Elinor Wyllys

Susan Fenimore Cooper

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ELINOR WYLLYS: OR, THE YOUNG FOLK OF LONGBRIDGE. A TALE.

BY AMABEL PENFEATHER.

{Pseudonym of Susan Fenimore Cooper (1813−1894),
daughter of James Fenimore Cooper (1789−1851)}

"Familiar matter of today;
Some natural sorrow, loss or pain,
That has been, and may be again."
WORDSWORTH

{William Wordsworth (English poet, 1770−1850), "The Solitary
Reaper" lines 22−24}

IN TWO VOLUMES,
VOL. I.

EDITED BY J. FENIMORE COOPER

EDITOR'S PREFACE.

THERE is so much of mystification resorted to, at the present time, in the publication of books, that it has become proper that the editor of Elinor Wyllys should explain what has been his own connection with this particular work.

The writer of this book is a valued female friend, who had a right to ask, and did ask, its editor's advice and assistance, in presenting it to the public. This advice and assistance have been cheerfully afforded, though neither has properly extended to the literary character of the work. As the author has not wished to appear, the name of the editor has been used in obtaining the copy−right, and his assistance given in forwarding and returning proof−sheets. Over a few of the last, the editor has cast an eye; but, believing the author of the book to be fully competent herself, to superintend her own work, as it has gone through the press, this supervision on the part of the editor has been very slight.

The editor has great confidence in the principles, taste, and intelligence of the real author of Elinor Wyllys. She has seen much of that portion of the world with which a lady becomes acquainted, and has seen that much under the most favorable circumstances. As usually happens in such cases, her book will be found free from exaggerations of every sort; and will be more likely to be well received by persons of her own class, than by those who are less familiar with its advantages. Imagination, feeling, sound principles, and good taste, are all to be found in this book, though in what degree, the public will necessarily decide for itself.

J. FENIMORE COOPER.

Philadelphia, Oct. 8, 1845.

PREFACE

IT will be well, perhaps, that the reader bear in mind, while running over the following pages, that many passing observations, many trifles, which naturally find their way into any sketch of social life, refer chiefly to things and notions in favour some ten years since; a period which is certainly not beyond the memory of man, but very possibly beyond the clear recollection of some young lady reader, just within her teens. New opinions, new ideas, new fashions have appeared among us since then, and made their way perceptibly. Twenty years' possession constitutes a legal title, if we may believe the lawyers; but a single season is often sufficient for a new fancy−−fancies of a serious nature too, sometimes−−to take full possession of the public mind, and assume arbitrary control of the premises for the time being, at least.

It will be more honest to confess, at once, before the reader undertakes the first chapter, that the tale now before him is a first appearance in print−−a first appearance, too, of one who, even now that the formidable step is taken, feels little disposed to envy the honours of authorship. Writing may be a very pleasant pastime; but printing seems to have many disagreeable consequences attending every stage of the process; and yet, after all, reading is often the most irksome task of the three. In this last case, however, the remedy is generally easy; one may throw aside the volume, and abuse the author. If there are books which MUST be read, stupid or not, owing to the claim of some great name on the binding, the present story is not one of the number; and perhaps the perfect liberty enjoyed by the reader under such circumstances−−to like or dislike independent of critics, to cut every leaf, or skip a dozen chapters at a time without fear of reproach−−will incline him to an amiable mood. It is to be hoped so; it will be unfortunate if, among many agreeable summer excursions both on terra firma and in the regions of fancy, the hour passed at Longbridge should prove a tedious one: in such a case the fault will belong entirely to the writer of the narrative, for there are certainly some very pleasant and very worthy people among the good folk of Longbridge.

−−−−−−−−−, August, 1845.

CHAPTER I.

"Enter the house, pr'ythee."−−
ROGERS.

{Samuel Rogers (English poet, 1763−1855), "Italy: Genevra" line 19. Samuel Rogers befriended James Fenimore Cooper and his family during their visits to England in 1826−33}

HAD there been a predecessor of Mr. Downing in the country, some five−and−twenty year since, to criticise Wyllys−Roof, the home of our friend Elinor, his good taste would no doubt have suggested many improvements, not only in the house itself, but also in the grounds which surrounded it. The building had been erected long before the first Tudor cottage was transported, Loretto−like, across the Atlantic, and was even anterior to the days of Grecian porticoes. It was a comfortable, sensible−looking place, however, such as were planned some eighty or a hundred years since, by men who had fortune enough to do as they pleased, and education enough to be quite superior to all pretension. The house was a low, irregular, wooden building, of ample size for the tastes and habits of its inmates, with broad piazzas, which not only increased its dimensions, but added greatly to the comfort and pleasure of the family by whom it was occupied.

{"Downing" = Andrew Jackson Downing (1815−1852), noted American rural architect and landscape gardener; "Loretto−like" = after Loreto, in Italy, where, according to tradition, a brick Holy House was miraculously conveyed through the air by angels in 1294}

The grounds were of the simplest kind. The lawn which surrounded the house was merely a better sort of meadow, from which the stones and briars had been removed with more care than usual, and which, on account of its position, received the attention of one additional mowing in the course of the summer. A fine wood, of a natural growth, approached quite near to the house on the northern side, partially sheltering it in that direction, while an avenue of weeping elms led from the gate to the principal entrance, and a row of locusts, planted at equal distances, lined the low, rude stone wall which shut out the highway. One piazza was shaded by noble willows, while another was faced by a row of cherry trees, flanked by peach and pear. Fruit trees, although so common and so lavish of their blessings in this climate, are often gathered about American country−houses, instead of being confined to gardens devoted to the purpose, as in Europe; a habit which pleasantly reminds us that civilization has made a recent conquest over the wilderness in this new world, and that our forefathers, only a few generations back, preferred the trees of the orchard to those of the forest, even for ornament. Fruit trees are indeed beautiful objects when gay with the blossoms of spring, or rich with the offerings of summer, and, mingled with others, are always desirable about a dwelling as simple and unpretending in its character as Wyllys−Roof. Beneath the windows were roses and other flowering shrubs; and these, with a few scattered natives of the soil−−elm, hickory, sycamore, and tulip trees−−farther from the house, were the only attempts at embellishment that had been made. The garden, surrounded by a white paling, was thought an ornamental object, and lay within full view of the drawing−room windows; and yet it was but a mixture of the useful and the beautiful, in which the former largely predominated. As a kitchen−garden it was certainly excellent; but the narrow flower−borders, which surrounded the ample beds of melons and strawberries, asparagus and cauliflowers, would have appeared meanly furnished in the eyes of a flower−fancier of the present day. There was not a hybrid among them, nor a single blossom but what bore a plain, honest name; and although there were lilies and roses, pinks and violets in abundance, they would probably have been all rooted out by your exclusive, fashionable gardener of the last summer, for they were the commonest varieties only. There were but two walks on the lawn; one of these was gravelled, and led to the garden−gate; the other was a common foot−path leading to the river, where the gentlemen of the family kept their boats, and where the cattle, who often grazed on the lawn, went to drink. The grounds were bounded on one side by a broad river, on the other by a sufficiently well−travelled highway. What particular river and highway these were, through what particular state and county they ran, we do not think it incumbent on us to reveal. It may easily be inferred, however, that Wyllys−Roof belonged to one of the older parts of the country, at no great

distance from the seaboard, for the trees that shaded the house were of a growth that could not have been reached by any new plantation in a western settlement.

{"particular state..." = Longbridge, we learn, has steamboat connections to New York City, while steamboat connections to Philadelphia are from nearby Upper Lewiston; in the course of the story, one of the first railroads in America comes through town; this suggests, if anywhere, New Jersey. Judicial matters take place in Philadelphia, which would seem to place Longbridge in Pennsylvania. It is not clear, however, that the author had any specific location in mind}

The interior arrangements of Wyllys−Roof corresponded very naturally with the appearance of things outside. The ceilings were low, and the apartments small and numerous; much room had been thrown into broad, airy passages, while closets and cupboards abounded. The whole of the lower floor had originally been wainscoted, but Miss Agnes Wyllys was answerable for several innovations in the principal rooms. When Mr. Wyllys decided to make his country−place a permanent residence, his daughter, who was at the head of his establishment, fancied that the furniture they had brought from their house in town could not be advantageously disposed of, without cutting folding−doors between the drawing−rooms. It was fortunate that a couple of adjoining rooms admitted of this arrangement, for at that day, two drawing−rooms of equal size, united by wide folding−doors, were considered a necessary of life to all American families "on hospitable thought intent." It seems to have been only very recently that any other arrangement has been found possible, an important discovery, which, like many others that have preceded it, was probably the happy effect of necessity, that mother of invention. Mr. Wyllys having cut through the partition, was next persuaded to take down the wainscoting, and put up in its place a French paper, very pretty in its way, certainly, but we fear that Miss Agnes had no better reason to give for these changes than the fact that she was doing as her neighbours had done before her. Miss Wyllys was, however, little influenced in general by mere fashion, and on more important matters could think for herself; this little weakness in favour of the folding−doors may therefore be forgiven, and justly ascribed to the character of the age in which she lived and gave tea−parties.

{"on hospitable thought intent" = John Milton (English poet, 1608−1674), "Paradise Lost", Book V, line 332}

For several years after they removed permanently to Wyllys−Roof, the family, strictly speaking, consisted of Mr. Wyllys, his unmarried daughter, and the usual domestics, only. They were seldom alone, however; they had generally some friend or relative with them, and in summer the house was often filled to overflowing, during the whole season, with parties of friends, or the different branches of a large family connection; for the Wyllyses had their full share of that free spirit of hospitality which seems characteristic of all classes of Americans. After a time, however, another member was received into the family. This was the orphan daughter of Mr. Wyllys's eldest son, an engaging little girl, to whom her grandfather and aunt were called upon to fill the place of the father and mother she had lost. The little orphan was too young, at the time, to be aware, either of the great affliction which had befallen her, or of her happy lot in being committed to such kind guardians, in merely exchanging one home for another.

The arrival of the little Elinor at Wyllys−Roof was the only important event in the family for some ten or twelve years; the Wyllyses were not much given to change, and during that period things about them remained much as they have just been described. We defer presenting the family more especially to the reader's notice until our young friend Elinor had reached her seventeenth birth−day, an event which was duly celebrated. There was to be a little party on the occasion, Miss Agnes having invited some half−dozen families of the neighbourhood to pass the evening at Wyllys−Roof.

The weather was very warm, as usual at the last of August; and as the expected guests were late in making their appearance, Mr. Wyllys had undertaken in the mean time to beat his daughter at a game of chess. Elinor, mounted on a footstool, was intent on arranging a sprig of clematis to the best advantage, in the beautiful dark hair of her cousin Jane Graham, who was standing for that purpose before a mirror. A good−looking youth, whom we introduce without farther ceremony as Harry Hazlehurst, was watching the chess−players with some interest. There were also two ladies sitting on a sofa, and as both happened at the time to be inmates of Wyllys−Roof, we may as well mention that the elderly gentlewoman in a cap was Mrs. Stanley, the widow of a connection from whom young Hazlehurst had inherited a large property. Her neighbour, a very pretty woman, neither young nor old, was Mrs. George Wyllys, their host's daughter−in−law, and, as her mourning−dress bespoke her, also a widow. This lady was now on a visit to Wyllys−Roof with her young children, whom, as she frequently observed,

she wished to be as much as possible under the influence of their father's family.

Mr. Wyllys's game was interrupted for a moment, just as he was about to make a very good move; a servant came to let him know that a drunken man had been found under a fence near the house. The fellow, according to Thomas's story, could not be roused enough to give a straight account of himself, nor could he be made to move.

"Is it any one you know, Thomas?" asked Mr. Wyllys.

"No, sir, it's no one from hereabouts. I shouldn't wonder if he was a sailor, by the looks of his trowsers and jacket. I guess it is some loafer on his way to Longbridge."

What could be done with him? was the question. The ladies did not seem to like the idea of having a drunken man, whom no one knew, brought into the house at night.

"I dare say it is the same person I heard asking the way to Wyllys−Roof this morning, when we stopped at the turnpike−gate," observed Mrs. Stanley. "He looked at the time as if he had been drinking."

Elinor suggested that possibly it might be some old sailor, who fancied he had a claim upon Mr. Wyllys's kindness−−Mr. George Wyllys having died a commander in the navy.

Harry volunteered to go out and take a look at him, and the party in the drawing−room awaited the result of this reconnoitring {sic}. At the end of five minutes Hazlehurst returned with his report.

"As far as I can judge by the help of moonlight and a lantern, it is no very prepossessing personage. He swore at me roundly for disturbing him, and I take it the fellow is really a sailor. I asked him what he wanted at Wyllys−Roof, but we could not make anything out of him. To keep him from mischief, we locked him up in one of the out−houses. It is to be hoped in the morning he will be sober enough to tell his errand."

The matter thus settled, nothing farther was thought of it at the time, and in another moment the game of chess was won, and the flower secured in a becoming position. Mrs. Stanley had been watching Elinor's movements with a smile.

"You are an expert hair−dresser; the flowers are much prettier as you have arranged them," said the lady to her young friend.

"Is it not a great improvement? They looked heavy as Jane had arranged them before−−I have taken out more than half," replied Elinor.

Mrs. George Wyllys looked up from the newspaper she was reading, and suggested a change.

"I think the clematis would look better on the other side."

"Do you really think so, Aunt Harriet? I flattered myself I had been very successful: it strikes me that it looks very well."

"What is it that looks so well, ladies?" said Mr. Wyllys, rising from the chess−table and drawing near the young people. "The flower? Yes, the flower and the face are both very pretty, my dear. What is it? a honeysuckle?"

"No indeed, grandpapa," answered Elinor, "it is a clematis−−this is a honeysuckle, a monthly honeysuckle, which Jane had twisted with it; but to my fancy the clematis is prettier alone, especially as it is so precious−−the very last one we could find."

"Why don't you put the honeysuckle in your own hair, Nelly? it is a very pretty flower. Being queen of the evening, you should certainly wear one yourself."

"Oh, I never wear flowers, grandpapa; I cannot make them look well in my hair. This bouquet must proclaim my dignity to−night."

"It is pretty enough, certainly, my child, for any dignity−−"

"Is it not rather large?" said Harry. "Why, Elinor, you have smothered my humble offering in a whole wilderness of sweets!"

"Not quite as bad as that," said Elinor, smiling−−"I only put with yours, a few Aunt Agnes and Miss Patsey gave me−−look at Jane's if you wish to see a bouquet of a reasonably fashionable size."

"Bouquets are worn very large this summer," said Jane Graham, in a languid tone, resting her beautiful eyes on the bunch in her hand.

"Fashion even in flowers!" exclaimed Mr. Wyllys.

"So it would seem," replied Elinor, smiling.

"And, pray," said Harry, taking a rose from a vase near him, "if a friend were to offer a flower for your belt, since you will not place one in your hair, would fashion permit it to be worn?"

"I don't believe it would, Nelly," said her grandfather.

Elinor looked just a little embarrassed, and a little pleased.

"Thank you," she said, taking the rose Harry offered; and while securing it in her sash, she felt that she coloured. But the flush was scarcely observed on a cheek as dark as hers.

"Well, Agnes, it is high time your friends came, unless they expect a rout," said Mr. Wyllys, stepping towards a window to look out. "Who are we to have?"

{"rout" = a large evening party}

"Your new neighbours, sir, the Taylors; your old friends, the Hubbards, Van Hornes, Bernards−−"

"I hope you will like the Taylors, Agnes; but I don't know much about them. I am glad you thought of asking them this evening, for he brought me a letter, you remember, from New York."

{"letter" = a letter of introduction}

"As there is a young lady in the family, and a son just grown up, I thought they might like to dance," replied Miss Agnes. She then turned to Mrs. Stanley, and asked that lady, who lived in New York, if she knew anything of these new neighbours of theirs.

"I never heard of them," replied Mrs. Stanley. "But they may be very important people, and make a great deal of noise, for all that; as I only see my old friends, and live so quietly myself, I don't even know the names of half the people who pass for fashionable."

"I never suspected our new neighbours of being fashionable," replied Mr. Wyllys; "but I hope they will turn out pleasant, sensible people, for your sake, ladies; and, then, if Taylor is a chess−player, that will leave nothing farther to be desired."

"Here comes somebody, at last!" exclaimed Mrs. George Wyllys, hearing a carriage. "The Van Hornes, I suppose."

"I beg your pardon," said Hazlehurst, who was standing near the window, "that is the Taylor equipage; why the 'tastiness' of the Taylor barouche is visible even by moonlight."

{"barouche" = four−wheeled carriage with room for four passengers inside}

The party in the carriage, consisting of father and mother, son and daughter, soon alighted, and appeared in the drawing−room. They were introduced by Mr. Wyllys, and received politely by his daughter and her niece.

"I am gratified, sir," said the tall and thin Mr. Taylor, with a pompous tone, "in having so early an opportunity of making our ladies mutually acquainted."

"We shall hope to see your family often, Mr. Taylor," replied his host. "You must not forget that we are near neighbours; and we country folk think a great deal of neighbourhood, I assure you."

"Yes; of course the restraints of society must be much greater in a city, than in a more sparsely settled section."

"I hope your new purchase suits you on farther examination. The farm is certainly a very good one; but the house, I should think, must want repairs."

"It does, sir; I calculate to build, however, next year. The present dwelling is much too small."

"The house might suit us, I think," observed Mrs. Taylor, who, with Miss Agnes, had taken a seat, while the young people were standing, chatting, near them. "If husband would put up a back−building, we should have room enough."

Miss Wyllys remarked, that even a small addition, often increased very much the convenience of a house.

"Certainly, madam; but I apprehend, if I had added wings and a back−building to the premises, as I first intended, Mrs. Taylor would still have found the house not sufficiently spacious. Now our young ladies and gentlemen are growing up, we must have, more room for company."

"Well," added his wife, "I expect to see a good deal of tea and dinner company, next summer, with the house as it is."

"The young people will be much obliged to you for your kind intentions, Mrs. Taylor; ours is not a very gay neighbourhood," said Miss Wyllys.

"So I should conclude," remarked Mr. Taylor.

"I don't know, Agnes," said her father; "if you include Longbridge in the neighbourhood, I think we may call ourselves a gay set."

"True, sir," said Miss Agnes; "but as we seldom go there ourselves in the evening, it had not struck me in that

light. But very possibly, Mrs. Taylor and her young ladies may be more enterprising than Elinor and myself."

"Four miles, madam," interposed Mr. Taylor, "with a good vehicle and good horses, is no great distance. Longbridge seems to be in a very flourishing condition, sir;" turning to Mr. Wyllys.

