affections which constitute our true being. And all of us have felt how difficult it is for those who have parted with a friend, to be cheerful round a table where he or she has left a vacant seat. So they all felt; but the children found a relief for their own feelings in their assiduous efforts to please their mother, who they knew was the greatest sufferer.

Their mother found support and consolation in fixing her thoughts upon Him who is not far from any of us; to whom she had, in the sincerity of a child-like trust, committed herself and her children, and their earthly protector, the friend whom she loved best in the world.

Mrs. Nelson did not allow her grief at parting with her husband to interfere with any, even the smallest duty. On the contrary, it seemed to stir her up to greater exertion, and to unfold, or rather to bring into exercise, faculties which she herself was hardly aware of possessing. Although she had always devoted more time to her children than many mothers do, yet the necessary calls upon her from society had left her less leisure than she wished to give to them. She felt that the immediate personal influence, the close intimacy, the confiding friendship, the constant society of a mother, might be made the greatest possible blessing to her children. She had found it necessary to send her daughters to school, but she had always regretted that she could not be more constantly associated with them in their studies; and she resolved now to take upon herself the care of their educa-

tion in this, as in all other particulars. She began, the very day her husband left her, to make arrangements for the prosecution of her plan. After her household duties were over, which her industry and order made no task, she called her daughters to her, and examined them in their various studies. She found that, although Catharine had made good use of her time at school, she had a great deal to learn, a great deal to do, in order to bring the materials she had been collecting, into their best use. Catharine, like other girls, had learned a little of every thing; and her mother endeavoured to ascertain what of all her various pursuits she most loved, and to decide upon those that were most congenial to her mind, its peculiar wants, powers, and tastes. She then laid out for her a regular plan of study. "I propose, my dear child," said she, "to join you in all your pursuits. The occupation will be a delightful one to me, and I think I can aid you in all of them, except in German; there you shall be my teacher, and we will both together teach Lucy, and we will make a fair division of the labour."

Catharine was overjoyed at her mother's

plan. Her love of her mother had been for some time ripening into a stronger and more spiritual affection, and while it lost none of its child-like trust, had the new and still greater charm of a youthful friendship. "Oh, mother," said she, "there is nothing I should like so well as to study any thing with you. What do you say to the plan, Lucy?"

"Oh," said Lucy, "I had rather be taught by you, mother, and by Catharine, than by any body else; but then I am afraid that I shall never have any" — "Any what? my child," said her mother. "Any play afternoons, shall I?" "Yes, you shall, Lucy," said her mother, "have the same time for play that you have always had." "Thank you, mother; then Saturday afternoons I shall have James, perhaps, for a companion. I wish he was at home all the time." "Why, my dear?" said her mother. "Because then he would study with me, and that would be so much pleasanter. Now I shall study every thing alone; to be sure I shall find it easy to be at the head of my class." "Perhaps not," said her mother, "for I mean to join you in your studies. But you know, Lucy, that I

do not approve of having any head or foot to a class; I want to teach you to study for the pleasure of using your faculties, and of gaining knowledge, and not for the sake of being at the head of your class. But I have a plan that has just come into my mind, that will please you, I think. The other evening, when James's master, Mr. B., was here, he said that he had two little girls, one a year older and the other a year younger than you, and that he wished he had a good school for them; for as Mrs. B. assisted him so much in his large school of boys, she had not time enough to attend to her little girls, and so they were often necessarily neglected. Now, I propose to take the little girls, and teach them with you; then you will not only have companions of your own age, but I shall be able, by that means, to pay for James's schooling. How shall you like that, Lucy?" Oh, dear mother, that is an excellent plan! and then I shall become acquainted with them, and have some girls to play with me; I hope I shall love them. What are their names?" "I do not know, Lucy; but I suppose that

will not make much difference to you," said her mother, "and you remember we have still to consult their parents about the plan." "I like it, mother," said Catharine," very much, and whenever you are engaged, or called away from the school by visiters, I will do my best as your assistant." "You will be a great help to me, my child," said Mrs. Nelson.

The remainder of the forenoon was devoted to fixing upon the hours for all their various pursuits, their hours for school, their hours for recreation, and their hours for household employment. Mrs. Nelson then decided upon the apartment that should be called the school-room, and collected there and arranged the books and all necessary apparatus. At dinner, the plan was communicated to James, and he was commissioned to make the proposal, in his mother's name, to Mrs. B., which he did; and after tea, the same afternoon, Mrs. B. brought her little girls to see Lucy, and she and Mr. B. readily acceded to the proposal. "How soon would you like to have my little girls come?" said

Mr. B., as they took leave. "To-morrow, if you please," said Mrs. Nelson; and they parted with this agreement.