"Yes, the place is looking up; they are very busy just now. They are building a good deal, this summer."

"I observed several tasty mansions, in what may be called the suburbs; in particular a brick edifice, being erected, I understand, by Joseph P. Hubbard."

"The brick house near the bridge? Yes, it will be the largest about here. Hubbard is building it more to please his daughters than himself, I fancy."

"It promises a great display of taste−−I observe he has reserved half his lot, in front of the mansion, for a park."

"Hem−−Yes, there will be just half an acre in it. Does Hubbard call it a park?" asked Mr. Wyllys, with an amused expression about his eyes.

"I applied the term myself," replied the knowing Mr. Taylor. "I was altogether much pleased with the appearance of your village, sir. It has a lively business for such a small place−−things really look quite citified there. If I had seen Mr. Hubbard's mansion, before concluding my bargain for my present location, I think I should have made him an offer."

"I am very glad you did not, husband. I was brought up on a farm, Miss Wyllys, and I am very happy that we have got in the open country. Besides, Mr. Hubbard's house will be too large for comfort."

"Ha, ha!" faintly laughed Mr. Taylor; "you seem to like room out of doors better than within, Mrs. Taylor."

At this moment two persons walked quietly into the room, and were received very kindly by Miss Wyllys and Elinor. One was a woman of about forty, plainly, but neatly dressed, with a pleasing face, remarkable for a simple expression of common sense and goodness. Her manners corresponded perfectly with her appearance; they were quiet and pleasant. The lad who accompanied her was a boy of sixteen, small, and slightly made, with good features, and an uncommonly spirited and intelligent countenance. They might very naturally have been taken for mother and son; but they were, in fact, brother and sister.

"Well, Charlie, my lad," said Mr. Wyllys, placing a hand on the boy's shoulder, "I hear the important matter is at last under full consideration."

"Yes, sir; my friends have all but consented; even sister Patsey is coming round. It will be all settled next week, I hope."

"I wish you joy of your success, Charlie," cried Hazlehurst.

"Not yet, if you please, Mr. Hazlehurst," said Miss Patsey Hubbard, smiling good−naturedly. "It is only a conditional consent, Charles, you must remember." Then turning to Mr. Wyllys, she added−−"All our friends seem to agree with you, sir, and Miss Wyllys: my uncles think Charles ought to show what he has done to some experienced painters, and have their opinions. We feel very anxious on the subject."

"Remember to persevere, young man, if you once begin," said Mr. Wyllys.

"No danger but I shall, sir," said the boy rather proudly.

"I fear, Charles, that half the fault of your obstinacy is thrown upon my shoulders," said Elinor. "Those Lives of the Painters were an unfortunate present; they seem quite to have turned your head; I am afraid Miss Patsey will not soon forgive me."

{"Lives of the Painters" = probably Giorgio Vasari (Italian writer, 1511−1574), "Lives of the Most Excellent Architects, Painters and Sculptors" (1550, rev. 1568), a famous and often reprinted series of biographies of Italian artists, also frequently cited as "Lives of the Artists."}

"I can't thank you enough for them, Miss Elinor−−you don't know what pleasure I have had with them."

CHAPTER II.

"We'll measure them a measure, and begone."

{William Shakespeare, "Romeo and Juliet", I.iv.10}

The arrival of guests again called the ladies away; they were followed by others, until the drawing−room was half−filled with the young people of the neighbourhood, and their parents. Mrs. Stanley was soon talking with Patsey Hubbard, whom she liked particularly. The tall and thin Mrs. Bernard, and her friend, the short and fat Mrs. Van Horne, were regretting with Mrs. George Wyllys, that she should think the air of Longbridge did not agree with her children; and lamenting that she should not remain at Wyllys−Roof until November, according to her first intention. Charlie was deep in a volume of fine engravings. Young Taylor was standing; in a corner, looking handsome, but awkward, and out of place. Mr. Taylor, the father, was aiming at making himself 'affable' to everybody he knew; he liked to be called the 'affable' Mr. Taylor. The last of the party to arrive, were Mr. and Mrs. Clapp; a couple, who were by no means equally liked by their hosts. The husband was a Longbridge lawyer, whose views and manners were not much admired at Wyllys−Roof; and he would probably never have found his way there, had he not married one of their old friends and favourites, Kate Hubbard, a younger sister of Miss Patsey's−−one who from childhood had always been welcome among them. William Cassius Clapp had curly hair, bright black eyes, and pink cheeks−−and, consequently, was generally thought an Adonis: his wife was a diminutive little creature, quite pretty, and very amiable; a sort of mixture of Miss Patsey and Charlie, without the more striking qualities of either. Some of her friends had thought her thrown away upon Clapp; but she seemed perfectly satisfied after five years' experience, and evidently believed her husband superior in every way to the common run of men. Holding it to be gross injustice towards the individuals whom we bring before the reader, to excite a prejudice against them in the very first chapter, we shall leave all the party to speak and act for themselves; merely endeavouring to fill the part of a 'faithful chronicler,' ourselves.

Mr. Taylor had been looking, with a mixed expression of surprise and curiosity, at the person he had heard addressed as Miss Patsey Hubbard, when the lady remarked his manner, and, smiling quietly, she bowed to him. The bow was returned; and Mr. Taylor crossed the room, to renew an acquaintance with the woman, who, three−and−twenty years before, had refused to become his wife. Mr. Pompey Taylor had, however, risen too much in the world, since then−−according to his own estimation, at least−−he had become too rich and too prosperous, not to look back with great equanimity, on what he now considered as a very trifling occurrence. While he was addressing Miss Patsey in his most polished manner, just marked with an extra−touch of 'affability,' for her especial benefit, he could not but wonder that her countenance should still wear the same placid, contented air as of old; it seemed, indeed, as if this expression had only been confirmed by time and trials. He began to think the accounts he had occasionally heard, of his old flame, must have been incorrect; it was scarcely possible she should look so calm, and even cheerful, if her father, the Presbyterian minister, had actually left her not only penniless, but burdened with the support of a bed−ridden step−mother, and a house full of younger brothers and sisters. We leave him to satisfy his curiosity as well as he could.

When was there ever an evening too warm for young people to dance! Elinor's friends had not been in the room half an hour, before they discovered that they were just the right number to make a quadrille agreeable. They were enough to form a double set; and, while they were dancing, the elder part of the company were sitting in groups near the windows, to catch the evening air, and talking over neighbourly matters, or looking on at their young friends.

"Don't you think Elinor very graceful?" exclaimed Mrs. Van Horne to her friend, Mrs. Bernard. "I like to watch her, while she is dancing; her movements are all so pleasing and easy, never, in the least,

exaggerated−−but, it is in her very nature; she has always been the same, from a little creature."

"Yes," replied Mrs. Bernard; "but it is a pity her face should be so ugly; for she has rather a pretty figure−−"

"Do you think her really ugly? She does not strike me, as so very plain−−there is nothing repulsive in her face. I have known girls called pretty, who had something far nearer coarseness in their features. It is true, I have been accustomed to see her from the time she was four years old; and, I know, she is always thought very plain by strangers."

"Why, my dear Mrs. Van Horne, she has not one feature that can be called good; and her eye−brows are so heavy, and her complexion is so thick and dark, too!"

"Yes, it is true, she is very dark; and that is a pity; if she were only fairer, her features would appear to greater advantage."

"Just look at her now," said Mrs. Bernard, "as she is standing by her cousin, Jane Graham, who is dancing with your son. Was there ever a greater contrast?"

"But Jane is so remarkably pretty−−"

"Certainly, she is a perfect little beauty; and that is one reason, perhaps, why Elinor strikes us as so plain; she is so much with her cousin−−"

"Well," said Mrs. Van Horne, "if you are going to quarrel so much, with my little friend's face, we had better find something else to talk about; for she is a very great favourite of mine."

"And justly−−I dare say.−−But, I am a great admirer of beauty, you know; and I cannot keep my eyes off Jane's lovely face."

The conversation then turned upon the Hubbards.

"Charlie, it seems, is actually going to be a painter," observed Mrs. Bernard. "Miss Patsey tells me, he is so bent on it, that she thinks there is no use in opposing it any longer; though, Mr. Clapp says, it is a wretched plan."

"I hope Charles may succeed; he is a fine boy; and I shall be very sorry, for Patsey's sake, if he turns out badly. She is very anxious about him, I know."

"They have been so fortunate, with the rest of the family, that, I hope, they will be able to keep Charlie straight. I see Miss Patsey is talking to Mrs. Taylor; they are old friends, perhaps. Do you know anything about these Taylors?"

"Nothing but what my husband told me. He is a merchant in New York, and very rich;−−made his money quite lately; and the business−men think a good deal of him."

"He seems to have a great deal to say for himself. Have you called on Mrs. Taylor?"

"We were there yesterday. She is a quiet, plain woman. The young man is good−looking, but very shy and awkward. The daughter seems very lively."

"Yes, and she is quite pretty, too. She will be a belle, I dare say."

"I hope Mrs. Taylor will send her younger children to Patsey's school."

"I wish she may; it will be a good thing for Miss Patsey, and make up her dozen. You know, she will not take more than twelve, as she keeps the largest room in the house for her mother."

"How kind and faithful Patsey has been to her step−mother! Just as she is, though, to everybody else; and she does it all in such a quiet, consistent way. I am glad to see her here to−night−−she enjoys a little society, once in a while; and yet no one can persuade her to go out, except Miss Wyllys."

"She has come in honour of her pupil's birthday, I suppose. You know, Elinor Wyllys was her first scholar. By−the−bye, do you know what I heard, the other day? They say, in Longbridge, that Mr. Hazlehurst is engaged to one of the young ladies here; though, to which, my informant did not say."

"There is no truth in it, you may be sure−−they are too much like brother and sister, to think of it. Besides, Mr. Hazlehurst is going abroad, shortly."

"I did not know that. Where is he going?"

"He told my son, yesterday, that he was going to Europe, for two years, to take care of his brother, Mr. Robert Hazlehurst, who has never recovered from the fall he had last winter; and the physicians have ordered him to travel."

At that moment the ladies were joined by Miss Agnes.

"I hear, Miss Wyllys," said Mrs. Bernard, "that Mr. Hazlehurst is going to Europe. He will be very much missed, at Longbridge."

"Yes, we shall miss him, here, very much," replied Miss Wyllys; "Harry has been with us more than ever, this summer. But, his brother is not in a state to travel alone, nor fit to take care of his wife and children, who go with him; and, although the plan is a sudden one, and interferes with Harry's law−studies, yet his friends all think a visit to Europe may be a great advantage to him."

The ladies agreed that it was a very good arrangement, and some inquiries were made as to Mr. Robert Hazlehurst's health; and a discussion of bruises and falls, nerves and dyspepsia, followed.

Soon after, the quadrille broke up.

"Well, Miss Jane," cried Mrs. Bernard, as several young people drew near, "I hear that your sister, Mrs. Robert Hazlehurst, is going to Europe; if I were you, I would not be left behind."

"I should like to go very well," said the beauty, in a languid tone; "but, I shall be at school, in New York, next winter."

"Oh, that is a pity! I am sure, you could learn all you want to know, much better, in Paris. Don't you think she ought to go, Mr. Hazlehurst?"

"Certainly, ma'am; everybody should go to Paris, if they have a chance."

"Miss Jane would be such a charming addition to your party.−−Two young people together, you would enjoy yourselves more, and make it pleasanter for your friends."

Young Hazlehurst made a civil bow to the lady; but he looked as if he had an opinion of his own on the subject, for comical expression crossed his face at the moment. Jane had turned in another direction, and was slowly lisping an answer to a very animated question of Miss Adeline Taylor's.

"Yes; I was at Mrs. G−−−−−'s school, last year; and, I am going there again."

"Well, I positively think I must go there, too, for my last winter. Mrs. G−−−−−'s school is all the fashion, now. All the young ladies she turns out, are very lively. Miss Hubbard, the great belle, was there, you know, before she came out. Don't you think it would be an excellent plan, Mr. Hazlehurst, for your cousin and me to be chums? I declare, I wish you were going, too, Miss Wyllys."

"Thank you. I have never been to school, in my life; and it is rather late, to begin now."

"Never been to school! What dull times you must have had at home! You don't know what fine fun we have, at school; it is next to going into company. I wouldn't stay at home, for the world. Why didn't you go?"

"Well, I really don't know why. Perhaps, I should have wished to go, if I had thought it as pleasant as you seem to do, Miss Taylor."

"And pray, if I may ask, what made it so very pleasant?" asked Harry Hazlehurst. "I should like to be initiated into the delights of a young ladies' boarding−school. Of course, they must be very different from the rude enjoyments of collegians."

"Oh! it would take me a year, to tell you all about it."

"I shall be most happy to listen all the evening. But, let me find you a chair, before you commence; you must be tired of standing," said Harry, with a view to taking a seat himself.

"Me? Oh, no; I never sit down, at a party; I always stand. You lose half the fun, by sitting down." And, having secured Harry's attention, the half−fledged belle turned to another youth, within hailing distance. "Now, what do you think Mr. Hazlehurst has given me to do, for the next hour, Mr. Van Horne?"

"I am sure, I don't know. Is it something very difficult? Listening to his pretty speeches, perhaps," said the other.

"Oh dear, no! I don't believe Mr. Hazlehurst can make a tender speech; I don't believe he has got any heart," said Miss Adeline, looking an attempt at archness.

"And, pray, what makes you think so, Miss Taylor? Do you judge from my savage expression?"

"Well, perhaps, you have one;" said the young lady, looking up bewitchingly. "I suspect, though, you take very good care of it,"

"But this is not fair; you are abusing me, instead of giving us the delights of your school, as you promised."

"Oh, I had forgotten that. But, I should think, you might guess what fun we have−−a set of wild girls together."

"How should I know anything about it? Pray, be more explicit."

"Well, in the first place, we make a point of getting up an excitement, at least once a week."

"Like our unruly spirits at college, you break the windows, and roll cannon−balls, I suppose."

"How you talk! No, indeed. Our last excitement was about the coat of our Professor of Mathematics. It was such a quizzical cut, we told Mrs. A., it was morally impossible for us to attend to the lesson, and study the problems, as long as the man wore it."

"It was unpardonable, in a professor of mathematics, to wear a coat that was not cut according to rule."

"Now wasn't it? Well, you may be sure, we can always pitch upon something for an excitement, whenever we're in the humour for it. And then, we have secrets to tell about our beaux−−and we quiz the new scholars−−and we eat candy−−and we torment Mrs. A−−−−−; but, I shan't tell you any more, now; for I must go out on the piazza, and have a walk−−it looks so sweet, out there. You shall have the rest of the story, if you'll come."

And away tripped the young lady, followed, of course, by the gentlemen.

Mr. Taylor, who had been moving about the room, making himself popular by a very bland smile, and, what he considered very courtly manners, still had time to keep one eye upon his son, who after an awkward fashion, seemed devoting himself to one or two of the ladies, and the other, upon his daughter. "Adeline will make herself conspicuous," thought the gratified father.

"Liny seems to enjoy herself," was the observation of her mother, who had been sitting quietly at her daughter's elbow, listening to the conversation just related.

"Two conquests!" thought the young lady herself.

"A lively girl!" was the opinion of young Van Horne.

"Fair game!" said Harry to himself.

While some of the young people were flirting, others dancing, Mr. Taylor and Mr. Clapp, whose acquaintance had commenced on board a steamboat that very morning, were walking together up and down the hall, which they had pretty much to themselves. They touched on business, which was pronounced very active; and on politics, which were declared to be particularly dull, just then: Mr. Clapp, indeed, thought the people much too quiet−−shamefully blind to their own interests, which always demanded what he called a state of healthful excitement−−meaning an unreasonable excitement upon any subject whatever. There can be no doubt that Mr. Clapp honestly believed such a state of agitation far more conducive than quiet to his own interest; for he was quite a fluent speaker, and very ambitious of a seat in the State Assembly. He belonged to that school of republicanism, which so completely identifies the individual with the mass, that it cannot conceive of any independent opinions, tastes, or principles; and, very possibly, he persuaded himself the good of the nation, as well as his personal advantage, required a fresh brand to be thrown upon the Longbridge council−fire. Having exchanged opinions with Mr. Clapp upon politics and the market, Mr. Taylor proceeded to make some observations and inquiries about the company; he evidently felt some curiosity regarding his new neighbours, while his companion seemed well disposed to give him all the information he desired.

"Mr. Wyllys is a man of large property, I conclude," said the merchant.

Mr. Clapp named the number of thousands usually given to their host; the amount was much lower than Mr. Taylor had supposed. He had already discovered that Mr. Wyllys was highly respected by the Longbridge community in general, and he had taken it for granted that he must be the richest man in the neighbourhood; but he now found that this was far from being the case. Mr. Wyllys, though in easy circumstances, could not command half as much money as several business men about him.

"THERE is a good fortune for you," said Mr. Clapp; "the lady on the sofa; her property does not lie here, though. The real estate is mostly in Carolina and Philadelphia. Did you see the young gentleman who has just gone out on the piazza with your daughter−−Mr. Hazlehurst? At the demise of the widow, it all goes to him; but in the mean time he has only two thousand a year−−it will be full twenty, altogether, if well managed," said Mr. Clapp, running his fingers through the black locks which his wife thought so handsome.

{"fortune" = short for a woman of fortune; an heiress}

"Mrs. Stanley is the old lady's name, is it not? The young gentleman is her grandson, I conclude."

"Not at all; only a nephew by marriage," replied the lawyer, pulling up his collar. "He may feel much obliged to Mr. Stanley for feathering his nest so well. But Hazlehurst is a very good fellow; I always liked him from the time he was a little shaver."

"The testator had no children of his own to inherit, I suppose," remarked Mr. Taylor.

"No sir; the only child of the first wife died just before his father−−the lady in the other room had no family.

Mr. Stanley had not a single near relation in the world; he bequeathed fifty thousand dollars to an Orphan Asylum, and left his widow a life−estate in one−half the remainder; which, at her death, goes in a lump, real estate and personals, to young Hazlehurst, who is the son of an old friend, and a nephew by marriage."

{"personals" = personal property}

"Some four hundred thousand dollars, I think you said; that would make a fine capital for a young man to open business with!"

"But show me the young man who, with four hundred thousand to begin with, will not spend it instead of making more! No, sir; give me a man with small means and a sharp wit for his stock in trade, rather than a hundred thousand down; ten to one the first winds up the better man by a good round sum. I should not wonder at all to find myself a richer man than Harry Hazlehurst by the time I am fifty."

"What splendid operations he might engage in, though!"

"If he wanted to, he could not touch the money now; it is all in the widow's hands until he is five−and−twenty, excepting the allowance of two thousand a year which she gives him, now he is of age."

After a little more conversation of the same nature−−in which the Van Hornes and the Bernards came in for their share of the appraisal, Mr. Clapp concluded by the offer of an introduction.

"Shall I introduce Mrs. Stanley to you? I am very well acquainted. I was raised in the same part of the country she came from. She is a very agreeable lady in conversation."

Mr. Taylor had not the least objection to make the acquaintance of any human being enjoying an estate of four hundred thousand dollars. He assented, and following Mr. Clapp into the drawing−room, the introduction took place without farther preface. Mrs. Stanley had been conversing with Miss Patsey and Elinor; she was rather taken by surprise when Mr. Clapp, advancing before her, said, with a flourish, "Mr. Taylor, Mrs. Stanley." Both the gentlemen were received by her with as much quiet coolness as was consistent with civility to her friend's guests. She had lately been often annoyed by Mr. Clapp's officious attentions, and was at a loss to account for them, until she remembered he might be wishing to obtain a share in the management of her affairs.

Having succeeded in bringing about the introduction, Mr. Clapp turned to Elinor.

"I hear strange stories in Longbridge about you, Miss Wyllys," said Mr. Clapp.

There was as yet no individual in the little world known to Elinor, more trying to her temper than the husband of her friend, Kate Hubbard. There was a smirking impertinence in Mr. Clapp's manner, of which it seemed impossible for him to divest himself, for it was often most conspicuous when he wished to make himself most agreeable; and no wonder this was the case, for it was a quality natural to him. The simple feeling of genuine respect and deference, so grateful to the heart where sincerely felt, was one he had never had the happiness to know. On the present occasion Elinor was not a little provoked with him, and something of the feeling might have been traced in her expression. We have heard of brilliant black eyes, that never appeared more beautiful than when flashing with passion. Those of our friend Elinor were small and grey; indignation, therefore, may not have been so becoming to them.

"Scarcely worth remembering, I fancy," she replied; and then made some observation about Mrs. Hubbard, to turn the conversation. The raillery and pleasantry of a man with no more tact, or true delicacy, than William Cassius Clapp, was more than even Elinor's sweet temper could have borne.

Mr. Wyllys had taken a seat near Mrs. Taylor.

"We have not seen all your young people yet, I believe, Mrs. Taylor."

"Oh, no, sir−−I have six at home, besides the two here. Thomas and Adeline are my eldest; the rest are hardly old enough to go out; to parties−−though Pompey is nearly fifteen."

"You must bring Mr. Pompey, too, next time. Your eldest son tells me he has just left Yale."

"He graduated last month. I want him to stay at home now until winter, and then go into business. But his father has taken a nation of having him go to Europe for six months. Thomas does not care so much about it; but husband has a great opinion of a European journey−−he talks some of going himself. Some young men go a whaling to see the world; but Mr. Taylor thinks Thomas had better have a chance to go to Paris."

"He will probably find Paris the pleasantest trip of the two," said Mr. Wyllys, smiling. "Young Hazlehurst is going abroad, too; he sails next week, with his brother. What is the name of Harry's packet, Nelly?" asked her grandfather, taking the young girl's hand affectionately, as she passed.

Elinor named the vessel; and, from Mrs. Taylor's answer, it appeared, the young men were to sail in the same

ship.

"I am glad to hear that your grandson is going to France, sir; it will be more sociable, for Thomas to have somebody he knows, in Paris."

"They will probably meet there. Harry is not my grandson, however."

"I beg your pardon; but, I understood, that the pretty young lady, with the white flower in her hair, and the young gentleman talking to my daughter Adeline, were your grandchildren."

"Oh, no; Miss Graham is my great−niece; and, as for Harry, if I remember right, he is no relation at all; though, we call him cousin. I have a house full of little grandchildren, here, just now, from Baltimore; but they are too young to be out of the nursery, at this hour. Does Miss Taylor sing?"

"No, sir; Adeline performs on the piano; but she has not any voice for music; which, I am very sorry for, as I like to hear young people sing."

"Perhaps, then, you would like to hear my grand−daughter; she sings me a song every evening, after tea," said Mr. Wyllys, who, indeed, seemed to think something was wanting to an evening, in his own house, unless Elinor gave him a little music, of which he was passionately fond; though, like most American gentlemen, of his age, he had no knowledge of the art, and no other guide than a good ear, and good natural taste. Elinor's voice was a full, sweet contralto, which had been cultivated under the best masters in Philadelphia; and, as she never attempted what she could not perform with ease and grace, her music always gave pleasure. One or two of the other ladies followed her, at the piano−−Mary Van Horne, and a friend who had come with her; but their performance was very indifferent. It was rarely that one heard anything approaching to really good amateur music, in this country, fifteen years ago, at the date of Elinor's seventeenth birthday.

A light supper, and a Virginia reel, concluded the evening; when the party broke up.

"I hope you are jealous, Elinor," said Harry Hazlehurst, as he returned into the house, after having attended Miss Adeline Taylor to the carriage.

"Jealous!−−Of what, pray?"

"Of the heart and affections of your humble servant, to be sure.−−You must have observed the snare that Miss Taylor laid for them."

"Nonsense.−−Good night!" and Elinor accompanied her aunt and cousin up stairs.

CHAPTER III.

"Her playmate from her youth."
ROGERS.

{Samuel Rogers (English poet, 1763−1855), "Italy: Genevra" line 55}

ELINOR had been in her room for some minutes, and was standing in thought, before an open window, when she turned toward a little table near her, and, opening a Bible, drew from it a letter. She raised it to her lips, and, moving toward a light unfolded the sheet. Tears soon blinded her sight; she was much agitated; then, becoming calmer, she continued to read. It was a letter of some length, and every line seemed deeply interesting to the reader. Once she paused, as if struck by some new thought, and then, again, she read with some anxiety. She had just finished the last words, when her door opened, and Miss Agnes entered the room.

"Be calm, my dear child," said her aunt; "it is indeed a precious letter, and one which we both value highly; your feelings are only natural, dearest; but do not indulge them to excess." Miss Wyllys, by her gentle, caressing manner, succeeded in calming Elinor, when, urging her not to sit up later, she left her niece for the night.

When Miss Agnes was gone, Elinor fell on her knees, with the letter still in her hand. She remained some time, apparently in prayer, and then rising calmly, she folded the sheet, and laid it on the Bible; and, before her head touched her pillow, the letter was again removed, and placed beneath it.

We have not the slightest wish to beguile the reader into believing that Elinor had a mysterious lover, or a clandestine correspondence; and we shall at once mention, that this letter was one written years previously, by the mother she had lost; and her good aunt, according to the direction, had placed it in her niece's hands, on the morning of her seventeenth birthday.

When Mr. Wyllys went down to breakfast, the next morning, he inquired if their drunken visiter {sic−−the Cooper family's usual spelling of the word}, of the previous night, had shown himself again.

"I have just been out, sir, to look after him," said Harry, "and the fellow does not seem to have liked his night's lodgings. He broke jail, and was off before any of the men were up this morning; they found the door open, and the staple off−−he must have kicked his way out; which could easily he done, as the lock was old."

Elinor suggested that it was, perhaps, some one who was ashamed of the situation in which he had been found.

"More probably he was too much accustomed to a lock−up house, to find it pleasant. But if he really had any business here, we shall hear of him again, no doubt," said Mr. Wyllys. The affair thus disposed of, the conversation took another turn.

Mr. Wyllys, Elinor's grandfather, was decidedly a clever man. He had held a high position, in his profession, until he withdrew from it, and had, at one time, honourably distinguished himself as a politician. He was well educated, and well read; his library, at Wyllys−Roof, was, indeed, one of the best in the country. Moreover, Mr. Wyllys was a philosopher, a member of the Philosophical Society of Philadelphia; and the papers he read, before that honourable association, were generally much admired by his audience. It is even probable that Mr. Wyllys believed himself endowed with a good stock of observation and experience in human nature; but, in spite of all these advantages, we cannot help thinking that, although well−versed in natural philosophy, this excellent gentleman proved himself quite ignorant of boy and girl nature. Even his daughter, Miss Agnes, feared her father had been unwise and imprudent on an occasion which she considered of great importance.

A great deal might be said in favour of Harry Hazlehurst. Few young men, of his age, were more promising in character and abilities. He was clever, and good−tempered; and, with all the temptations of an easy fortune within his reach, he had always shown himself firm in principles. There was one trait in his character, however, which

had already more than once brought him into boyish scrapes, and which threatened, if not corrected, to be injurious to his career through life. He was naturally high−spirited; and, having been indulged by his mother, and seldom controlled by his male guardian, a brother some ten years older than himself, Harry was rather disposed to be self−willed, and cherished some false notions regarding independence of character. His friends hoped, however, that as he grew older, he would become wiser. Something of this feeling had been mixed up with the motives which had lately led him to take a decided step for the future.

>From a boy, Harry had been more or less the companion and play−fellow of Elinor Wyllys and Jane Graham, whom he looked upon as cousins, owing to a near family connexion. He had always felt very differently, however, towards the two girls. Jane, a little beauty from her birth, had been an indolent and peevish child, often annoying Harry by selfish interference with their plans and amusements. Elinor, on the contrary, had always been a favourite playmate. She was an intelligent, generous child, of an uncommonly fine temper and happy disposition. As for her plain face, the boy seldom remembered it. They were both gay, clever children, who suited each other remarkably well, in all their little ways and fancies. Now, within the last year, it had struck Harry that his brother Robert and his sister−in−law, Mrs. Hazlehurst, were very desirous of making a match between Jane Graham and himself. He had overheard some trifling remark on the subject, and had suffered an afternoon's very stupid teasing and joking, about Jane, from a talkative old bachelor relation. This was quite sufficient to rouse the spirit of independence, in a youth of his years and disposition. When, at length, he heard a proposition that Jane should accompany them abroad, he went so far as to look upon it as something very like manoeuvring {sic}. HE was not a man to be led by others, in the choice of a wife. Jane might be a beauty−−no doubt she was−−but he had no such extravagant admiration for mere beauty. There was Elinor, for instance; she was a very different girl, though without any beauty; she was just the kind of person he liked. She was so warm−hearted and generous in her feelings−−without a bit of nonsense; she was so clever−−could catch a thought in a moment, and always understood and enjoyed a good thing. Then her manners, too, were charming, so simple and natural; while Jane had no manners at all. Then, everybody said she was remarkably graceful, in a perfectly natural way;−−how well she rode! Jane was even afraid to mount. And how pleasantly Elinor sang−−and he was so fond of music. Jane would do very well to sit and look at all day long; but, for walking, talking, riding, singing−−ay, for thinking and feeling, Elinor would make precisely such a companion as a man of sense would wish for. By dint of dwelling on Elinor's good qualities, and on what he fancied the plans of his brother and sister−in−law, he came to the conclusion that the only thing to be done, under the circumstances, by a man of any character−−by a man who had an opinion of his own, was to go immediately to Mr. Wyllys, and request his permission to address Elinor.

Harry was a great favourite with his uncle−−from a child the young man had always given this title to Mr. Wyllys−−and he had more than once expressed to his daughter, a wish that Hazlehurst and Elinor might, some years thence, take a fancy for each other. In the mean time he seemed to look upon them as children, and left matters to take care of themselves. Harry's proposal was, therefore, quite unexpected at the moment, and took him by surprise; he seemed to think Hazlehurst decidedly too young, at present−−he had not yet acquired his profession. This little difficulty in the opening of the affair, merely served to rouse Harry's eloquence; and as his youth was really the only objection against him, he succeeded, before long, in obtaining Mr. Wyllys's cheerful consent to his endeavouring, during the next two months, to interest Elinor in his behalf.

Miss Agnes, when informed of what had passed, was quite startled; she thought both parties too young to take so decided a step. But her father had given his formal consent, and she could not seriously oppose it; especially when she remembered that she, also, had more than once indulged the idea that some five or six years later, Harry would make a very good husband for her adopted daughter.

No one in the family was more surprised at Harry's advances than Elinor herself. They had been so much together, ever since she could remember, and had always been such good friends, in an open, brother−and−sisterly way, that even in the last year or two, when indistinct ideas of love and matrimony had occasionally, like distant events, cast their shadows before, Harry had never once presented himself to her fancy in the light of a suitor. It required a day or two for her to comprehend the full meaning of Harry's proceedings; she could say neither yes, nor no. This hesitation, very much increased Hazlehurst's perseverance; but her aunt, who looked on anxiously, had stipulated that nothing decided should be required of her, until Harry left them.

In the mean time, a day or two had been sufficient for Mr. Wyllys to become not only reconciled to the idea, but so well pleased with the appearance of things, that he amused himself with looking on at Harry in his new

character of a lover; and generally once a day, had some little joke at the expense of Elinor's embarrassment. But now, the two months had passed; Harry was to sail the next week for France−−and Elinor, the morning after her birth−day, was to give a decided answer.

It was no longer very difficult to foresee that this answer would be favourable. In fact, Harry, who was thoroughly gentlemanly by nature and habit, had made his attentions just what they ought to have been under the circumstances; and, with the full approbation of her own friends, and all Harry's good qualities appearing in their best light, the two months had proved sufficient to direct Elinor's childish affection for him into another and a deeper channel. The letter she had received on the night of her birth−day, caused a moment's indecision when, the next morning, after breakfast, as Mrs. Stanley and Mrs. George Wyllys left the room, her grandfather playfully asked her "what they should do with Harry?"

But she scarcely knew in what shape to express the thought that arose in her mind, and the feeling merely gave an additional touch of embarrassment to her manner, which was only looked upon as quite natural at the moment.

"I shall think myself very badly treated, Elinor," said Harry, observing her hesitation, "if you turn me off like a common acquaintance, after we have been the best friends in the world for nobody knows how long."

"Well, Nelly," said her grandfather, "what is it, my child? Shall we tell Harry to go to Paris and cultivate his moustaches, and forget everything else?"

"Oh, no;" said Elinor, smiling as she held out her hand to Hazlehurst, though without looking up: "pray, don't come back a dandy!"

The affair was settled. The young people parted with the understanding that when Hazlehurst returned from Europe, and had acquired his profession, they were to be married; and Harry went to Philadelphia, to join his brother, and make the last arrangements for their voyage.

Jane, too, left Elinor a few days later; and Miss Wyllys, who had charge of her−−as Mr. and Mrs. Graham lived in Charleston−−placed her at one of the fashionable boarding schools of New York. Miss Adeline Taylor had, in the mean time, informed her parents that she had changed her mind as to the school which was to have the honour of completing her education: she should NOT return to Mrs. A−−−−−'s, but go to Mrs. G−−−−−'s, which was a more fashionable establishment. Not that she had anything to complain of at Mrs. A−−−−−'s; but she thought the young ladies at Mrs. G−−−−−'s dressed more elegantly, and besides, she felt the impossibility of remaining separated from Jane Graham, her new bosom friend. These two young ladies had met twice previously to the evening they had passed together at Wyllys−Roof; Adeline had upon one occasion been in the same boat with Jane, going and coming, between New York and Longbridge, and she had already done all in her power towards getting up a desperate intimacy. Her mother, as a matter of course, did not interfere with the young lady's preference for Mrs. G−−−−−'s school−−why should she? It was Adeline's affair; she belonged to the submissive class of American parents, who think it an act of cruelty to influence or control their children, even long before they have arrived at years of discretion. As for Mr. Taylor, he had discovered that the daughters of several fashionable families were at Mrs. G−−−−−'s, and was perfectly satisfied with the change; all he had to do was, to make out the cheques in one name instead of another. Adeline managed the whole affair herself; and having at last been to a young party, for which she had been waiting, and having satisfied some lingering scruples as to the colours of the silk dresses which composed the winter uniform of the school, and which she at first thought frightfully unbecoming to her particular style of beauty, Miss Taylor one morning presented herself at Mrs. G−−−−−'s door, and was regularly admitted as one of the young band in fashionable training under that lady's roof. Jane, it is true, did not show quite as much rapture at the meeting as Adeline could have wished; but, then, Miss Taylor had already discovered that this last bosom−friend was of a calmer disposition than the dozen who had preceded her.

Harry had not been a day in Philadelphia, before he announced to his brother, his engagement with Elinor; for he was much too frank by nature to have any taste for unnecessary mystery.

"I have a piece of news for you, Robert," he said, as he entered the drawing−room before dinner, and found his brother lying on a sofa.

"Good news, I hope," replied Mr. Robert Hazlehurst.

"May I not have my share of it?" asked Mrs. Hazlehurst, whom Harry had not observed.

"Certainly; it is a piece of good fortune to your humble servant, in which I hope you will both be interested."

"Why, really, Harry," said his sister−in−law, "there is a touch of importance, with a dash of self−complacency and mystery in your expression, that look a little lover−like. Have you come to announce that you are determined to offer yourself to some belle or other before we sail?"

"The deed is already done," said Harry, colouring a little; as much, perhaps, from a mischievous satisfaction in the disappointment he foresaw, as from any other feeling.

"No!" said his brother, turning towards him with some anxiety. "Offered yourself−−and accepted, then; or, of course, you would not mention it."

"Pray, tell us, Harry, who is to be our new sister," said Mrs. Hazlehurst, kindly, and with some interest.

"I have half a mind to tease you," he replied, smiling.

"I never should guess," said Mrs. Hazlehurst. "I had no idea you were attached to any one−−had you, Robert?"

"Not I! It must be somebody at Longbridge−−he has been there more than half his time lately. Come, tell us, Harry, like a man; who is it?" asked Robert Hazlehurst, naturally feeling interested in his younger brother's choice.

"No one precisely at Longbridge," said Harry, smiling.

"Who can it be?−−And actually engaged?" added Mrs. Hazlehurst, who saw that Harry would not explain himself without being questioned.

"Engaged, very decidedly, and positively, I am happy to say. Is there anything so very wonderful in my having declared an attachment to Elinor; I am sure I have liked her better than any one else all my life."

"Engaged to Elinor!" exclaimed Robert Hazlehurst, much relieved. "I am delighted to hear it. It is a wiser step than one would always expect from a young gentleman of your years."

"Engaged to Elinor! I wish you joy with all my heart," repeated his sister−in−law. "It had not occurred to me to think of any one so near and dear to us already; you could not have done better, Harry," she added, with a perfectly frank, open smile.

To tell the truth, Hazlehurst was not a little surprised, and rather mortified by this decided approbation−−since it proved he had been unjust, and that he had deceived himself as to what he had supposed the wishes of his brother, and the plans of his sister−in−law. He did not, however, for an instant, regret the step he had taken; his regard for Elinor was too sincere to allow of any other feeling than that of satisfaction, in remembering their engagement. But it had now become a matter of indifference whether Jane were to join the European party or not.