As soon as they were gone, Lucy began to jump about the room. "Oh," said she, "what nice girls! I like them very much. One of them, mother, is named Ellen, and the other Caroline; don't you think they are pretty names? and they looked so good-natured and sensible, I am sure I shall like them."

At another time Mrs. Nelson would, perhaps, have reminded Lucy that this was rather a hasty decision, and smiled at her for giving such reasons for admiration; but now she felt such a relief from her own low spirits, in the light-heartedness of her child, that she could not find a word of chilling warning of the possible disappointment she might suffer in her new friends. She tried to sympathize with Lucy, and to feel sure that she would love them. Indeed, there was reason enough for her faith; they were two amiable, intelligent children, with no more faults than most girls, from eight to ten years of age, must be expected to have.

When Lucy kissed her mother at night,

before she went to bed, she put her arms around her neck, and said, "I mean, mother, to be a very good girl, and a good scholar, even though you will not give me any good marks or medals." By sunrise, the next morning, Lucy was awake. "Come, Catharine," said she, "we must rise very early, so that every thing may be done, and all made ready; you know our school begins to-day." Catharine joined heart and hand with Lucy in making the necessary preparations. At nine o'clock the children came, and the school commenced; and never were children better pleased with their teacher, and never was a teacher better satisfied with her pupils than Mrs. Nelson was with hers; and never were there four happier faces together than her little school exhibited. Two or three days afterwards, Catharine wrote a long epistle to Julia, from which we will make only a few extracts, in order to shew how they passed their time.

"Notwithstanding your dread of the country, my dear Julia, I think you would be very happy to live as we do. We rise very early, and the music of the birds repays us for the

exertion. Lucy and I put our chamber in order. At six we breakfast; from breakfast till eight o'clock, we assist mother in domestic affairs, and then get ready for our little school. Mother, before we begin our lessons, either reads a chapter in the Bible, or a prayer, and she says that sometimes she shall talk with us upon religious subjects, when she is not disposed to read. We are in school only four hours; but my mother attends to us so closely, explaining every thing so well to us, that these four hours are better than six with our master. After the school, Lucy and I put the room in order for the next day, and do any thing we please till dinner, which is at one. I usually practise on my piano that you have made so precious to me. I wanted to give Lucy lessons in music; but mother says, that as she has no ear or taste for it, she thinks that she can employ her time better. After dinner we put the parlour in order, and then Lucy employs herself as she pleases; I either draw or read, till four, when mother reads history with me. Lucy is at liberty to do as she likes; but she always joins us, though she is free to choose

whether she will or not; and then I give her a lesson to practise in drawing, while mother is reading, and I am sewing. We have tea early, and take a walk afterwards; and then we have James with us. In the evening we talk, or I play and sing; and if father were only with us, we should be as happy as the day is long.

"My dear mother has borne this trial so well that you would love her better than ever, Julia. She looks so patient, and it seems as if she was thinking all the time what she shall do for our good. She talks with us more than she ever did, especially when she goes to walk with us; she tells us the names of all the wild flowers we find, and, if we are merry, she joins us in our merriment. She seems to be trying to forget her own loss in what pleases and concerns us. I cannot tell how it is, Julia, but though I always loved my mother, as you know, so much, I am sure I love her better now than ever. When father has safely arrived in England, she will feel quite cheerful again. Oh, how often I wish that dear uncle was alive, he would be such a comfort to mother;

but he is gone, and blessed Newton all spoilt by factories. A gentleman said the other day, speaking of Newton, that these were the only real ruins in our country.

"I long, dear Julia, to have you come and see us. Our house is rather small and old-fashioned, but very pleasant. There are two beautiful old trees before it, and a porch covered with honeysuckles; and the flowers and the green grass almost come to the very doors. You must come soon, for I long to see you.

"Your affectionate

"CATHARINE."

Mrs. Nelson found a reward in her exertions, which perhaps she did not think of. It was a feeling of loss and suffering by the separation from her husband that led her to make still greater exertions than ever in the performance of duty. It seemed to her that she was in this way a fellow-labourer with him, for the good of their children. She felt as if this unity in their purposes and actions kept their minds more entirely together. She found, however, an unlooked-for pleasure in being so constantly with her children, in

mingling her thoughts more entirely with theirs. The society of innocent children, full and overflowing as they are with pure and generous emotions, is a healthful atmosphere; and to those who have the care of them, they are like fragrant flowers, that shed their perfume upon the hands that are employed to prune and water them, and who guard their tender blossoms.