On the appointed day, the Hazlehursts sailed. They went abroad with more advantages than many others, for they carried with them good sense, good principles, and a good education, and were well prepared to enjoy the wide field of observation that lay before them. There was every reason to hope, from the encouraging opinions of his physicians, that Mr. Robert Hazlehurst's health would be entirely restored by travelling; his wife looked forward to the excursion with much pleasure, and Harry was delighted with the plan. They had an old family friend in Paris, an excellent woman, who was in every way qualified to redeem the promises she had given, of soon making them feel at home in France. Madame de Bessieres was the widow of a distinguished emigre, and had passed a long exile with her husband in America. They had been for years near neighbours of Mr. Wyllys, and this gentleman had had it in his power, at different times, to render services of some importance to his French friends. Madame de Bessieres and her family were grateful for these acts of kindness: she had known the young people at Wyllys−Roof, and felt an interest in them all; for their own sakes, as well as from a sincere respect and regard for Mr. Wyllys and his daughter, this lady was anxious to show the Hazlehursts every friendly attention in her power. Under these agreeable auspices, the party left home, expecting to be absent for a couple of years.

CHAPTER IV.

"Farewell, my lord! Good wishes, praise, and prayers,
Shall Suffolk ever have of Margaret."
Henry VI.

{William Shakespeare, "1 Henry VI", V.iii.173−174}

THE arrival of letters from Harry, often accompanied by something pretty or useful, as a souvenir for herself, were the principal events of the next winter, to Elinor. Several months of the cold weather were passed, as usual, by Mr. Wyllys and his family, in Philadelphia; and Miss Agnes thought it time that her niece should make her appearance in society. But Elinor found less pleasure, than most girls, in the gay world. She was seldom appreciated, in mixed company; she was too young, at that time, and too modest, for her intelligence to be generally known or cared for; while her personal appearance exposed her to be entirely overlooked and neglected by strangers; it had indeed occasionally been the cause of mortifications, more deeply felt by Miss Agnes, than by Elinor herself. People talk so lightly, in what is called general society; heartless remarks are uttered with so much careless indifference on all sides, that it was not surprising some unkind observations should have reached her ear. It was not until the season that she had been introduced into a larger circle, that Elinor became better aware of her disadvantages in this respect. She had been so tenderly loved and watched over by her grandfather and aunt; she was so generally liked by those who had been hitherto her companions, that she had not been aware of all the consequences of her position. She knew that her appearance was not attractive, while her young friends were more or less pretty; still, she had thought but little on the subject, until her introduction into a larger circle led her to remark the great importance which the world attaches to mere beauty, in women, at least. But, with this reflection, came also the gratifying recollection of Harry's regard for her; and it served indeed to increase very much her attachment to him, by giving it an additional feeling of gratitude.

Harry's letters were kind and affectionate, and Elinor thought them very amusing. It was impossible that an intelligent, well−educated young man, suddenly transported from the New, to the Old World, should not find a great deal to say; and Harry told his adventures very agreeably. His letters to Elinor were almost as straight−forward and matter−of−fact, as they might have been if she had already become his wife. His brother's health was improving; so much so, that they were talking of leaving Mrs. Hazlehurst, and her children, in Paris, while Harry and the invalid made a six weeks' excursion to England. Madame de Bessieres had been all kindness, and they were delighted with the society they met at her house. "Madame de Bessieres remembers you perfectly," said Harry, in one of his letters, "and as she is sure, under Aunt Agnes' care, you must have grown up with all the good and agreeable qualities that she loved you for when a child, she agrees with your humble servant, in thinking him a very lucky fellow, and very prudent, in having secured you before he left home. She is really a most excellent and charming woman, as kind as possible to Louisa. Her American friends have every reason to be satisfied with her recollections of them, especially Mr. Wyllys and Aunt Agnes, whom she evidently appreciates. Her nephew, young de Guivres, and I, are very good friends already, and often take a gallop together in the Bois de Boulogne. It is a settled thing, Elinor, dear, that I am to bring you to France, one of these days; that is to say, if you have no objections; which, of course, you will not have. Tom Taylor is here still, and his progressive steps in civilization are quite amusing, to a looker−on; every time I see him, I am struck with some new change−−some fresh growth in elegance. I was going to say, that he will turn out a regular dandy; but he would have to go to London for that; he will prove rather a sort of second−rate petit−maitre a la Parisienne; which is entirely a different creature. It would do your heart good to see Robert; he eats like a ploughman, if ploughmen ever devour poulets a la Marengo, or ortolans a la Provencale. I wish I could give as good an account of Creighton, who arrived in the last packet; poor fellow, he has not revived at all, and, I fear, will never be better. His wife is with

him; as pretty and agreeable as ever. I hope Bruno behaves well, and remembers that it is now his chief duty to devote himself to your service."

{"petit−maitre a la Parisienne" = a ridiculously pretentious dandy, Parisian−style; "poulets a la Marengo" = chicken Marengo, a recipe supposedly invented by Napoleon's chef after the Battle of Marengo in 1800; "ortolans a la Provencale" = ortolans (a variety of bunting) in the style of southern France (Provence) (French)}

This was the last letter Elinor received in Philadelphia, for early in the spring the family returned to the country. She was never happier than at Wyllys−Roof, and resumed with delight occupations and amusements, which would have appeared very insipid to many elegant belles whom she left behind her−−since the mornings were to be passed without visiting or shopping, the evenings without parties or flirtations. In a quiet country house, with no other young person in the family, there was of course, at Wyllys−Roof, very little excitement−−that necessary ingredient of life to many people; and yet, Elinor had never passed a tedious day there. On the longest summer morning, or winter evening, she always found enough to occupy her time and attention.

To her, Wyllys−Roof was home; and that is a word of a broader and more varied meaning in the country than in a town. The cares, the sympathies of a country home, embrace a wide circle, and bring with them pleasures of their own. People know enough of all their neighbours, to take part in any interesting event that may befall them; we are sorry to hear that A., the shoemaker, is going to move away; we are glad to find that B., the butcher, has made money enough to build a new house. One has some acquaintance with everybody, from the clergyman to the loafer; few are the faces that one does not know. Even the four−footed animals of the neighbourhood are not strangers: this is the Doctor's Newfoundland dog; that is some old lady's tortoise−shell cat. One knows the horses, as well as the little urchins who ride them to water; the cows, and those who milk them. And then, country−folks are nature's freeholders; they enjoy a full portion of the earth, the air, the sky, with the thousand charms an ever−merciful Creator has lavished on them. Every inanimate object−−this hill, that wood, the brook, the bridge, C.'s farm−house, and D.'s barn−−to the very highway, as far as eye can reach, all form pleasing parts of a country home. In a city, on the contrary, we live surrounded by strangers. Home is entirely restricted to our own fire−side. One knows a neighbour's card, perhaps, but not his face. There may have been a funeral or a wedding next−door, and we learn it only from the morning paper. Then, even if a fixture oneself, how is it possible for human sensibilities to cling very closely to the row of brick houses opposite, which are predestined to be burned or pulled down in a few years? Nor can one be supposed to look with much pleasure at the omnibus horses, or half−starved pigs that may belong to one's street. No doubt, that with hearts warm and true, we may have a FIRESIDE in town; but HOME with its thousand pleasant accessories−−HOME, in its fullest meaning, belongs especially to the country.

Elinor was a country girl, born and bred. Though banished from Chesnut {sic} Street, she would have been well satisfied with the usual occupations of a country life, varied only by quiet walks with her aunt, rides with her grandfather, chatty meetings with a few young companions, or long visits from old friends, whose names and faces had been familiar to her all her life. The first few weeks after her return to Wyllys−Roof, she had, of course, more than usual to see and hear. Elinor had been absent from home but a few months; yet, even in that short space, she found changes had occurred in the neighbourhood−−varied, as usual−−some of a sad, some of a pleasant nature. Miss Agnes and her niece found one place vacant among those whom they were in the habit of seeing often; the father of a family who lived within sight of their own windows, had died suddenly, and left a widow and children to struggle with the world: but they were neither friendless nor repining, and submitted with humble resignation to their severe affliction, prepared to meet with faith and hope the additional cares and toils allotted to them. One of Elinor's young friends, too, was lying on a sick−bed at Longbridge−−a beautiful girl of her own age wasted by consumption; but she was calm and peaceful, though without hope this side the grave. We shall scarcely forgive ourselves for making even a distant allusion to one portion of Elinor's pleasures and labours, although more especially connected with home; since none could perform their religious duties with less ostentation, with more single−hearted sincerity−−none could more carefully follow the precept, to "give with simplicity," than Miss Wyllys, and the niece she had educated.

{"Chesnut Street" = Chestnut Street, a fashionable street in Philadelphia}

Of course, the ladies had immediately resumed their intercourse with their old friends; and they had many neighbourly visits to pay. Not your formal, fashionable morning calls, lasting just three minutes, when you are so

unfortunate as to find at home the individual you are paying off; no, indeed; good, honest visits of nearly an hour's length, giving time to exchange many kindly inquiries as to the health of all the members of the family, the condition of the garden, and promises of the crops; and even occasionally allowing Mr. Wyllys to take a look at some addition to the live−stock, in the shape of calves, colts, or pigs. Then, Mrs. Bernard had just moved into a new house, whose comforts and conveniences must certainly be shown by herself, and appreciated by her friends. Then, Elinor had to kiss, and make acquaintance with several tiny pieces of humanity, in white frocks and lace caps−−little creatures born during the past winter; of course, the finest babies one could wish to see, and the delight of their parents' hearts. Then, Alida Van Horne was going to be married; as Elinor was to be her bridesmaid, a great deal of talking and consulting took place on the occasion, as matter of course. But, although her time was fully occupied in many different ways, no day was too pleasant or too busy for more than one thought to be given to Harry Hazlehurst.

CHAPTER V.

"Anch' io son pittore!"
CORREGGIO.

{"Anch' io son pittore" = "I too, am a painter!" (Italian).
Antonio Allegri da Correggio (Italian painter, 1494−1534),
exclamation on viewing Raphael's "St. Cecilia" at Bologna (1525)}

THERE was one subject, in which the family at Wyllys−Roof felt particularly interested just then, and that was, Charlie Hubbard's picture. This piece was to decide finally the question, whether Charlie should be an artist, or a merchant's clerk; a question which he himself considered all important, and which caused much anxiety to his friends.

The house in which the Hubbards lived was a grey, wooden cottage, of the smallest size; curious gossips had, indeed, often wondered how it had ever been made to contain a large family; but some houses, like certain purses, possess capabilities of expansion, quite independent of their apparent size, and connected by mysterious sympathies with the heads and hearts of their owners. This cottage belonged to the most ancient and primitive style of American architecture; what may be called the comfortable, common sense order−−far superior, one might suppose to either Corinthian or Composite, for a farm−house. The roof was low, and unequally divided, stretching, on one side, with a long, curving slope, over the southern front; which was scarce seven feet high: towards the road the building was a little more elevated, for a dormer−window gave it the dignity of a story and a half. Not only the roof, but the walls−−we have classical authority for wooden walls−−were covered with rounded shingles, long since grey, and in spots, moss−grown. Twice the cottage had escaped a more brilliant exterior; upon one occasion it had been inhabited by an ambitious family, who talked of a coat of red paint; fortunately, they moved away, before concluding a bargain with the painter. Again, when the Hubbards took possession of the 'old grey house,' a committee of ladies actually drove over from Longbridge, with the intention of having it whitewashed; but, the experienced old negro engaged to clean generally, gave it as his opinion, that the shingles were not worth the compliment. The windows were very small; more than half the glass was of the old, blue bull's−eye pattern, no longer to be found at modern glaziers, and each heavy window−shutter had a half−moon cut in its upper panel, to let in the daylight. When we add, that there was a low porch before the door, with a sweet−briar on one side, and a snowball on the other, the reader will have a correct idea of the house inhabited by our friends, the Hubbards.

{"Corinthian or Composite" = two of the classical orders of architecture, based on the style of column used. The "Composite order," however, was something of a Cooper family joke, first used by James Fenimore Cooper in "The Pioneers" (1823) to describe a pretentious building of no particular style at all. The Coopers, father and daughter, were contemptuous of buildings that pretended to be Greek temples}

The cottage stood within a little door−yard, near the gate which opened on the lawn of Wyllys−Roof; and, immediately opposite the place recently purchased by Mr. Taylor. Here the family had lived for the last twelve years; and, from that time, Miss Patsey had been obliged to struggle against poverty, with a large family of younger brothers and sisters, dependent, in a great measure, upon her prudence and exertions.

Mr. Hubbard, the father, a respectable Presbyterian minister, had been, for half his life, in charge of a congregation in Connecticut, where, by−the−bye, Mr. Pompey Taylor, at that time a poor clerk, had been an unsuccessful suitor for Patsey's hand. After a while, the family had removed to Longbridge, where they had lived very comfortably and usefully, until, at length, the minister died, leaving his widow and seven children entirely unprovided for. Happily, they possessed warm friends and kind relatives. The old grey house, with a garden and a little meadow adjoining, was purchased for his brother's family by Mr. Joseph Hubbard, known to the young

people as Uncle Josie: he was a merchant, in easy circumstances, and cheerfully gave the thousand dollars required. The cottage was furnished by the minister's congregation. Many useful presents were made, and many small debts forgiven by kind neighbours. With this humble outfit the family commenced their new career. Mrs. Hubbard, the second wife, and mother of the three younger children, had lost the use of one hand, by an attack of paralysis. She had always been a woman of very feeble character; and although treated with unvarying kindness and respect by her step−children, could do little towards the government or assistance of the family. It was Patsey who toiled, and managed, and thought for them all. With the aid of two younger sisters, mere children, at first, and an old black woman, who came once a week to wash, all the work was done by herself, including baking, ironing, cooking, cleaning, and yet Patsey found time to give up four hours a day to teaching a class of some dozen children, belonging to several neighbouring families. This school furnished the only money that passed through her hands, and contributed the only regular means of support to the family. They received, however, much kind assistance, in many different ways; indeed, otherwise, it would have been scarcely possible to keep a fireside of their own. There had been, in all, nine children; but the eldest son, a missionary, died before his father; the second had already gone to Kentucky, to seek his fortunes as a physician; he had married young, and, with children of his own to support, it seemed but little he could do for his step−mother; he sent for a younger brother, however, engaging to provide for him entirely. Another son was educated by his rich Longbridge relative, kind Uncle Josie; another uncle, a poor old bachelor, known to the neighbourhood as Uncle Dozie, from a constant habit of napping, did his utmost, in paying the school−bills of his niece Catherine. In the course of a few years, Uncle Josie's protege became an assistant in the school where he had been educated; Kate Hubbard, Uncle Dozie's favourite, married a quick−witted, but poor, young lawyer, already introduced to the reader, by the name of Clapp.

Still, there remained in the family two younger daughters, and Charlie, besides Miss Patsey and Mrs. Hubbard. By the exertions and guidance of Patsey, the assistance of friends, and their own good conduct, the young people, in due time, were all growing up, endowed with good principles, good educations, and with respectable prospects opening before them. At the period of our narrative, the third daughter hoped shortly to become an under−governess in the school where she had been educated; and Mary, the youngest of the family, had such a decided taste for music, that it was thought she would have no difficulty in supporting herself, by giving lessons, in the course of two or three years. Of all the family, Charlie was the one that caused his friends the most anxiety. He was a fine, spirited, intelligent boy; and Uncle Josie had promised to procure a situation for him, with his son−in−law, a commission−merchant and auctioneer, in New York. This plan was very pleasing to Mrs. Hubbard and Miss Patsey; but, unfortunately, Charlie seemed to have no taste for making money, and a fondness for pictures and pencils, that amounted almost to a passion. Here was an unexpected obstacle; Charlie was the pet and spoiled child of the family. All the rest of the young people had been quite satisfied with the different means of support that had offered for each; and they had followed their respective careers with so much quiet good sense, that Charlie's remonstrances against the counting−house, and his strong fancy for an artist's life, was something quite new, and which Miss Patsey scarcely knew how to answer. There was nothing in the least poetical or romantic about Patsey Hubbard, who was all honest kindness and straight−forward common sense. She had no feeling whatever for the fine arts; never read a work of imagination; scarcely knew one tune from another; and had never looked with pleasure at any picture, but one, a portrait of her own respected father, which still occupied the place of honour in their little parlour, nearly covering one side of the wall. This painting, to speak frankly, was anything but a valuable work of art, or a good likeness of the worthy minister. The face was flat and unmeaning, entirely devoid of expression or relief; the body was stiff and hard, like sheet−iron, having, also, much the color of that material, so far as it was covered by the black ministerial coat. One arm was stretched across a table, conspicuous from a carrot−coloured cloth, and the hand was extended over a pile of folios; but it looked quite unequal to the task of opening them. The other arm was disposed of in some manner satisfactory to the artist, no doubt, but by no means easy for the spectator to discover, since the brick−coloured drapery which formed the back−ground to the whole, certainly encroached on the side where nature had placed it. Such as it was, however, Miss Patsey admired this painting more than any she had ever seen, and its gilt frame was always carefully covered with green gauze, no longer necessary to preserve the gilding, but rather to conceal its blackened lustre; but Charlie's sister belonged to that class of amateurs who consider the frame as an integral part of the work of art. It was, perhaps, the most promising fact regarding any future hopes of young Hubbard's, as an

artist, that this same portrait was far from satisfying his taste, uncultivated as it was. Charlie was, for a long time, so much ashamed of his passion for drawing, that he carefully concealed the little bits of paper on which he made his sketches, as well as the few old, coarse engravings he had picked up to copy. But, one day, Miss Patsey accidentally discovered these treasures between the leaves of a number of the Longbridge Freeman, carefully stowed away in an old chest of drawers in the little garret−room where Charlie slept. She found there a head of Washington; one of Dr. Blair; a view of Boston; and an old French print called L'Ete, representing a shepherdess making hay in high−heeled shoes and a hoop; there were copies of these on bits of paper of all sizes, done with the pen or lead−pencil; and lastly, a number of odd−looking sketches of Charlie's own invention. The sight of these labours of art, was far from giving Miss Patsey pleasure, although it accounted for the surprising disappearance of her writing−paper, and the extraordinary clipping, she had remarked, of late, on all notes and letters that were left lying about, from which every scrap of white paper was sure to be cut off. She spoke to Charlie on the subject, and, of course, he had to confess. But he did not reform; on the contrary, matters soon grew worse, for he began to neglect his studies. It happened that he passed the whole summer at home, as the school where his brother had been assistant, and he himself a pupil, was broken up. At last, Miss Patsey talked to him so seriously, about wasting time on trifles, that Charlie, who was a sensible, warm−hearted boy, and well aware of the exertions his sister had made for him, promised amendment, and actually burnt all his own sketches, though the precious engravings were still preserved. This improvement only lasted a while, however, when he again took to drawing. This time he resolutely respected Miss Patsey's paper, but that only made matters worse, for he became more ambitious; he began to sketch from nature; and, having a special fancy for landscape, he used to carry his slate and arithmetic into the fields; and, instead of becoming more expert in compound interest, he would sit for hours composing pictures, and attempting every possible variety in the views of the same little mill−pond, within a short distance of the house. He soon became quite expert in the management of his slate and pencil, and showed a good deal of ingenuity in rubbing in and out the white shading on the black ground, something in the manner of a stump−drawing; but, of course, these sketches all disappeared before Charlie went to take his regular lesson in book−keeping, from the neighbour who had promised to keep him in practice until the winter, when he was to enter the counting−house.

{"Dr. Blair" = possibly Robert Blair (Scottish poet, 1699−1747), author of "The Grave"; or James Blair (1656−1743), founder of the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia. "L'Ete" = summertime (French); "stump drawing" = probably from "stump", a pencil−like drawing implement of rolled paper or of rubber, used to smooth or rub in dark lines}

At last, however, Charlie determined to have an explanation with his mother and sister; he made a clean breast as to the misdoings on the slate, and boldly coming to the point, suggested the possibility of his being able to support himself, one day, as an artist, instead of a commission merchant. Poor Miss Patsey, this was a sad blow to her! It had been her cherished ambition to see Charlie an upright, prosperous merchant; and now that his prospects were brightening, and a situation was provided for him, that he should be only a painter! She had a very low opinion of artists, as a class, and she would almost as soon have expected Charlie to become a play−actor, or a circus−rider. When the boy found that both Uncle Josie and Uncle Dozie thought his idea a very foolish one, that Miss Patsey was very much distressed, and Mrs. Hubbard could not be made to comprehend the difference between an artist and a house−painter, he again abandoned his own cherished plans, and resumed his commercial studies. Unfortunately, one day, Elinor was choosing a book as a present for her old play−fellow, at a bookstore in Philadelphia, when she laid her hand on the Lives of the Painters. These volumes finally upset Charlie's philosophy; he immediately set to work to convince Miss Patsey and Uncle Josie, by extracts from the different lives, that it was very possible to be a good and respectable man, and not only support himself, but make a fortune, as an artist. Of course, he took care to skip over all unpleasant points, and bad examples; but when he came to anything creditable, he made a note of it−−and, one day, pursued Miss Patsey into the cellar, to read to her the fact that Reubens had been an ambassador.

{"Reubens" = Peter Paul Rubens (1577−1640), famous Flemish painter, who served as a diplomat in Spain from 1626−30}

Miss Patsey confided her anxieties to Mr. Wyllys, who was already aware of Charlie's propensities, and, indeed, thought them promising. He advised Mrs. Hubbard and Patsey, not to oppose the boy's wishes so strongly, but to give him an opportunity of trying what he really could do; and as the expense was a very important

consideration with the Hubbards, he made Charlie a present of a palette and colours, and kindly took him, one day, to Philadelphia, to see Mr. S−−−−−, who gave him some advice as to the way in which he should go to work. This assistance Charlie received, upon condition that he should also, at the same time, continue his other studies; and in case any two artists that his friend might consult, should declare, on seeing his work, that he did not show talent enough to promise reasonable success, he was, from that time, to devote himself to business. For a while, Charlie was a great deal happier than a king. He immediately began a view of his beloved little mill−pond, and then attempted one of a small sheet of water in the neighbourhood, called Chewattan Lake. These, after having been touched and re−touched, he carried, with a portfolio of drawings, to New York, and with a fluttering heart and trembling hands laid them before two distinguished artists, Mr. C−−−−− and Mr. I−−−−−, to whom Mr. Wyllys had given him letters. The decision of these gentlemen was not discouraging, upon the whole; but they found that he had set out wrong in the arrangement of his colours, and having corrected the mistake, they proposed his painting another piece in oils, to determine whether the faults in the first were the result of ignorance, or of a false eye for colour; for on this point his judges disagreed. It must be confessed that Charlie's clouds might give some idea of such vapours as they may exist in the moon; but certainly the tints the youth had given them were very remarkable for an earthly atmosphere.

It was upon this last picture−−another view of Chewattan Lake−−that Charles was engaged, heart and soul, when the Wyllyses returned home. One afternoon, Mr. Wyllys proposed to Miss Agnes and Elinor, to walk over and call upon Miss Patsey, and see what their young friend had done.

"Here we are, Charlie, my lad; you promised us a look at your work this week, you know;" said Mr. Wyllys, as he walked into the neat little door−yard before the Hubbards' house, accompanied by the ladies.

Charlie was at work in the vegetable garden adjoining the door−yard, weeding the radishes.

"Everything looks in very good order here, Charles," observed Miss Wyllys. "You have not given up the garden, I see, although you have so much to do now."

"Your beds and your flowers look as neat as possible," said Elinor; "just as usual. You don't seem to have gone far enough in your career to have learned that, un beau desordre is the effect of art," she added, smiling.

{"un beau desordre" = a pleasing lack of order (French)}

"No, indeed; it is to be hoped I never shall, for that would throw my mother and sister into despair, at once!"

Miss Patsey, who had heard the voices of the party, now came from the little kitchen, where she had been baking, to receive her friends.

"Elinor has just remarked that things do not look as if you had an artist in the house; everything is neat as wax," said Mr. Wyllys, stepping into the little parlour.

Miss Patsey was beginning to resign herself to hearing Charlie called an artist, although the word had still an unpleasant sound to her ear.

"Charles is very good," she replied, "about keeping his things in their place; he does not make much litter."

After some inquiries about Mrs. Hubbard−−who, it seems, was taking her afternoon nap−−Mr. Wyllys asked to see Charlie's work.

"You must let us look at it, Charles," said Miss Agnes; "we have been waiting, you know, quite impatiently for the last week."

"If we must go up to your STUDIO for it, we'll rest awhile first," said Mr. Wyllys taking a seat.

"You mortify me, sir," said Charlie, "by using such great words about my little doings, even in pleasantry. I am half afraid to show my work; but I will bring it down."

"I hope we shall find some improvement−−that is all we can expect at present, my boy. We don't look for a Claude yet."

{"Claude" = Claude Lorrain (1600−1662), French painter famous for his landscapes, who was an important influence on the American Hudson River School}

Charlie blushed, in the excess of his modesty.

"Pray, bring all your sketches, too," said Elinor. "Mary wrote me you were drawing all winter; you must have a great deal that we have not seen."

"They are certainly not worth looking at; but such as they are, you shall see them."

"And don't forget the Arithmetic, too," said Mr. Wyllys, smiling; "we had better look a little into Compound Interest, of course."

Charlie looked as if that were rather a sore subject, as he left the room.

While he was gone, a carriage stopped at the little gate. It proved to be the Taylors; and Mr. Taylor, with his wife, and a couple of children, walked in. After a general salutation had been exchanged, and two additional chairs had been brought from a bed−room, to accommodate such an unusual number of visiters, Mr. Taylor turned to Miss Patsey, and observed, in a jocular way:

"It is not etiquette, I believe, to call twice in the same day; but I hope you will excuse us; for on this occasion, Mrs. Taylor has come to transact a little business."

"As you seem to be engaged, Miss Hubbard, we will put it off until another time," said Mrs. Taylor. " "Just as you please," replied Miss Patsey. "I am always glad to see my friends."

Mr. Taylor, however, liked quick measures, and never postponed business if he could help it.

"We came to see you, this afternoon, about our two youngest children; if you can conveniently take them into your school, it would suit us very well."

Charlie, at that moment, returned with his picture in one hand, and a portfolio in the other. He was rather sorry to find the Taylors there, for he was far from admiring the gentleman. Mr. Wyllys was really anxious to see the piece, and asked to look at it at once. The canvass was placed near a window, in the proper light, and the covering removed. The Wyllyses were immediately struck with Charlie's rapid improvement; there was indeed, no comparison between the young man's first attempts at the art, and this last piece. His friends all congratulated him on his success, and Charlie was delighted.

"This settles the question, I think, Miss Patsey," said Mr. Wyllys.

"I suppose so," said Miss Patsey, with a shake of the head, and a smile. "I think I can see myself that this picture looks more natural than the first."

"Quite a tasty painting," said Mr. Taylor, stepping up with a decided air towards the canvass. "I should conclude, however, that you would find portRATES a more advantageous business."

"I like landscapes best, sir," replied the youth; and turning to Mr. Wyllys, he added: "Mr. S−−−−− advised me to please myself as to the subjects I worked upon."

"Certainly," answered Mr. Wyllys; "and you seem to prefer my mill−pond, Charlie, to the human face divine."

"But, here are sketches of faces," said Elinor, looking over the portfolio; "very good, too;−−this is excellent−−grandpapa, do you know yourself? and Miss Patsey−−very good−−Aunt Agnes, too! Why, Charles, you must have drawn all these from memory."

The sketches Elinor was looking at, were roughly done in ink or lead−pencil; but were generally good likenesses. Mr. Wyllys took up one, that had not yet been observed by the rest of the party; he smiled, and passed it to his granddaughter. Elinor coloured, and her heart beat as she looked at it, for it was a sketch of Harry. Mr. Taylor was standing behind her, and recognised it immediately.

"That is Mr. Hazlehurst, if I am not mistaken; and a very good likeness, Miss Wyllys."

"I suppose, your son and Harry have met, in Paris, Mr. Taylor," said Miss Agnes, by way of turning his attention from Elinor.

"Yes, madam, Thomas mentions having had some intercourse with Mr. Hazlehurst, and observes, that he sees him, almost every day, in the TULLYREES; which, Thomas says, is the RENDY−VUSS of the fashionable world, in Paris."

"Will your son return home soon?"

"Why, no; I think not. He went for six months; but he calculates, now, to stay some time longer. I am told, Mr. Hazlehurst will not return until next year;−−they might make the European TOWER together. But Thomas seems to like the CAFFIES and the BULLY−VARDS of Paris, too much to move from that city."

Elinor was going to take another sketch from the table, when Charlie quickly passed his hand between Mr. Taylor and herself, and drew the paper away.

"I beg your pardon−−but it is a wretched thing; I did not know it was there," said the youth, hastily.

"Pray, let me look at it," said Elinor, "for, I thought, I recognised a friend."

"You must not see it, indeed, Miss Elinor; I dare say, you took it for anybody but the right person;" said Charlie, a good deal embarrassed, and hurriedly handing Elinor something else to look at.

She was surprised at his nervous manner, but said nothing more.

"I honestly think, Charlie," said Mr. Wyllys, who had been examining the landscape, that Mr. C−−−−−, and

Mr. I−−−−−, will tell you to persevere, after this. There is something about the water, in your picture, that strikes me as unusually good."

"I am very glad to hear you say so; for there is nothing I like to paint so much as water. I took great pains with that part of my piece; but it does not satisfy me yet."

"Do you intend to make use of water−colours altogether, in your paintings?" asked Mr. Taylor.

Charlie looked puzzled, and the merchant repeated his question.

"I should think, you would find water−colours cheaper; but oils must be more durable. Which are most generally in use among painters?"

Charlie, understanding the point, at last, explained that water−colours, and oils, were two entirely distinct branches of the art.

"Which is your picture, there, done in?"

"I am learning to paint in oils, sir."

"And that porTRATE, overhead, which is your father, I presume; is that in oils, too?"

"Yes, sir.−−There are very few pictures, of that size, in water−colours, I believe. Here is a miniature, in water−colours, which Mrs. Van Horne lent me; I am taking a large picture, in oils, from it."

Mr. Taylor examined the miniature. "It has puzzled me considerably," he observed, "to know how painters could change the size of an object, and be correct, without measuring it off in feet and inches; but, I suppose, that is what you term perspective."

One is sometimes surprised by the excessive ignorance, on all matters concerning the fine arts, betrayed in this country, by men of some education; very clever, in their way, and quite equal to making a speech or a fortune, any day. In Europe, just notions, on such matters, are much more widely spread. But, after all, such a state of things is perfectly natural; we have hitherto had no means of cultivating the general taste, in America, having few galleries or even single works of art, open to the public. With the means, it is probable, that as we grow older, we shall improve, in this respect. That there is talent, ay, genius, in the country, sufficient to produce noble works of art, has been already proved. Nor can it be doubted, that there is latent feeling, and taste enough, among the people, to appreciate them, if it were called forth by cultivation. It is only a brutal and sluggish nation, who cannot be made to feel, as well as think. The cultivation necessary, however, is not that which consists in forcing the whole body of the people to become conceited smatterers; but that which provides a full supply of models for mediocrity to copy, and for talent to rival. It is evident, that common sense requires us to pursue one of two courses; either to give true talent, in every field−−in literature, in music, painting, sculpture, architecture−−some share of the honourable encouragement which is its due, or else honestly to resign all claim to national merit, in these branches of civilization; leaving the honour to the individual. As neither the government, nor men singly, can do much toward encouraging the arts, this would seem to be the very field in which societies might hope to produce great results. Would it not be a good innovation, if those who often unite to present some public testimonial of respect to an individual, should select, instead of the piece of plate, usual on such occasions, a picture or work of sculpture? Either, it is to be supposed, if respectable in its way, would be a more agreeable offering, to a person of education, than gold or silver in the shape most modern workmen give them. Under such circumstances, who would not prefer a picture by Cole or Wier {sic}, a statue like Greenough's Medora, Power's Eve, or Crawford's Orpheus, to all the silver salvers in New York? Who would not prefer even a copy from some fine bust or head of antiquity, from some celebrated cabinet picture, to the best medal that has yet been struck in this country?

{"Cole" = Thomas Cole (1801−1848), American painter and founder of the so−called Hudson River School of landscape painting; "Wier" = Robert Weir (1803−1889), another American landscape painter; "Greenough" = Horatio Greenough (1805−1852), American sculptor, and a close friend of Susan Fenimore Cooper's father; "Power" = Hiram Powers (1805−1873), another famous American sculptor; "Crawford" = Thomas Crawford (1813−1857), another American sculptor, whose statue of Orpheus was purchased by the Boston Athenaeum; "cabinet picture" = picture exhibited in a gallery or museum}

Thoughts like these were passing through Mr. Wyllys's mind, as he sat looking at Charlie's picture. Mrs. Taylor had, in the mean time, been making arrangements for her younger children to enter Miss Patsey's school for the summer. Mr. Taylor having joined the ladies, something was heard about 'terms,' and the affair appeared settled. Miss Agnes having mentioned to Mrs. Taylor that she had intended calling on her, but would now postpone it until another day, she was so strongly urged to accompany them home, that she consented to do so,

aware that the visit should have been paid some time before. Accordingly, they all left the Hubbards together.

It was not often that Miss Patsey's little parlour was so full, and so much littered, as it had been that afternoon; it generally looked crowded, if it contained two or three persons besides the minister's portrait, and was thought out of order, if the large rocking−chair, or the clumsy, old−fashioned tea−table did not stand in the very positions they had occupied for the last twelve years.

Very different was the aspect of things at Mr. Taylor's. Not that the rooms were imposing, in size, but the elegance of the furniture was so very striking. Of course, there were two drawing−rooms, with folding−doors and Brussels carpets; while everything corresponded to a fashionable model. Mrs. Taylor, good soul, cared very little for these vanities of life. The window−blinds, in her two drawing−rooms, were never opened, except for some occasional morning visiter or evening tea−party; she herself used what she called the 'living room,' where she could have her younger children about her, and darn as many stockings as she chose. The drawing−rooms were opened, however, for the Wyllyses, who were urged to stay to tea. Miss Agnes declined the invitation, though Mr. Wyllys and herself remained long enough to look at the plan of a new house, which Mr. Taylor was to build shortly; it was to be something quite grand, far surpassing anything of the kind in the neighbourhood, for Mr. Taylor had made a mint of money during the past winter.

CHAPTER VI.

"What say'st thou? Wilt thou go along?"
Henry VI.

{William Shakespeare, "3 Henry VI", IV.v.25}

JANE GRAHAM joined Elinor at Wyllys−Roof, after having made her parting curtsey to Mrs. G−−−−−. Her parents lived at Charleston; but as her constitution was delicate, and required a more bracing air than that of Carolina, Jane had been more than once, for a twelvemonth at a time, entirely under Miss Wyllys's charge, and was seldom absent from Longbridge for more than a few months together. It was now settled that she was to remain with Elinor until the autumn, when her parents, who were coming north for a couple of months, were to carry her back to Charleston. Miss Adeline Taylor, of course, found it impossible to remain longer at school, when Jane, her bosom−friend, had left it. She, too, returned to her family in the country, prepared to enliven the neighbourhood to the best of her ability. The intimacy between these two young ladies was only riveted more closely by the necessity of living under different roofs; Adeline, indeed, protested that she found the separation so distressing, that she thought it would be an excellent plan, to divide the winter together, between Charleston and New York; Jane to pass the first three months with her, and she, in her turn, to accompany her friend to Charleston, later in the season. But Jane thought her mother would now wish to have her return home as soon as possible, as it was already nearly a year since she had seen her family. This affair, however, was not quite decided; Adeline declaring that she could not bear to give up the idea, hinting that there were all−important reasons for their remaining together during the next winter.

Elinor often wondered that her cousin should find so much pleasure in this intimacy with Miss Taylor, whom she was far from liking herself; and she could not help thinking that Adeline was more persevering in pursuit of Jane, than was agreeable. The dislikes of young girls of seventeen are seldom violent, however, whatever their likings may be. She made the best of it, and the three girls were often together.

One evening, when they had been drinking tea at Mrs. Taylor's, Elinor was much struck with a change in Jane's manner, which she had already observed several times of late, when they had been in society together. As they were coming home, and alone together in the carriage, she spoke to her cousin on the subject.

"How gay you were to−night, Jane! I never saw you in better spirits."

"Was I? Well, I'm very tired now; it is almost too much for me, Elinor, to be so lively."

"Was it an effort? Did you not feel well?" inquired Elinor.

"I felt very well, indeed, before we went; but it tires me so to be animated."

"If it fatigues you to go out, my dear Jane, we had better stay at home next time we are asked; but I thought you wished to go this evening."

"So I did. It does not tire me at all to go out; there is nothing I like so much as going to parties. If one could only do as they pleased−−just sit still, and look on; not laughing and talking all the time, it would be delightful."