The change in their circumstances and mode of life had also a very good influence upon her children. It made them begin actually to live for others, as well as themselves; they all felt that they had the care, in some measure, of their mother; that they were to make up to her the loss of their father. They showed their sense of this duty in little as well as in great things. They knew that her health was delicate, and she never stepped out of the door without some little caution or attention from one of them. Lucy would beg her to let her run up stairs for her India-rubber shoes. James would offer her his arm, and Catharine would watch her to see if she was fatigued. She was fond of flowers, and they kept her mantel-piece

dressed with every variety the season afforded. All these small services, which they had seen their father anxious to perform for her, they each and all were forward to render her. Thus they learned all those "small, sweet courtesies of life" that constitute polished manners, at their true and only unfailing source, a pure and sincere affection which loses the thought of *self* in devotion to its object.

CHAPTER XI.

GOOD MANNERS.

THE fifth day after Mr. Nelson's departure, as James came running home from school, "Mother, mother," said he, "a letter from father! I have been at the post-office for these two days past, as soon as school was over, in the hope of surprising you with a letter, and I have one at last."

His mother's heart was too full to thank him. She silently took the letter, and after

she had read it herself, read these passages in it to her children:

"I have not yet seen my brother; I did not find him at the boarding-house to which he usually goes. I shall see him, I hope, to-morrow. As the vessel I shall go in does not sail under three days, he perhaps did not expect me so soon. I feel as if I had never known what solitude was before; now, when I find myself in this great city, and see no familiar face, I am thankful that I have so much business to attend to.

"Give my love to Catharine, and tell her I sing over to myself her favourite hymn, when I feel sad and think I am becoming impatient. My love to James, and tell him that I have never said a word to him about the offering he made me of all his earnings, because I could not speak of it without being, I will not say unmanned, for it is because I am a man that the thought of such a thing makes me a child; but I could not trust myself to talk of such things; I felt the importance of self-controul. James will understand me, I know. Give my love to little Lucy; tell her not to be so much in love with her

little brook as to throw herself into it, but to think of her father when she goes there. Kiss them all for me, and tell them I feel sure that they will be good children.

"I have engaged my passage, and am getting my things in readiness to go on board. I shall write again before I sail, which will be on the 15th."

"To-morrow, then," said James, "father will sail, and I suppose, mother, you will have another letter in two or three days after. I wish I had only known before that the money I was earning was for father; I should have worked harder and earned more."

The afternoon of this day they were surprised by a visit from Julia and her mother. Catharine and Julia were truly delighted to meet again. So much had passed since their last meeting, that they both felt as if it was ten weeks instead of only ten days. Catharine's mother received Julia very affectionately; she had always thought, that, notwithstanding some great faults, she had many very excellent qualities; and her judicious kindness to Julia had been of great advantage to her, and, in her efforts to do her good,

Mrs. Nelson had become very truly attached to her. After a chat of a few minutes, which comprised as many questions and answers as two girls of fourteen could crowd into such a space of time, Catharine invited Julia to look at their pleasant house and little garden.

"And the school-room, and my brook too," said Lucy; "and our beautiful chamber," she added, running after them, as Julia and Catharine went out.

"Take care and keep your hats and shawls on when you go out," said Julia's mother, "or you will be as dark as Indians. I hope, sister," said she, turning to Mrs. J. Nelson, "I hope that you pay unwearied attention to this subject; it is of the greatest importance. No girl can ever look genteel, and like a lady, if she is tanned; it is not only ugly, it is more; it is vulgar. Do not expose your daughters to such an evil! I assure you, my dear sister, I have thought much of your misfortunes, and of your being obliged to bury yourself and Catharine in the country; I have not been well, and it has made me really nervous to think of it. I should think you would have preferred living any how in

town; and if you had only been near me, I could have been of service to you and the girls, especially to Catharine, whom I quite take a fancy to. Indeed, I propose to have her come and make us a long visit as soon as you are all quite arranged; I think it may be of use to her, as it will keep up her fine city manners, which I have always admired so much. Here, where she can run so wild, she may lose that lady-like restraint that is so fashionable and genteel. Besides, she has no good model here, and she may forget her manners; I mean, you know, sister, except in you; and there ought to be a great difference in the manners of a mother and her daughter. Now it appears to me, that if she passes the greater part of her time with us, much of the evil of living in the country will be obviated, and I think she will be quite patronized among our friends."

Here Julia's mother stopped, partly from bodily exhaustion, and partly because she had nothing more to say.

Catharine's mother heard her in silence, and even with patience, for it was only what she expected from her sister-in-law; the pa-

tronizing tone was the only thing in her speech that had any novelty in it. Perhaps, for she was but human, it was this that roused her to make one more effort to make herself understood by this lady,—a thing she had so often attempted in vain with her that she had long since given it up as hopeless.