"That is what I have often done at parties," said Elinor, smiling; "and not from choice either, but from necessity."

"Do you really think that a person who is engaged ought not to talk?"

"No, indeed;" said Elinor, colouring a little, as she laughed at the inquiry. "I meant to say, that I had often sat still, without talking, at parties, because no one took the trouble to come and speak to me. Not here, at home, where everybody knows me, but at large parties in town, last winter."

"Oh, but you never cared about being a belle. Adeline says everybody knows you are engaged, and it is no matter what you do or say. But Adeline says, to be a belle, you must laugh and talk all the time, whether you feel like it or not; and she thinks you need not be particular what you talk about, only you must be all the time lively.

The young men won't dance with you, or hand you in to supper, unless you entertain them. Adeline says she is too high−spirited to sit by, moping; and so am I, too, I'm sure!"

"But Jane, you are so very pretty, there is no danger of your being overlooked."

"No, indeed, you are mistaken," said Jane, with perfect naivete. "I was at two or three small parties, you know, in New York, while I was staying with Mrs. Stanley, this spring; well, I missed more than half the quadrilles, while those fat Miss Grants, and the Howard girls, were dancing all the evening. Adeline says it is all because I was not lively. They don't think anything of you unless you are all the time talking, and laughing, and moving about; and it does tire me so−−I'm almost sick of it already. I'm sure I shall never be able to be lively at Charleston, in warm weather. I shan't be a belle, Elinor, I'm afraid!" said the young beauty, with something like a sigh.

"Poor Jane!" said Elinor, laughing, though she really felt provoked with Adeline for giving her cousin such notions; Jane looked half worn−out with the evening's exertions. "And I believed, all the time, that you were in such good spirits! Charlie and I were looking at you with surprise; we thought Mr. Van Horne, and John Bernard must be telling you something very amusing, you were laughing and talking so much."

"No, indeed; it was I, who was trying to amuse the gentlemen."

But Jane was not destined to try the effect of the Charleston climate upon the energies of a belle. Her parents arrived in New York, where she met them. She found letters there from her sister, Mrs. Robert Hazlehurst, to her mother and herself, strongly urging the propriety of Jane joining their party, for the last year of their European visit. Mrs. Hazlehurst thought travelling would be of great service to her sister, in every respect; it would, probably, restore her health entirety; in Paris she would take lessons from the best masters, if she wished it−−besides enjoying the advantages of seeing the Old World; at the same time that, in her sister's family, she would be as well taken care of, as if at her father's house, or at Wyllys−Roof. It was an opportunity which might not occur again, and Mrs. Hazlehurst wrote so urgently, that her parents consented to the arrangement, provided Jane, herself, liked the idea. An old friend of the family, Mrs. Howard, was to sail next month for France, and would willingly take charge of Mrs. Graham's daughter during the voyage: everything was settled, it only remained for Jane, herself, to decide. She was far less anxious, however, to see the wonders of Europe, than many other young persons would have been. Elinor congratulated her warmly upon her good fortune, and dwelt upon the pleasure she would, no doubt, enjoy; still, Jane appeared rather indifferent to the plan, and it would probably have been abandoned, had it not been for two circumstances. Her father thought the voyage and change of air might have a happy effect on her health, and improve it permanently; and, at the same time, Miss Adeline Taylor threw the whole weight of her influence into the scales; she had a long private interview with Jane, which seemed to decide the matter. The arrangements were made, and the first of September, Jane, accompanied by her parents, Miss Agnes, and Elinor, went on board the Havre packet, and was placed under the care of Mr. and Mrs. Howard. Though the separation took place under such happy auspices, there were some tears shed, of course. Elinor felt quite sad at parting from her young friend, to whom she was warmly attached; but time and tide soon separated the cousins, and the last farewell, and waving of handkerchiefs, were exchanged.

{"Havre packet" = scheduled passenger ship to Le Havre, the principal Atlantic port of arrival in France}

Elinor had placed in Jane's hands a small package, and a letter, for Harry. The last we do not think ourselves privileged to open; but the little box we know to have contained a purse of her own knitting, and a lock of hair, which was sent at the special request of Harry, as he intended to have it placed in a ring by a Paris jeweller. Jane's baggage contained, moreover, in addition to her own paraphernalia, several articles that one would not expect to find among a young lady's trunks and hat−boxes. She, carried with her a barrel of buckwheat, a keg of cranberries, and a couple of jars of ginger−dainties for which, it appeared, some American friends of the Hazlehursts had sighed, even amid all the delicacies of Paris.

In a few weeks, the family at Wyllys−Roof had the pleasure of hearing of Jane's safe arrival in Paris. The good news came through Harry, and we shall give his letter, since it was the last Elinor received from him in some months.

"Place Vendome, October, 18−−.

"MY DEAREST ELINOR:−−

"You will be glad to hear that Jane passed the barriers, this morning, with the Howards. She has just finished a letter to Mrs. Graham; and, as she dislikes writing so much, has given me leave to announce her arrival to all at

Wyllys−Roof. As Jane enters Paris on one side, I leave it in the opposite direction, for, the day after to−morrow, I am off for Constantinople; a movement which will, no doubt, astonish you, though, I am sure, you will wish me joy of such pleasant prospects. This letter will probably be the last you will hear of me, for some time; not but what I shall write as usual, but these long overland mails, through countries where they suspect revolution or plague, in every letter, often fail to do their duty. In fact, I delayed my journey a week or two, expressly to see Jane, and have a good supply of Longbridge news before setting out. Everybody tells me, I must expect to lose more than half my letters, both ways. This is bad enough, to be sure; but a journey to Greece and Constantinople, would be too full of delights, without some serious drawback. I believe Jane is more tired by answering our questions, and hearing what we have to tell her, than by her voyage. I cannot help wishing, my dear Elinor, that it were you who had arrived in Paris, instead of our pretty little cousin. How I should delight in showing you my favourite view, the quais and the island, from the Pont Royal−−the Louvre, too, and the Madeleine. As for Jane, she will, doubtless, find her chief pleasures at Delilles', and the Tuileries−−buying finery, and showing it off: it has often puzzled me to find out which some ladies most enjoy.

{"barriers" = gateways leading into Paris, where travellers' papers were examined}

"We are to be a party of four of us, on our eastern expedition. In the first place, Ellsworth, whom you may have seen; a very clever fellow, and brother−in−law to poor Creighton. By−the−bye, Mrs. Creighton is still here, and has been living, very quietly, with her brother, since her husband's death; she is now going to the Howards, who are her connexions, I believe; so says Louisa, at least. Ellsworth, you know, poor fellow, lost his wife about a year ago; he has left his little girl with her mother's friends, and has come abroad for a year or two. Having been in Europe before, he was very glad to make one, in our party to the East, where he has not yet been. I mention him first, for he is the most agreeable of our set. There is not much to be said on the chapter of young Brown; and, I must confess, that I don't quite agree with Col. Stryker, in the very good opinion he evidently entertains of himself. By−the−bye, American Colonels are as plenty, now−a−days, as the 'Marquis' used to be, at Versailles, in the time of the Grand Louis. Some simple European folk, actually believe that each of these gentry has his regiment−−−−−in the garrison of 'Nieu Yorck,' I suppose; it would puzzle them, to find the army, if they were to cross the Atlantic; I don't remember to have seen one of Uncle Sam's soldiers for five years before I left home.

{"Grand Louis" = French King Louis XIV (1638−1715), known as "Louis the Great"}

"Many thanks, dearest Elinor, for the contents of your box; you cannot doubt but they will accompany your preux chevalier on his pilgrimage. This Eastern movement has been such a sudden one, that I have still a thousand things to do, which will oblige me to make my letter shorter than I wish. Ellsworth is waiting for me, at this moment. We expect to be gone six, or, possibly, eight months. I shall write again from Marseilles; and, I hope, the letter from thence will reach you. Pull Bruno's ears for me, and don't let him forget his master; which will be one way, my dear, kind, Elinor, of obliging you to remember that individual also. Best respects to Mr. Wyllys and Aunt Agnes, with much love for yourself, dearest Elinor, from

Your affectionate, present and FUTUR,

H. H.

P. S.−−Many remembrances for Mrs. Stanley, if she is with you; I wrote to her last month."

{"preux chevalier" = valiant knight; "FUTUR" = future (French)}

CHAPTER VII.

"What tidings send our scouts? I pr'ythee, speak."
Henry VI.

{William Shakespeare, "1 Henry VI", V.ii.10}

ABOUT the middle of the following March, the season, by courtesy called spring, but when winter sometimes reigns de facto, in the neighbourhood to which Wyllys−Roof belonged, Mr. Wyllys proposed, one morning, to drive his granddaughter to Longbridge, with the double object, of making the most of a late fall of snow, and procuring the mail an hour earlier than usual.

The light cutter slipped through a track in which there was quite as much mud as snow, and, it seemed, as if most people preferred staying at home, to moving over roads in that half−and−half condition: they met no one they knew, excepting Dr. Van Horne.

"I was sure you would be out this morning, Mr. Wyllys," cried the Doctor, as they met, "your sleigh is always the first and the last on the road."

"You generally keep me company, I find, doctor. I am going for the mail. How far have you been, this morning?"

"To Longbridge, sir; but, with this sun, the snow will hardly carry you there and home again; and yet, I dare say, you will find something worth having, in the mail, for I saw letters in your box; and there is a French packet in."

"Indeed! We'll make the best of our way, then, at once;" and, wishing the doctor good morning, Mr. Wyllys drove off. "We shall have letters from Paris, I hope, Nelly," said her grandfather.

"Certainly, I hope so," replied Elinor; "Jane's last letter was shamefully short. I had half a mind not to answer it; and so I told her; but my scolding has not had time to reach her yet."

"Jenny is no great letter−writer; and she is very busy enjoying her year in Paris, I suppose. But I shall be glad to have a sight of Harry's handwriting again. Where was it he wrote from last, in December?"

"From Beyroot {sic}, sir. He was to be in Paris early in the spring."

"Well, I hope we shall hear something from him to−day. Before long, I suppose, we shall have the young gentleman at Wyllys−Roof, trying to persuade you that he wants your help in reading Blackstone. But, don't believe him, Nelly; I shan't give you up for a year to come."

{"Blackstone" = Sir William Blackstone (1723−1780), British jurist whose "Commentaries on the Laws of England" was the principal text for aspiring young lawyers}

"There is time enough to think of all that," said Elinor, blushing a little.

"Yes, time enough! and we can judge what sort of a lawyer he will make, by the way in which he handles the subject. As it is a bad cause, he ought to find a great deal to say on the occasion. Suppose he manages the matter so well, as to bring your aunt and myself over to his side, what would you say?"

"I can only say now, grandpapa, that I cannot bear to think of the time when I shall have to leave Aunt Agnes and yourself," replied Elinor, with feeling. "Pray, don't let us talk about it yet; I shall be very well satisfied with things as they are, for a long time to come."

"Well, you may be satisfied to have Harry in Egypt; but I should like to see him here, once in a while. When is it they are to be home?"

"The last of the summer, sir. They sail in August, that Louisa may see Mrs. Graham before she goes south."

"You have had a different sort of a winter, my child, from Harry and Jane."

"It has been a pleasant winter to me, and to all three, I hope."

"Yes; Jenny has had all the gaiety−−Harry all the adventure−−and you, all the sobriety. But it was your own

wish, my dear, that has kept us in the country, this winter."

The last six months had, indeed, passed very differently to the young people. Jane had been dancing away her evenings on the parquets of Paris; and dividing her mornings between walks to the Tuileries, drives to the Bois de Boulogne, and visits to the shops. As for the lessons which had, at one time, entered into the plan, they had never been even commenced. Jane was too indolent to take pleasure in anything of the kind; and her companions, the daughters of Mrs. Howard, led her into so much gaiety, that she really seemed to have little time for anything else. Mrs. Robert Hazlehurst thought, indeed, that her sister was quite too dissipated; still, Jane seemed to enjoy it so much, she looked so well and happy, and Mrs. Howard was such an obliging chaperon, that the same course was pursued, week after week; although Mrs. Hazlehurst, herself, who had an infant a few weeks old, seldom accompanied her.

Elinor, in the mean time, was passing the quietest of country lives at Wyllys−Roof, where the family remained all winter. Even the letters, which the previous year had given her so much pleasure, had been wanting during the past season. Jane never wrote oftener than was absolutely necessary; and only two of Hurry's letters reached their destination. There was a package from Europe, however, in the Longbridge Post−Office, on the morning of the sleigh−drive we have alluded to. It contained a long letter from Harry, written at Smyrna, announcing that he hoped to be in Paris some time in March; and one from Mrs. Hazlehurst, informing her friends of their plans for the summer−−including an excursion to Switzerland−−after which they were to return home late in August.

The very day Elinor received these letters, Harry returned to Paris. After pitching his tent among Grecian ruins, and riding on camels over the sands of Egypt and Syria, he had returned to France through Turkey and Austria; thinking himself a very lucky fellow to have seen so much of what the world contains, worth seeing.

He found his brother entirely recovered, as well as he had been before the accident which had injured him. He was called upon to admire the little niece born during his absence; she was a sweet little baby, and Mrs. Hazlehurst had named her Elinor, after her future sister−in−law−−a kind attention for which Harry was much obliged to her, and which, he declared, would make the child a favourite with him.

Jane was there, of course, and glad to see Harry, of course. Hazlehurst had scarcely taken possession of a comfortable fauteuil in his brother's drawing−room, before the thought occurred to him, that all the party looked much as usual, excepting Jane. During the first evening, he became convinced that she was certainly altered by the air of Paris. How very much she had improved in appearance and manner! He had never before thought her so very beautiful as many others had done−−but he must now retract all he had ever said on the subject. He supposed the good taste with which she was dressed must have some effect; but it seemed as if her beauty were now in its perfection. When he last saw her, there was something almost childish in her appearance and expression, which she had now lost entirely. He was struck with the air of finish about her whole person, from the rich glossy lustre on her dark hair, to the pearly tint of her complexion. She was, indeed, a beautiful creature. What a sensation such a face must create among the enthusiastic Parisians! Then, she must have more feeling than he had given her credit for; she had received him quite kindly, and seemed really glad to see him again.

{"fauteuil" = armchair (French)}

Daily observation, while living under the same roof, only confirmed Harry in this new opinion of Jane. He began to admire the languid grace of her movements; and he discovered that it is very possible to have too much warmth of manner, and that some women certainly fatigue one by their animation. He must tell the family at Wyllys−Roof how much Jane had improved. He found he was not mistaken in supposing that she must produce an impression wherever she was seen. Whether they were walking in the Tuileries of a morning, or went into society in the evening, the effect was always the same; he saw her everywhere followed by very evident and open admiration. And no wonder; her beauty threw a charm over all her actions: it was even a pleasure to accompany her in shopping excursions−−which he used to look upon as the greatest tax that a lady could impose upon his gallantry; but then, few persons looked so beautiful as Jane, when selecting a muslin, or trying on a hat. He soon became proud of a place at her side, and much more vain of her beauty than she was herself.

"I must let them know at Longbridge," he thought, "what a sensation Jane is making. She is, indeed, a beauty to be proud of. I saw nothing like her in Greece. She does credit to the country." Harry thought it patriotic to admire her, and to lose no opportunity of enjoying the effect of her beauties among the gay world of Paris. American patriotism, as we all know, often takes singular shapes.

Jane and himself became more intimate, and on more friendly terms than they had ever yet been. She seemed,

indeed, to prefer him, as a cavaliere servente, to any of her other admirers, American or European. But that might easily be accounted for, on the score of connexion. Of course, Harry was grateful for this preference, and after a while he even began to look upon the excessive devotion of one or two of her admirers, as impertinence on their part.

{"cavaliere servente" = male escort (Italian)}

About this time−−some weeks after his return−−Hazlehurst gave himself very much to the study of aesthetics. The beautiful, the harmonious, alone attracted him; he could not endure anything approaching to coarseness. He wandered up and down the galleries of the Louvre, delighting more in the beautiful faces of the Italian masters, in the Nymphs and Muses of the old Greeks, than he had ever done before. He became quite a connoisseur. He had no taste for the merely pretty; perfect beauty he admired with his whole soul, but anything short of it was only to be tolerated. He felt the fact, if he did not reason on the discovery, that beauty in the very highest degree, carries with it−−we do not say the expression−−but the stamp of dignity, and even of intelligence. Such was the impression produced by Jane's perfectly classical head and features. It was impossible, as you gazed upon her smooth polished forehead, and noble dark eyes, to believe her wanting in character, or intellect. Then, Harry remembered that talent of the highest order bears a calm aspect; not frothy, sparkling cleverness, which takes so well with the vulgar; not wit, exactly; but that result of a well−balanced mind, in which all the faculties harmonize so well, that they leave no one particularly prominent. He had been much struck, lately, with several remarks of Jane's−−they showed a depth of observation, a fund of good sense, which he had not formerly supposed her to possess; but then, of old, he used to be unpardonably unjust to Jane. She was certainly improved, too; her friends at Longbridge would be gratified by the change.

This course of aesthetics gradually carried Harry so far, that after a profound study of the subject in general, and of Jane's features in particular, he became a convert to the opinion of the German philosopher, who affirms that "The Beautiful is greater than the Good." There have been disputes, we believe, on the subject of this axiom, some critics giving it a deep mystical sense, others, again, attempting to explain it in different ways. Our friend Hazlehurst, though a pretty good German scholar, seemed disposed to adopt the idea in its simplest interpretation.

{"German philosopher" = I have been unable to identify with certainty the quotation, though the sentiment suggests Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling (1775−1854)}

Things were in this train, when the family set out for Switzerland.

CHAPTER VIII

"Her dress, and novels, visits, and success."
CRABBE.

{George Crabbe (English poet, 1754−1832), "Posthumous Tales: XV
Belinda Waters" line II.31}

LONGBRIDGE was quite a pleasant village, and surrounded by a pretty country. Like most other American rural towns, it received, in the warmest months, a large accession to its population; for it seems to be a matter of course, that everybody who is able to do so, runs away from brick walls in the months of July and August, and selects some village in which to rusticate, and set the fashions, enjoy the dust and the fire−flies, fresh peaches, and home−made ice−cream.−−Longbridge, in addition to the usual advantages of pure air, and brown fields, in the month of August, had something of a reputation as a place for bathing; and its three taverns, and various boarding−houses, were generally well filled with families from New York and Philadelphia, during the very warm weather.

Among others, during the season to which we allude, the Grahams were there, anxiously awaiting the arrival of the Hazlehurst party from Europe; for letters had been received, informing their friends that they might be expected at any moment. The Wyllys carriage was now seen at Longbridge every day, either at the house where their relatives, the Grahams, had taken lodgings for the season, or before the door of a neat little cottage, recently purchased by Mr. Wyllys for the widow of his youngest son, Mrs. George Wyllys. This lady, to whom the reader has been already introduced, had been left, with four children, almost entirely dependent on her father−in−law. Her character was somewhat of a medley. She was a good−hearted woman, attached to her husband's family, and always asking advice of her friends, particularly Mr. Wyllys, and Miss Agnes, for whom she had a sincere respect. She was pretty, lady−like, rather clever, and a pleasant companion to persons not particularly interested in her welfare. On indifferent topics she could converse with as much good sense as the rest of the world; but her own affairs she mismanaged terribly. All her other good qualities seemed unsettled by a certain infusion of caprice, and jealousy of influence; and yet she really meant well, and fancied herself a very prudent woman. She thought she was capable of making any sacrifice for those she loved, and therefore believed herself a model in all the relations of life. As a mother, she had a system of education, the theory of which was excellent; but there was little consistency in its practice. As regards money−matters, she talked and thought so much about economy, that she took it for granted that she practised it. After having passed the first years of her widowhood with her own family in Baltimore, she had lately become convinced that her income was not sufficient to allow her living in a large town, without running in debt. Mr. Wyllys was unfortunately too well aware that his daughter−in−law's difficulties were not the result of Baltimore prices, but of her own mismanagement. Franklin advises his friends to "take care of the pence, and the pounds will take care of themselves:" but this rule is by no means infallible. Perhaps there is no species of extravagance more common, than that often practised by well−disposed people, which consists of being "penny−wise, pound−foolish;" they will save a hundred cents on as many different occasions, and throw away twenty dollars on one object. It happens that such persons often succeed in persuading themselves that they are models of prudence, and self−denial. Such was Mrs. George Wyllys's plan; and, unfortunately, she not only brought trouble on herself, but was a constant source of anxiety to her father−in−law,

who endeavoured, in vain, to counteract the evil; but every succeeding year brought a repetition of the difficulties of the former.

{"Franklin" = Benjamin Franklin (1706−1790), but the expression is usually attributed to Lord Chesterfield (1674−1773); "penny wise, pound foolish" = phrase originated by Robert Burton (1577−1640)}

At present, Mrs. Wyllys was bent upon economy in a cottage, with new furniture, purchased at a high price, at New York auctions; and it was in vain to oppose her plan, so convinced was she, that duty alone could have induced her to leave her own family and old friends in Baltimore.

"We must make the best of it, Agnes," said Mr. Wyllys, "it will be pleasant, at least, to have Harriet and her little people near us−−and we may be of use to the children."

Miss Agnes agreed to the first part of her father's remark, but was far from feeling sanguine as to their being of any advantage to the children. It was a part of Mrs. Wyllys's system, to consult her friends far more frequently than was necessary, upon the education of her family, at the same time that it also entered into her plan to follow their advice very seldom indeed.

As for Elinor, she was very well pleased with her aunt's arrival in the neighbourhood; of course, she was too young and inexperienced to know the exact state of matters, and she was attached to Mrs. Wyllys, and fond of her little cousins.

One afternoon, Mrs. Wyllys had persuaded Miss Agnes and Elinor to drink tea with her, and not return home until the evening. The ladies were sitting together, in Mrs. Wyllys's pleasant little parlour, engaged with their needles, while the children were playing under the windows, in the shady door−yard.

"Shall I put the bow on the right or left side, Elinor?" asked Mrs. Wyllys, who was re−trimming a hat for one of her little girls.

"It looks very well as you have it now, Aunt;" replied her niece.

"Perhaps it does; there is a stain, however, on the other side, which must be covered," replied the lady, changing the bow. "This riband was very cheap, Agnes," she added, showing it to her sister−in−law. "Only twenty cents a yard. I bought the whole piece, although I shall not want it until next spring."

"Quite cheap," said Miss Agnes, looking at the riband; "but I don't know what you will do with so much of it."

"Oh, I shall find some use for it; in a large family, nothing comes amiss."

A pretty, little girl, about eight years old, ran into the room, and, skipping up to her mother, whispered, "Here comes a carriage, mamma, and some ladies."

"Who is it, Elinor?" asked Mrs. Wyllys, of her niece, who was sitting near the window.

"The Hubbards," she replied.

"What, Patsey Hubbard?"

"Oh, no; her cousins−−very different persons. The Longbridge Hubbards, whose acquaintance you have not yet made."

Two ladies, radiant with elegance, entered the room, and were introduced, by Miss Agnes, to her sister−in−law, as Mrs. Hilson, and Miss Emmeline Hubbard. They were both young; quite pretty; very fashionably dressed; very silly in their expressions, and much alike, in every respect.

After a few preliminary speeches, Mrs. Hilson remarked, that she was very glad Mrs. Wyllys had come to join their rustic circle.

"Thank you," replied the lady; "Longbridge is a favourite place of mine; but I have not yet seen many traces of rusticity, here."

"Why, no, Julianna," observed Miss Emmeline, "I don't think our village is at all a rustic place. We have too many advantages of communication with the city for that."

"It is true," said Mrs. Hilson, "Longbridge has always been a very aristocratic place. You know, Miss Wyllys," turning to Miss Agnes, "we have our 'West−End,' and our 'exclusives.'"

{"West End" = from the fashionable West End of London}

"I was not aware of it; but then I am really a rustic," Miss Wyllys added, smiling.

"Yes, it is unfortunate, you should be so far from the village. Emmeline and I often pity you, Miss Elinor, for being so far from genteel society."

"That is scarcely worth while, I assure you, for we have several pleasant families, within a short distance."

"But only a very small circle, however. Now we have quite a large set of aristocratic people, in the village.

Some of our inhabitants are very refined, I assure you, Mrs. Wyllys."

The lady bowed.

"You will find your two next neighbours, Mrs. Bibbs and Mrs. Tibbs, very fascinating ladies," observed Miss Emmeline. "Mrs. Bibbs is one of our beauties; and Mrs. Tibbs, our most elegant dresser."

"Emmeline is going over the Court Calendar, for you, already," said Mrs. Hilson, laughing fashionably.

{"Court Calendar" = from the section of British newspapers devoted to the schedule and appearances of the Royal Family}

"Are these ladies the wives of judges?" inquired Mrs. Wyllys.

"Oh, no; Mrs. Tibbs is the lady of our physician, and Mrs. Bibbs is a 'marchande,'−−she is a very fascinating lady, and has a fine flow of conversation. She was a great belle, at Saratoga, a year or two since; you may, perhaps, have met her there?" inquired Mrs. Hilson.

"Not that I know of; but I have not been at Saratoga for years."

"Is it possible? I cannot live without three weeks at Saratoga, and a fortnight at Rockaway, every year. Before I ordered my wedding−dress, I made Mr. Hilson promise I should have my own way about that. I said to him, one day, 'Alonzo, before the settlements are drawn up, I shall require you to pledge yourself to six weeks, every year, between Saratoga and Rockaway.'"

{"settlements" = marriage settlements or pre−nuptial agreements; "Rockaway" = a fashionable sea−side resort on Long Island, near New York City}

"You are fond of a gay life, I suppose."

"Very naturally; having lived in the world of fashion from my cradle, I do not think I could breathe any other atmosphere. It must be a great change for you, Mrs. Wyllys, from all the pleasures of a city−life to a small circle like ours."

"A change, certainly; but a pleasant one, I hope."

"It will be a relief to you, to find so much aristocracy among us. We have a certain clique, that, I think, must satisfy the most refined taste, and will console you, I hope, for the loss of genteel society in Baltimore."

"Thank you. I shall scarcely miss any but my friends. I go out very little."

"I regret to hear that.−−We must try to persuade you to change your determination, and mingle more with society. I feel confident, that our West−End clique must satisfy the most refined taste. We expect to have a great deal of gaiety, this fall; but, just at present, we have a scarcity of beaux."

"What has become of young Mr. Taylor; he was to have been home by this time. Do you hear anything of him, Miss Wyllys?" inquired Miss Emmeline.

"His family expect him soon, I believe."

"I hope he will arrive before our summer parties are over. Mr. and Mrs. Hazlehurst, too, and Miss Graham, when shall we have the pleasure of seeing them?"

"We expect them every day."

"I hope," said Mrs. Hilson, "they will arrive while I am here, which will be longer than usual, this season, for they are painting our suit {sic} of apartments in the city. When I came, Alonzo told Emmeline to keep me until October, and she has promised me a round of entertainments, while I am with her; so that I feel particularly interested in the arrival of your friends."

"Miss Graham will dash a great deal, no doubt, when she comes back," said Miss Emmeline; "I quite long to see her. Miss Taylor must be expecting her impatiently. By−the−bye, I understand, Mr. Taylor's new furniture is now all arrived. His villa, as well as his city−house, will be very stylish."

"Mr. Taylor is a very tasty gentleman," observed Mrs. Hilson. "He seems to be very talented, in every way; formed to figure in fashionable life, as well as in business. His new house is a magnificent edifice."

"Your father tells me, he has quite finished his own house, Mrs. Hilson; you must be glad to get rid of the workmen," remarked Miss Wyllys.

"Yes−−they have been long enough about it; but Pa has old−fashioned notions about having everything substantial, and well done; he said Emmeline and I might choose the plan, and have everything as we liked; but he must have his own time to do it in. However, it is a delightful mansion, now. It has every convenience of the most fashionable houses in the city; plate−glass, and folding−doors, and marble chimneys to the garret. Just such a house as I should like in New York; though, to tell the truth, I would not keep house for the world."

"Julianna is so delightfully situated, in her boarding−house, Mrs. Wyllys, that she has nothing to wish for."

{"boarding−house" = at this period in American history, many respectable and reasonably well−off people and even families lived permanently in boarding−houses, rather than maintain a houseful of servants}

"Yes, we have every luxury of fashionable life, united to a very aristocratic set of boarders; and Mrs. Stone, herself, is an extremely fascinating lady. Indeed, I have been spoilt; I don't think I could endure the drudgery of housekeeping, now; though I once told Alonzo, if he would give me a four−story house, up town, with a marble front, I would try."

"You must find the situation of your father's new house pleasanter than that he has left," observed Miss Agnes.

"By no means.−−That is a serious objection to our new mansion. Standing surrounded by the park, on three sides, removes us so far from the street."

"I should have thought you would find it pleasant to be removed farther from the noise and dust. What is your cousin Charles doing? I suppose you see him often, in town."

"I really do not know what has become of him," said Mrs. Hilson, languidly; for she always felt rather mortified by any allusion to her unfashionable relations. "Though Charles is in the city now, studying painting, yet I never see him. He told Mr. Hilson that he called sometimes, but I have never seen his card; in a large boarding−house like ours, with a family of forty or fifty people, there is often great confusion about visits. But, Emmeline, we are making a very unfashionable call. I am quite ashamed, Mrs. Wyllys: but we will relieve you now−−I see our carriage has returned." And after an exchange of curtsies, the ladies glided out of the room. Miss Emmeline, as she passed, touched the curly head of one of the children, exclaiming as she did so, "fascinating cherub!" and then both vanished.

We have said that these two sisters were very much alike. Mrs. Hilson, however, was the most distinguished of the two, for she carried the family follies several degrees farther than Miss Emmeline. Taken altogether, she was an absurd compound. Personally, she was thoroughly American, very pretty and delicate in form and features, and thus far appeared to great advantage; but she had, also, an affected mincing manner, and drawling voice. Of course, her dress was as Parisian as possible; everything she wore was a faithful copy from "Le Courier des Dames." Her feelings and opinions; Mrs. Hilson was proud to call English in the extreme, for she had chosen to imbibe a great love of "aristocracy," and many other things which she did not in the least understand. She had a set of common−place phrases of this description in constant use, having borrowed them from an intimate friend, living in the same boarding−house, a Mrs. Bagman, an Englishwoman, of a very equivocal position. Then, she read nothing but English novels; these were her only source of amusement and instruction in the way of books; and as she followed the example of Mrs. Bagman, in rejecting every tale that had not its due share of lords and ladies, she called herself fastidious in the selection. She was a great talker, and not a day passed but what cockney sentiments fell from her pretty little mouth, in drawling tones, from under a fanciful Parisian coiffure. John Bull would have stared, however, if called upon to acknowledge her as a daughter; for Yankee vulgarity and English vulgarity are very different in character−−the first having the most pretension, the last the most coarseness.

These ladies had scarcely driven from the door, before Mrs. Wyllys exclaimed: "Is it possible, Agnes, that these Hubbards are a good specimen of the Longbridge people!"

"No, indeed; one such family is quite enough for any place."

"How ridiculous they are! How can you tolerate them?"

"Now, pray, Aunt Agnes," said Elinor, "do not say one word in their favour."

"No; as regards the ladies of the family, one can say little. They are not perhaps, by nature, as ridiculous as they have made themselves. Time may do something for them. But their father is a very worthy, respectable man; you must have seen him at our house last summer. Don't you remember one day two uncles of Patsey Hubbard dining with us?"

"Yes, I do remember them; one Charles Hubbard called Uncle Josey {sic}, and he seemed quite a sensible man; the other fell asleep I know, the one they called Uncle Dozie."

"The napping uncle is the old bachelor; Uncle Josie is the father of these ladies."

"He seemed a sensible man; how came he to have such daughters?"

"They are very like their mother, who died a year or two since."

"They are very disagreeable, certainly. How often shall we be required to encounter this desperate elegance? I

almost begin to repent having fixed myself at Longbridge."

"And between Mrs. Bibbs, and Mrs. Tibbs, too!" said Elinor, laughing. "However, for your consolation, Aunt, I can assure you these two ladies are far from being so very 'fascinating' as the Hubbards. Mrs. Hilson and her sister rise high above the rest of us in that respect−−they are, decidedly, 'our Corinthian capital.'"

"You will find the Van Hornes, the Bernards, and several other families, very pleasant neighbours, on farther acquaintance," said Miss Agnes. "You have really been unfortunate in this specimen."

"And where did these ladies contrive to pick up so much absurdity?"

"With a miserable education to begin with, no other reading than the worst novels, and the chance association of second−rate boarding−houses, that point, I think, is easily accounted for," said Miss Agnes.

The conversation was interrupted by the hurried return of Mr. Wyllys, who held a newspaper in his hand.

"They have arrived!" cried Elinor, springing from her chair, as she saw her grandfather enter the gate.

"Good news!" said Mr. Wyllys, as he joined the ladies. "The Erie is in, and our friends with her! They must have arrived in the night, and to−morrow morning we shall have them here."

Of course, all the family were gratified by the good news. Elinor was quite agitated, though her aunt had the pleasure of seeing her look very happy.

"Here it is," said Mr. Wyllys, reading from the paper the arrival of "'the Packet Ship Erie, Capt. Funck, from Havre, consigned to −−−−− −−−−− &Co.;' that you won't care about. But here is the list of passengers: 'Mr. Johnson, Mrs. Johnson, and a dozen Masters and Misses Johnson, from Natchez;'−−strangers, you will say, but here are acquaintances: 'Mrs. Creighton, Mr. Francis Ellsworth, and servant, of Phil.; Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hazleworth, and family, of Phil.; Miss Graham, of Phil.; Madame Gigot, of Paris:' wait a moment, Nelly, all in good time. 'Capt. Flint, of British Army; Achille Bureau, of Paris; T. Davis, of Charleston; Dr. Brackett, of St. Louis;' and, though last, not least in our estimation, W. Hazleworth, of Phil.; with seventy−nine in the steerage.' Of course, for W. Hazleworth, read H. Hazlehurst; they never spell a name right. We shall have them all here to−morrow I hope, Nelly."

If Elinor said little, she thought and felt a great deal.

They were still talking over the arrival, when Mrs. Wyllys's little girl came skipping in, again, and said; "Here comes a gentleman, mamma." She was followed in an instant, by a young man, who, in a hurried, eager manner, had kissed the hand of Miss Agnes, and Elinor's cheek, before either had time to exclaim "Harry!"

It was, in fact, Hazlehurst, still in his travelling−cap. They had arrived in the night, he said, and the rest of the party was to follow him the next day.

CHAPTER IX.

"How taught shall I return?"
CRABBE.

{George Crabbe (English poet, 1754−1832), "Posthumous Tales: VI
The Farewell and Return" line I.62}

OF course, Harry was established at Wyllys−Roof. And, after a few days passed with her parents at Longbridge, Elinor persuaded Jane to pay her a short visit.

It is a pleasant moment for people of mature years, when they can sit idly by, as affectionate observers, while a gay party of young people, in whom they are interested, are chatting familiarly together, with the lively tone and light spirits of youth, free alike from the restraints of childhood, and the cares of middle age. Every varied shade of character, unconsciously betrayed by the young group−−the playful remark−−the just observation−−the pleasing acquirement−−an act of good−nature−−a graceful motion−−the bright eye and the careless smile−−ay, even the proof of inexperience and want of worldly wisdom−−all is attractive to the partial friends. They feel such a moment to be the reward of many a previous hour of care and anxiety; it is their happy privilege to mark each improvement in person, mind and heart−−the fruit of past labours and prayers−−the cheering promise amid the doubts of the future. Happy they, who can look upon the young people committed to their charge, with the consciousness that no important duty towards them has been neglected; happy the young person, who, with a clear conscience and an open countenance, can meet the approving smile of a parent; thrice happy the youth, who, having taken a false step at the beginning of his career, has had the courage and wisdom to turn, ere too late; that precious approbation of wise and true friends, may still be fully his; he has turned from danger, temptation and shame, into the sure and safe path that leads to everything most to be valued, even in this world.

As for our friends at Wyllys−Roof, the joy of re−union, after a long absence, gave additional zest to the first pleasant meetings of the young people, in whom Miss Agnes and Mr. Wyllys were so warmly interested. Elinor was in gay spirits−−even Jane was more animated than usual, in her expressions and manners. As for Harry, he was decidedly improved; the last two years had done a great deal for him. He was now a clever, well−educated, agreeable young man of three−and−twenty, whose judgment and taste were much improved by travelling.

"A very good−looking fellow, too, Agnes," remarked Mr. Wyllys.

It was easy to gather, from the natural, healthful tone of his conversation, that in more important points, while he had gained much, he had lost nothing by wider observation of the world.