"I thank you," she said, "for your partiality for Catharine; I shall leave her at liberty to do as she pleases about accepting your invitation. I consider it, however, one of the advantages of our misfortunes, that we have removed into the country; it brings me still nearer than ever to my children; it gives them an opportunity of exercising virtues and acquiring habits of useful employment, and calls upon them for sacrifices, which I think are of more importance to them than any advantage they derived from living in the city. They agree with me, that, if their father were only at home, we should be happier than ever. With regard to externals, I hope that they will not wantonly abuse whatever good looks they may have, by mere carelessness; I, however, consider good health

and good humour more important. Still, sister, the bonnets must and shall be remembered. As for my daughters' manners, they have not been formed upon any particular model in Boston; and I therefore may proceed with them upon the same principle here. True politeness is the spirit of Christianity carried into the daily intercourse of life. Christians who in honour prefer one another, in little as well as great things, would be models of politeness.

"I have heard it said sometimes, of professed Christians, of clergymen, that they are wanting in good manners; that they neglect the courtesies and proprieties of life, that they take the first place and the best things. But the truth is, that in doing these things, they lay aside their religion and are not Christians. Christianity teaches what is lovely and of good report, as perfectly as it does what is true and what is pure. I think, therefore, that Catharine has a model of good manners while she makes this book" (laying her hand on the Bible) "her constant study. Without entering so fully into the principle, I have always acted upon it in the education of my

children, and have endeavoured to teach them, whenever they have been wanting in true politeness, that they have violated some important Christian duty. I know that there are some little forms that it is of importance to be acquainted with, and which are to be learned only as forms; but it does not take much time to acquire them, and my children will not be so excluded from society as to be quite ignorant of them.

"You speak, sister, of your friends patronizing Catharine. I again thank you for your desire to serve my child, but I really should be very sorry to have her patronized. I have too great a regard for her true dignity. When her father was rich, I should have been troubled at seeing her caressed on that account; and now it would be equally painful to me to have her patronized because we are poor. Perhaps it is a mother's partiality that makes me think that she is worth loving simply on her own account, and a mother's pride that makes me think that she does not require, and would not be honoured by, patronage. If my children are ever to be distinguished and respected in the world, I wish

it to be the reward solely of their own unquestioned merit."

Mrs. Nelson's warmth had made her, for a few moments, forget the weakness and narrow-mindedness of her sister-in-law. She was restored to recollection by seeing her gape with such an unequivocal expression of confusion of thought, and of weariness at the length of her sermon, as to prove to her that she had preached altogether in vain.

"Do I understand you right, sister," said she, as she put a little essence-bottle to her nose, "that you are willing Catharine should come soon to make us a visit? I think, and so does Mr. Nelson, that you have excellent views upon the subject of education, and Catharine does you honour; you may be proud of her. With your leave, I will invite her, when they return from their walk, to come to our house. They ought to come in soon; the evening air will be damp—I ought not to be out in it. I am too weak for any thing, and indeed, sister, I am sorry you did not keep your elegant sofa, it was so easy; these chairs are not some of your best; I don't

speak on my account, but if you should happen ever to be so weak as I am, I am afraid you would miss your sofa. What do you think has become of those girls? I am afraid that Julia will get sun-burnt."

In a few minutes Julia and her cousins returned from their walk.

"I am glad to see you," said her mother to Julia; it is growing late in the afternoon, and I am much afraid of the effects of the evening air. Catharine, my child," said she, "I must have you come and make us a visit soon; you will lose all your spirits and become quite rustic if you do not come to Boston frequently, and we depend upon having you. Julia has had a solemn face ever since she heard of your father's misfortunes, and that you were to live in the country. It is quite natural; girls cannot do without some one to tell all their secrets to, and she never talks to me. There is to be a fine concert in the course of a fortnight; the singer is the finest that ever was in Boston—I forget his name; you are fond of music; so that I am sure it will be a great pleasure to you, and

come you must. I shall come for you myself, or send the carriage, before then; when will you be ready, my dear?"

Catharine looked a little embarrassed, and hesitated for an answer.

"Well, my dear," said her aunt, "should you like to come?"

"I thank you, aunt," said Catharine, "I had rather not leave home at present."

"What! my dear," said her aunt, in rather a pettish tone, which was habitual with her when she was thwarted in her wishes, "and so you prefer hearing the frogs croak here in the country, to hearing fine music in Boston? I thought by this time you might be glad to visit the civilized world again. However, you cannot be in earnest; and if you are, you will change your mind by the time I send for you, which will be in less than a week; your mother says you may go."

Catharine looked towards her mother, who immediately answered, "I said, my dear that you might do as you pleased."

By this time Catharine had recovered from her embarrassment at being obliged to refuse the invitation. There was something in the

whole tone of her aunt a little different from usual, and although she did not quite understand it, she did not like it; and she again answered her, but with perfect composure, that she should rather not leave home,—that she was not sick of the country, but liked it better than the town. "And as for the frogs, aunt," she added, "you know if I don't like their music, I can drown their noise with my own, since uncle and Julia have been so kind as to give me my piano again."

"Then you do not care for the concert? Well, child, I did not think the country would spoil you quite so soon. Come, Julia, my dear, let us go."

This was said in rather a displeased tone of voice. Catharine simply answered, "Yes, I do care for the concert; I have no doubt I should enjoy it highly; but I prefer being at home now; I hope you are not displeased with me, aunt?"

"Oh no, my dear, do as you please; good bye; it is time we were at home."

Julia, who had really set her heart upon having Catharine go with her to the concert, and had imbibed something of her mother's

fretfulness at meeting with any disappointment, had so true a love for Catharine that she felt only for her.

"I am very sorry you cannot go with us, Catharine," said she, "to this concert; but perhaps there may be another, and then you will go; I shall not go without you."

As her mother was in the carriage and calling her, she could say no more; but she kissed Catharine most affectionately as she bade her good night.

"I cannot understand what Aunt Nelson means," said Catharine, as they drove off. "How can she suppose that I want to go to a concert now, after all that has passed, and father just gone!"

"It would be dull for mother too," said Lucy, "if you were to go away, Catharine; I wonder that she did not think of mother."

Catharine felt this too, but she was old enough to know that it would be kinder to say nothing to her mother of this reason for her not leaving home; and her heart was so entirely in her present duties and pleasures, that she had not been conscious of making any sacrifice of her own inclinations.

"I am very sure," she said, "that I am happier here than I should be in Boston. Julia says, mother, that her father is to return soon. I only wish," she added, "that we had Julia here. Notwithstanding the way in which she sometimes talks of the country, I know she would like it if she were only here. She was so agreeable and affectionate to me this afternoon; she seemed to love me more than ever, and when I told her that she must come and pass a week with us, she did not laugh at the idea of coming into the country, as she did before, but seemed quite pleased with the thought. I certainly think, mother, Julia has improved a great deal of late."

"I think so too, my dear," said her mother. "I am very glad, Catharine, that you felt and acted as you did, at your aunt's invitation. I did not suppose you would wish to go; and I thought it best that you should not; but I wished you to decide entirely for yourself."

CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUSION.

We have now nearly arrived at the conclusion of the little sketch that we promised to give our readers of Catharine Nelson and her friends, four years after her first Well-spent Hour, of which we gave them an account. It was our object at that time to shew the value, and possible effect, of even one well-spent hour,—that it might be the apparent beginning of virtue and happiness that could not be measured by hours, that would have no limits, no termination. We say only the apparent beginning; it is not possible for any human eye, perhaps, to perceive the first action of a rational being that is prompted by conscience, the first germ of the immortal fruit of virtue. It may be that the infant in his mother's arms, that is taught to restrain one little passion, has taken one step on his way towards his Father's house.

Our purpose has been in the present volume to shew what we thought the natural

results of such principles as we set forth in the first; to describe Mr. and Mrs. Nelson and their children just as they probably would be, acting, feeling, and thinking as we might expect they would, under the circumstances in which they were placed by the change in Mr. Nelson's fortune. We wished to shew that they possessed the true riches, and that the privation of earthly possessions, and even of some of the purest earthly enjoyments, could not make them truly unhappy.

It remains for us now to say only a few words more of them, before we say farewell.

Mrs. Nelson had completed all her domestic arrangements. She found Nancy Leonard a great comfort and assistance to her; her neatness, her quiet industry, the habit which she had early formed of turning her hand to any thing, her devoted love for the family, made her an inexpressible blessing to them. She, as well as Catharine, had begun a life of usefulness and virtuous happiness, by "shewing piety at home." In Mrs. Nelson's opinion, and in the opinion of all who judge righteous judgment, she was as much deserving of love and honour as any one of the family. She

was treated by them all with the greatest respect and affection, not as a matter of charity or partiality towards her, but because their sense of right would not allow them to treat her in any other way. It was respect, affection, simple justice, — not favour, not condescension. To Mrs. Nelson she was as a child, and to the children she was as a sister.

As the family was small and their wants were few and simple, and as all had their appropriate duties, which were carefully performed at the proper time, with the fidelity of love, which makes the measure of ability the only measure of good deeds, you would have thought, come in when you would, that every thing was in order, that there was nothing to do. Mrs. Nelson found her little school a source of great enjoyment to her; she read and studied as a learner, in order the better to fit herself to be a teacher. The room she had devoted to her school looked directly into the garden, every motion of the wind brought in a shower of blossoms, and the song of the birds mingled and harmonized well with the sweet voices of the children, re-

peating their lessons; lessons, in which there was no rivalry, no unhallowed ambition to eclipse others; lessons, that were not tasks, but lessons that taught in detail the great truth which God's beautiful universe teaches with an overwhelming fulness and power, that He is good, and that all his works declare his glory, and that it is the great privilege and true felicity of his rational offspring so to perfect their nature by knowledge and virtue, that they may become acquainted with God, and be formed in his likeness. To bring the minds of her children to this result, and to shew them that this was the great end of knowledge, was the only definite plan and system that Mrs. Nelson pursued; she left it to circumstances and experience to teach her the best method of arriving at the end she proposed.

The morning of the 17th, three days after Mr. Nelson's last letter, the day on which she expected another letter from her husband, Mrs. Nelson said to James, as he was going to school, "I hope, my son, that you will bring home a letter from your father when you return to dinner." James, however, re-

turned without it. His mother felt much disappointed, and a little anxious. The weather had been unusually hot, and the hot weather was apt to make her husband ill, when it first came on. She knew that he would have much to do, and she feared that so much exercise might be injurious to him. See did not mention her fears, but Catharine understood them without her speaking. "Rely upon it, mother," said she, "if father was ill uncle would write."

"He had not found your uncle when he last wrote," said her mother.

"Oh! but, mother, that was only the third day after he arrived. You know uncle always visits at Mr. R.'s, and he would hear of him there; I dare say he went there the very day after he wrote. I am sure, mother, there is no reason for being anxious. You know, Patrick used to say, that bad news is always heard beforehand."

"Why, mother," said James, "you know our post-office is good for nothing; I dare say there was a letter in Boston this morning, and they did not bring it out. I shall bring you home one this afternoon;" and he has-

tened to school, as if by that means he should return the sooner.

The tea-table was spread, and the time had nearly arrived for James to return from school. Lucy had stationed herself at the front windows, where she could get the very first glimpse of James. "He will hold the letter up, if he sees me," said she; so she put her head as far out of the window as she well could. But Lucy's impatience did not hasten that slow, obstinate old fellow with the hour-glass in his hand; it was not quite time for James to return with the letter. "This chaise makes such a dust," said Lucy, "I cannot see any thing; I dare say that poor James is in that cloud of dust. Oh! it is stopping at our gate; I cannot see into the chaise, for it has passed my window. Why, mother, it is uncle that has just jumped out of it! that it is! that it is! He has brought your letter, and that is the reason poor James did not find it at the post-office. There's another gentleman getting out! why, what a jump he made! why, mother, it looks like—" She stopped, she doubted her own eyes. Mrs. Nelson had run to the door to meet her

brother-in-law, and to receive her husband's letter; but whom did she meet there? in whose arms was she clasped? It was her own husband; it was in his arms that she was folded. It was he that sprang out of the chaise, and that even little Lucy could not believe for joy to be her father.

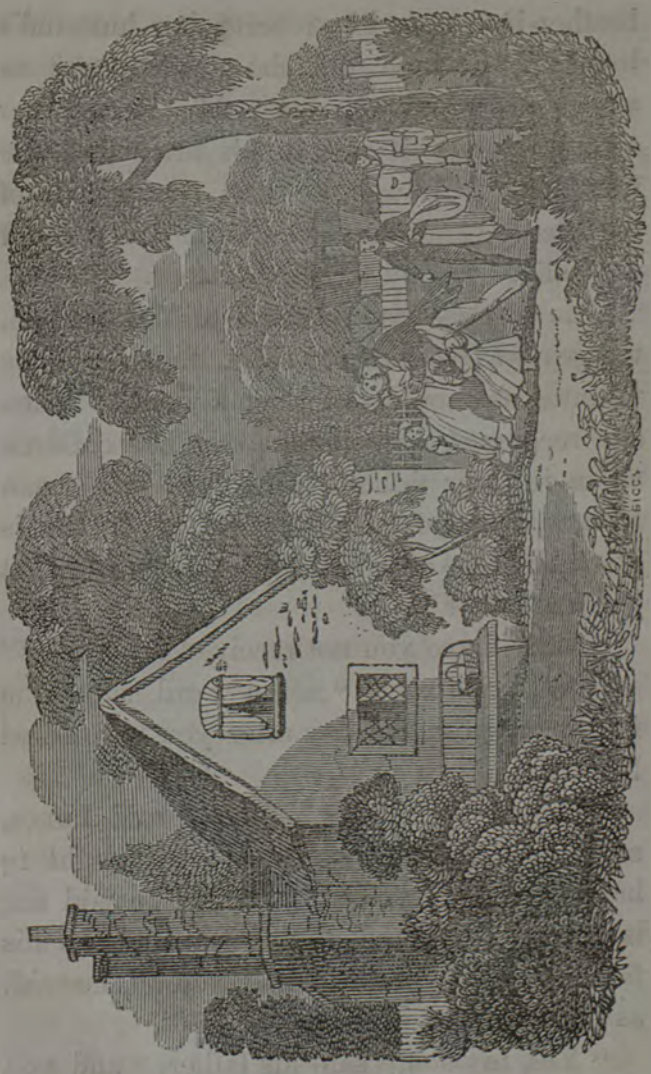
The surprise was so great to Mrs. Nelson, the joy was so overpowering, that for some minutes she could not utter a word. When she recovered herself and saw her children again in their father's arms, her tears began to flow, tears of unspeakable joy. "How is it?" said she; "what does this mean, that you are here?"

"Why, have you not received my letter?"

"No," she said, "not a word since the first you wrote the day after you arrived at New York."

"Here is your letter, mother," said James, as he ran up the little yard; "it ought to have been here yesterday." As he said the last word, he entered the parlour and saw his father. "Why, father! is it you?" he said, as he flew into his arms.

"Yes, my son," said his father, "and you



must thank your uncle for seeing me again so soon. The letter you have brought to your mother tells the whole story."

"Before we have any stories," said their uncle, "I choose to have a little attention paid to me; here I have been crying like a boy, at seeing all this hugging and kissing going on, and not one hug or kiss have I had to comfort me; so I expect as many kisses as I have stood here seconds waiting your leisure." He then seized upon little Lucy. "Come here, all of you," said he; "my arms are long enough to take you all in." The children loved their uncle very tenderly, and what their father had said to them made their hearts overflow with love and gratitude to him.

"Dear uncle," said Catharine, "how good you are to us all! How did you manage to bring home father to us?"

"I suppose I may as well tell you the whole story myself; for your father would be too sentimental, and take too long a time. Come, all of you, and sit down here by me, —close by me, Miss Lucy,—and I will tell you the whole story. You see, your father

does not want to go to Europe, and I do; I want some one to take care of all my business, money, &c. I know of no one but he that will answer my purpose. Now it is a fair bargain. I have been wanting a partner for some time past; but like Betty Martin in search of a husband, I could not find one to suit my mind. It is the luckiest thing that ever happened to me that your father failed; for now I can take him into partnership, and have a vacation; and you know, James, that's a thing worth having at any time, and I mean to cut as many capers as I please; and now, children, my story is done."

"One thing," said his brother, "you have left out of your story, which I must tell my children. Besides giving me employment by which I can support my family, you have paid my debts, and made me a free man again."

"All for my own advantage," said his brother; "I could not do without you. I began to form this plan, sister, as soon as I heard of your husband's failure, and I hoped to be able to return from New York soon enough to prevent his leaving you at all; but I had

some business that made it impossible. The very day he arrived in New York I was obliged to leave there for Philadelphia, from whence I returned only the day before the packet was to sail, not knowing that he had been there some days. You know I hate writing, and love talking; so I had my whole plan to communicate and settle in a very short time; but it was soon enough to prevent his baggage as well as himself from making a voyage to England."

Mrs. Nelson put her hand in her brother's; "You know, dear William, what is in my heart, and what I would say if I could speak."

"And I do not want to hear it, sister," said he; "but I want you to do something for me, which will be a great favour."

"And what is it, brother?" said Mrs. Nelson; "I shall rejoice at your wants as truly as you did at my husband's failure."

"I wish," said Mr. Nelson, "to take my wife with me; she has a married sister, who, you know, lives in Paris; and she wishes to go, and thinks the voyage will be of use to her health. She wishes that we should take Julia with us; but I cannot consent that

Julia should learn any Parisian airs, and I am desirous that you should take charge of her while we are gone. You well know she is our most precious possession, and there is no place in this world where I should feel that she was so well protected from evil, and in the way of obtaining so much good, as under your care, and with Catharine for her companion."

Catharine could hardly restrain her expressions of delight till the conclusion of her uncle's request. "Oh, dear mother," said she, "that is delightful! that is the very thing I should like best in the world, now that father has come back."

Mrs. Nelson was not less pleased than Catharine. "You know," said she, "that I love Julia very sincerely; I have proved my love by sometimes telling her of her faults. Rely upon it, brother, I will be as a mother to her during your absence. It will be a great pleasure to us all to have her with us."

"Tell her of her faults as much as you please," said Mr. Nelson, "only let her be with you, and I am satisfied." This being settled, they drew round the tea-table, and

never was there a set of faces seen together, that told the story of happier hearts than did theirs that evening. Not many words were spoken, however; even little Lucy was silent; in great joy, as well as in great sorrow, we find that words are weak and vain to tell what is in the depths of the heart.

"Another kiss from you all," said their uncle to the children, as he bade them good night, and left them to return to the city.

After a little while Lucy's talking faculties began to return, and she told her father of their school, of her little companions, Ellen and Caroline B., and how much better she liked study now than she ever did before. "My brother wishes us," said Mr. Nelson, "to return to Boston, and live in his house while they are gone; they do not like to shut it up."

"Oh no, dear father," said all the children; "let us live in the country."

"What do you say, my dear?" said he to their mother.

"Let us remain here," she said; "I can be more with the children, and do them more good. Indeed, I am as much pleased with

the school as they are; and if your business will allow it, I should prefer remaining in the country for the summer at least."

"This is just my wish," said Mr. Nelson; "early rising will do me good, and I can always be in the city soon enough for my business." It was then decided that they should remain where they were, and continue their little school; and they retired to rest, with hearts overflowing with gratitude and joy, but not before Mr. Nelson had, in the simple language of devout and sincere prayer, thanked the Giver of all good, for so soon uniting them together again, under the same roof, in peace and safety.

It remains only to be said that the mother found it hard to relinquish her plan of taking Julia to Paris; but her husband was positive, and she at last consented to leave her. Vain and weak as she was, she loved her daughter very tenderly; and although she feared it would be a lasting injury to Julia's manners, and, what was to her of nearly as great importance, her complexion, to live in the country, she yet wished her to be with her aunt and Catharine, rather than with any

one besides, if she was not permitted to go with them to Paris. She trusted, she said, that her aunt Nelson would make it a matter of conscience, to see that Julia never went out without a bonnet. The idea of the sufferings and possible dangers of the voyage made her feel very nervous; but, on the other hand, she would say, that she comforted herself with the thought that she should see a little of Parisian society, and be able, perhaps, to bring home with her a French milliner, who could teach the Gothic Bostonians a more civilized mode of making bows for their caps and bonnets.

When Julia heard from her father that they were going to Europe, and that she was to remain with her aunt Nelson, her first feeling was that of passionate grief at being separated from her parents. Her next feeling was, that if she could not be with them, she should be happier with Catharine and her aunt than any where else. They had always had the power of calling forth her best qualities; and, without ever being flattered by them, she had always experienced more true self-satisfaction after being with them, than

at any other time. She had often said to her father, "I should learn to be always good, father, I believe, if I was to live with Catharine." It is impossible to love excellent beings truly, and become very intimate with their minds, without desiring to imitate the excellence which we admire. Julia had experienced this blessed effect from the character and conduct of Catharine; she had found her happiness in yielding to that influence only which it is safe and desirable for one mind to have over another, that of simple goodness and superior virtue. Catharine had been Julia's first playmate, her earliest companion, and was her dearest friend; and may we not hope that, now that she is to live with her, she will cure her faults, and, to use her own words, "learn how to be always good"?

We hope that our readers will not compare us to a visiter, who, after having said "Good-bye," stands holding the door in his hand, to say a few last words, which, although courtesy induces us to listen to them with a degree of attention, do not make us forget that it is time the door was shut. We have one part-

ing word to say of our friend Patrick. When he heard that Mr. Nelson had returned home, and that he was to remain with his family, he ran about tossing up his hat, huzzaing like a crazy man. "Betsy," said he to his wife, "it's not worth while for me to try to work this afternoon. I must go out and see Mr. Nelson myself, and ask him if it is really him that has come back, and that's not going to England. Good-bye!" and in less than five minutes he was on the road to Mr. Nelson's. He arrived a little before sunset, and found his old master standing in the little porch in front of the house. "Heaven be praised, and is it yourself that I see?" said he, while his eyes filled with tears, and his whole face glowed with delight.

"Indeed it is, Patrick," said Mr. Nelson, as he caught the poor fellow's hand, "and very glad to see you, my good friend. All my debts are paid, I am a free man again, and can stay at home with my wife and children; come in and see us." They all came forward to shake hands with him, and receive his congratulation, and enjoy over again with him their new and unexpected happiness.

He stood still, looking around at the whole group for a moment, and then said, "Now have the prayers of poor Patrick O'Neil been heard, and I have lived to see you all together again. Now I can forgive even the creditors, especially since they did not get Miss Catharine's piano."

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