As for Jane, Miss Agnes had not expected much from her, and she was pleased with the changes she observed. Her young kinswoman's temper seemed to have become more even than formerly, and she was quite as much pleased to return to her family, as she ought to have been. It appeared natural, that everybody who saw Jane should be satisfied with looking at her. Beauty like hers disarmed their attempts at severity, and disposed them to indulgence. It seemed scarcely reasonable to expect any striking quality, or great virtue, with beauty so rare. But if the Wyllyses had thought her beautiful before she left them, they were really astonished to find how much it had been possible for her to gain in appearance. Her face was now perfectly lovely, in the finest style of beauty. Miss Wyllys was pleased to find her manners much improved; a change from the society of Adeline Taylor, and her lively young friends, to that of older and better−bred people, had been of great advantage. Jane's labours of liveliness had annoyed Miss Agnes not a little; and more than once she had ventured a remark on the subject; but her young relative had been too well advised, by Adeline and her school−companions, to believe that Miss Wyllys could possibly know, as well as themselves, what were the fashionable airs and graces of the day. Since her visit to Paris, however, Jane's manner, without her being aware of it herself, had become much more quiet and natural. During the last twelvemonth, she had not found it necessary to make perpetual exertions to attract, or retain

admirers. She had learned to look upon the attentions of society as a matter of course.

The observations of Mr. Wyllys and his daughter were not all confined to the two young travellers; they watched the graceful movements of Elinor, and listened with interest to the gay remarks made in her pleasant voice. She had never been in better spirits, and was evidently happy. Elinor was really attached to Jane; and yet, never were two girls less alike, not only in person, but in mind and disposition. Jane's beauty was a great charm, in Elinor's eyes. The homeliness of her own features only increased her admiration for those of her cousin, who had always filled, with her, the place of a younger sister and pet, although the difference in their ages was very trifling. If these feelings were not returned as warmly as they deserved, Elinor had never seemed to expect that they should be; it was not in Jane's nature to do so. That Harry's arrival should have made her happy, was, of course, only natural; she betrayed, at times, a touch of embarrassment towards him, when Aunt Agnes had smiled too openly, or Mr. Wyllys had rallied too strongly; but it was graceful, like every shade in her manner.

Miss Agnes was well aware that the last two years had not been lost with Elinor, although passed in quiet every−day life. She knew, from close observation, that the character of her adopted child had been gradually approaching nearer to all she wished it to be. As the two young girls sat chatting together, Miss Wyllys could not but mark the striking difference in their appearance; but she also felt that if Jane's loveliness were a charm, even to her, knowing Elinor thoroughly, she loved her far more deeply for the want of beauty. But, of course, the world would have decided differently.

The morning after Jane's arrival at Wyllys−Roof, the young people were engaged in one of the gay conversations we have alluded to, when Mr. Wyllys called off Hazlehurst's attention.

"Harry, what was that clumsy contrivance about the French horses, you were describing to Van Horne, last night? I wanted to ask you, at the time, but you began to talk with Miss Patsey. You said something about a wooden collar, I think."

Harry changed his seat, for one nearer Mr. Wyllys, and began a long explanation of the harness used by the French teamsters.

"I have several engravings in my trunks, that will show you my meaning, sir, better than words can do."

"I should like to see them. But, are these wooden wings to the collars, as you describe them, used throughout France, or only in Normandy, and the neighbourhood of Paris?"

"We saw them wherever we went. All the carters and farmers seem to use them. They have, besides, a great deal of clumsy, useless ornament, and they contrive to want twice as much tackle as we do."

The gentlemen continued to discuss the subject of horses and harness, Harry relating, for Mr. Wyllys's amusement, many observations he had made, on these matters, in the different countries where he had been.

Jane had brought down, from her room, an arm−full of pretty things, evidently Parisian. She had just given Elinor a very pretty bag, which Miss Agnes was called upon to admire.

"My dear Aunt," cried Elinor, "do look at this; Jane, I think we must call it a sac−−'bag' sounds too heavy. Look at the material−−the finest cachemere. And then the colour, so rich and so delicate at the same time."

"Yes; it is a very pretty shade of ponceau," said Jane.

{"ponceau" = poppy red (French)}

"And then the shape! so Parisian! And the ornaments−−"

"It is very pretty," said Miss Wyllys, after due examination.

"That is the way with everything that comes from Paris," said Elinor; "it is always so complete; not one part good and others clumsy−−or good in quality, but ugly in form and colour. The French seem to have an instinct about these things; they throw a grace about everything."

"Yes; they have a perfect taste," said Jane.

"While I was up−stairs, with Louisa, yesterday," said Elinor, "we talked over Paris all the morning, Aunt Agnes. I was amused with a great deal she told me. Louisa says, there is a fitness in all that a French−woman does and says, and even in everything she wears−−that her dress is always consistent−−always appropriate to the occasion."

"That is true," replied Jane; "their dress is always of a piece."

"And yet, Louisa insists upon it, that they do not bestow more time and thought upon the subject, than the women of other countries−−and, certainly, not so much money."

"Everything is so easy to be had, and so much cheaper, in Paris," said Jane.

"But, she remarked, that they are never ashamed to wear a pretty thing merely because it is cheap; nor to make themselves comfortable, by wearing thick shoes in the mud, and a coarse, warm shawl in a fog."

"We have not much mud or fog to trouble us, in this country;" said Miss Agnes.

"No, aunt; but we have hard showers in summer, and cold weather in winter; in spite of which, you know, our ladies must always be dressed like fairies."

"I have often heard Madame de Bessieres praise the good sense of her countrywomen, on those subjects," observed Miss Wyllys.

"Louisa maintains that the French−women have a great deal of common sense; she says, that is the foundation of their good taste; and, I suppose, after all, good taste is only good sense refined."

"I suppose it is, my dear. Louisa seems to have come back even more of a French−woman than you, Jane," observed Miss Agnes.

"Oh! I like the French very well, Aunt Agnes."

"But Louisa is quite eloquent on the subject."

"She was so very fortunate, Aunt, in having so kind a friend in Paris, as Madame de Bessieres. Louisa describes the de Bessieres as living in a delightful set of people−−she mentioned half a dozen persons whom she met habitually there, as not only amiable, and highly accomplished, and well−bred, but high−principled, too. She says she used often to wish you could know them, Aunt Agnes."

"I can readily believe anything good of the intimate friends of Madame de Bessieres, for I never knew a woman whose character was more worthy of respect. It was a great loss to us, when she returned to France. She was very fond of you, Elinor."

"How kind in a person of Madame de Bessieres' age, to remember me! I long to see the letter she wrote me; Robert says I shall have it, certainly, to−morrow, when all their baggage will be at Longbridge."

"Madame de Bessieres often spoke of you, Elinor," said Jane. "She bid me ask if you remembered all the pet names she used to call you, but I forgot to mention it when I wrote."

"Just as you forget many other things, naughty girl; I must say you are anything but a model correspondent, Jenny, dear."

"Well, I can't help it−−I do dislike so to write!"

"You need not tell me that," said Elinor, laughing. "But I do remember all Madame de Bessieres' kind names very well. It was sometimes, mon lapin, mon lapin dore, mon chou, ma mere−−they all sounded pleasantly to me, she spoke them so kindly. But sometimes to vex me, the other children−−Master Harry among others−−used to translate them; and, though rabbit, and golden rabbit, sounded very well in English, I did not care to be called cabbage."

{"mon lapin" = my rabbit; "mon chou" = my cabbage, a term of endearment; "dore" = golden; "ma mere" = my mother (French)}

"Did you like the young people you met in Paris, Jane?" asked Miss Wyllys.

"Oh, yes; the young men don't trouble you to entertain them, and the girls are very good−natured and pleasant."

"Louisa seems to think the French girls are charming−−so graceful, and pleasing, and modest; really accomplished, and well educated, too, she says−−all that young women ought to be."

"Yes, she says that she hopes her little girls will be as well educated as Madame de Bessieres' grand−daughters," said Jane.

"Well, I hope my little namesake may answer her mother's expectations. She is a sweet little puss now, at any rate. Louisa was quite vexed yesterday, with Mrs. Van Horne, who asked her if the French girls were not all artful, and hypocritical. She answered her, that, on the contrary, those she saw the most frequently, were modest, ingenuous, and thoroughly well−principled in every way, besides being very accomplished. She laid great stress on one point, the respect invariably paid by the young to the old, not only among the women, but the men, too."

"Yes," observed Miss Agnes; "I remember to have heard the same remark from Madame de Bessieres; she observed, that after having been in many different countries, she could justly claim for her own, that in no other was so much deference paid to age as in France."

"That agrees precisely with Louisa's opinion. She says it is a striking feature in French society, and appears thoroughly part of their character−−not at all assumed for appearance sake."

"It is a duty too little remembered in this country. It seems to be only in our very best families that the subject is properly attended to," said Miss Agnes.

"Louisa likes the manners of the men for the same reason; she says that in society they are always respectful and obliging, whatever other agreeable or disagreeable qualities they may have. She remarked, that she had never met with a rude Frenchman in society; but she had, repeatedly, met with rude Englishmen, in very good company."

"What fault, pray, did Louisa find with the Englishmen you met, Jane?" asked Miss Agnes.

"There is a certain set, who say and do rude things."

"I should not have thought that;" said Miss Wyllys.

"Oh, they have a way of making themselves disagreeable; now, a Frenchman never tries to be disagreeable."

"One would think no one would try that," said Elinor.

"The English do, though, I assure you; at least a certain set. I don't believe any other people do. I remember one evening, Harry was very angry with a certain Mr. Ellery, son of Lord Greystone, who used to come to our house quite often last spring. Do you remember him, Harry?" she added, as Hazlehurst again approached the table covered with French knicknacks {sic}, where the girls were sitting.

"Whom were you talking about?" he asked.

"Mr. Ellery;−−do you remember his manner?"

"Ellery?−−To be sure I do!−−Insufferable coxcomb!"

"Pray, what was his great offence?" asked Elinor, laughing.

Harry coloured violently. "Oh, it was his intolerable English manner. I have known him stretch himself out nearly full length on a sofa, on which Jane or Louisa was sitting, and stare at them, with the most sickening expression, for half an hour at a time."

"Half an hour, Harry! how can you talk so? Half a minute, you mean."

"Well, until he drove you away, at any rate. I was often surprised that you could endure it as long as you did. But happily, Louisa cooled him off after a while; though I had a strong inclination to undertake the job myself."

"It was much better as it was; it was Louisa's place to do it," observed Miss Agnes.

"But I thought you liked the English," said Elinor, with some surprise. "You were speaking very highly of several of your English friends, last night."

"I do like the better sort very much. They are fine, manly fellows, as ever breathed."

"What people did you like best?" asked Miss Agnes.

"A man who does not cherish prejudice, must naturally like the best qualities and the best individuals of all nations."

"But have you no preference?"

"There cannot be a doubt, that society is more agreeable in France, in Paris, than elsewhere."

"Are not the French too artificial?"

"I honestly do not think them more so than the English. English simplicity often has a very artificial twist; with the French it is just the reverse; art becomes a second−nature, with them."

"We hear the French accused of selfishness−−"

"I think you would find both French and English more selfish than we are. But they have different ways of showing it. The Englishman is exclusive, and reserved; the Frenchman egotistical. Reserve may seem dignified; but it often covers a great deal of cold self−love; while French egotism−−not EGOISME−−is often mingled with much naivete and bonhommie {sic}. Both nations, however, are more selfish than the Italians, or Germans, I should say."

"Still, you seem to like the French the best of the two."

"Well, the French generally treat Americans more civilly than the English. John Bull is very fond of giving himself airs of superiority, after a disagreeable fashion of his own. Now a Frenchman fancies himself so much more civilized than the rest of the world, that he has a good−natured feeling towards everybody but John Bull: he thinks he can afford to be amiable and friendly."

"If you are speaking of the best people in each country, however," said Mr. Wyllys; "that is not the surest way of judging national character. We must take the average."

"I am aware of that, sir."

"At any rate, you don't seem to have liked this Mr. Ellery," said Elinor.

"Not in the least; I used to think him excessively impertinent," exclaimed Harry, and as his choler rose, while certain recollections passed through his mind, he coloured again. To change the subject, he took up the bag the young ladies had been admiring.

"What fanciful name may belong to this piece of finery; for, of course, it is not a bag?" he asked.

"Oh, it is too useful, not to have a straight−forward, common name; you may call it a sac, though, if you like. I could not think of anything more imaginative; can you, Jane?"

"I dare say, there is another name; but I have forgotten it; everything has a name of its own, in Paris."

"Your table looks like a fancy−shop, Aunt Agnes," continued Hazlehurst; "gloves, bags, purses, boxes, muslins, portfolios, and twenty other things, jumbled together."

"What sort of wood is the work−box that you chose for Miss Patsey?" asked Elinor. "I am very glad you thought of her."

"Harry does not seem to have forgotten any of his friends, while in Paris," said Miss Agnes.

Hazlehurst looked down.

"It is some dark wood; not rose−wood, however. It is rather plain; but a serviceable−looking box," he said.

"Just the thing for Miss Patsey," observed Elinor.

"Here, Elinor," said Jane, "is the cape I spoke of;" and she unfolded a paper, and drew from it a piece of muslin which had evidently received a very pretty shape, fine embroidery, and tasteful bows of riband from some Parisian hand. "This is the one I spoke of.−−Is it not much prettier than any you have seen?"

Elinor received the cape from her cousin, who was unusually animated in its praises; it was held up to the light; then laid on the table; the delicacy of the work was admired; then the form, and the ribands; and, at last, Elinor threw it over Jane's shoulders, observing, at the same time, that it was particularly becoming to her. Harry seemed determined not to look; and, in order to resist any inclination he may have felt, to do so, he resolutely took up a Review, and began turning over its pages. The young ladies' admiration of the cape lasted several minutes, and, at length, Elinor called upon the rest of the party to admire how becoming it was.

"Well, really," exclaimed Harry, looking rather cross, probably at being disturbed in his reading, "young ladies' love of finery seems quite inexhaustible; it is sometimes incomprehensible to the duller perceptions of the male sex."

"Don't be saucy!" said Elinor.

"Why, you can't deny the fact, that you and Jane have been doing nothing else, all the morning, but tumble over this Paris finery?"

"I beg your pardon−−we have been talking quite sensibly, too; have we not, Aunt Agnes?"

"Much as usual, I believe, my dear," replied Miss Wyllys.

"Pray observe, that the table contains something besides finery; here are some very good French and Italian books; but, I suppose, Jane will say, those you selected yourself."

"I certainly did," said Harry; "and the music, too."

"Well, I have half a mind not to tell you, that we like the books and the music quite as well as anything here," said Elinor, colouring; and then, as if almost fearing that she had betrayed her feelings, she continued, in a gay tone. "But, why are you so severe upon us this morning?"

"Unpalatable truth, I suppose," said Harry, shrugging his shoulders.

"Pray, remember, sir, that if finery be thrown away upon the noble sex, at the present day, it was not always so. Let me refer you to certain kings, who, not content with studying their own dresses, have condescended to compose those of their queens, too. Remember how many great heroes−−your Turennes and Marlboroughs−−have appeared in diamonds and satin, velvet and feathers!"

{"Turenne" = Henri de la Tour d'Auvergne, Vicomte de Turenne (1611−1675), a famous French military commander; "Marlborough" = John Churchill Marlborough, Duke of Marlborough (1650−1722), a famous British military commander}

"But that was two hundred years ago."

"They were heroes, nevertheless; and, I suppose, une fois caporal, toujours caporal. But, if you prefer something nearer to our own time, figure to yourself Horace Walpole, and General Conway, some half−century since, consulting, in their correspondence, upon the particular shade of satin best suited to their

complexions−−whether pea−green, or white, were the most favourable."

{"une foi caporal...." = once a corporal, always a corporal (French); "Walpole" = Horace Walpole (1717−1797), English author; "Conway" = General Henry Conway (1721−1795), English general and politician}

Hazlehurst laughed.

"There it is, in white and black!" said Elinor. "Just remember Goldsmith, strutting about Temple Gardens, in his blush−coloured satin, and fancying everybody in love with him, too!"

{"Goldsmith" = Oliver Goldsmith (1730−1775), British author; "Temple Gardens" = in London on the Thames River, next to The Temple (an ancient English school of law)}

"Quarter! quarter! Nelly," cried her grandfather, laughing.

"True, I must confess," said Harry, smiling; "but that was more than fifty years ago. The world has grown wiser, now."

"Has it?"

"Look at our sober coats, to−day−−the last Paris fashions, too!"

"Yes−−but what is the reason?" cried Elinor, laughing herself. "You have just found out that finery, and a showy exterior, are of no use to you−−they do not increase your influence with the ladies! We do not value a man more for a showy exterior!"

"I submit," said Harry; but he coloured, and seemed to Miss Agnes, more embarrassed by Elinor's remark than was necessary. He threw down his book, however, and crossed the room to take a place near her.

"What are you going to do this morning?" he said, quietly.

A walk was proposed, and soon after the young people, accompanied by Bruno, set out together.

CHAPTER X.

"Fashion, leader of a chattering train."
COWPER.

{William Cowper (English poet, 1731−1800), "Conversation" line 457}

MISS PATSEY'S mother was more unwell than usual; and after breakfast the following morning, Elinor prepared a little basket of particularly fine peaches, which she proposed carrying to Mrs. Hubbard, herself. Harry offered to accompany her, and Jane was persuaded to join them; although in general, she disliked every kind of motion except dancing.

The travellers had already seen Miss Patsey and her youngest sister, and they were now so fortunate as to find Charlie at home. He had come from New York, the evening before, and, of course, was much pleased to see his young friends; indeed, he showed so much emotion at the meeting, as to change colour when he first saw the three cousins enter the little gate.

"Why, Charlie, you have grown in inches; as well as in dignity, since we parted," said Hazlehurst, shaking him warmly by the hand.

"I shall never arrive at any great elevation either way," replied the youth, after shaking hands also with Jane.

"I don't know that; you have grown half a foot since I saw you, and you have done wonders I hear, as a painter. Mr. Wyllys, and Elinor, are both great admirers of your pictures."

"Wonders are comparative, you know; I believe I have accomplished more, for instance, than my mother anticipated, for she thought I was going to devote myself to signs and window−blinds."

{"window−blinds" = window shades were at this time frequently decorated with hand painted pictures}

"That is your account of the matter. But don't suppose I have not learned that Mr. Charles Hubbard is looked upon as one of our most promising young artists, and that several of his pictures are thought the best of their kind that have been painted this side the Atlantic."

"You are very much improved in flattery by a visit to Paris," said Charlie, smiling.

"Only sober truth, as you must well know, Mr. Charles Hubbard. I hope you have something here for us to look at; I am really very impatient to see some of your pictures. I wish you could have enjoyed half the fine works of art that I have seen in the last two years."

Hubbard replied that he had strong hopes of going abroad himself before long, thanks to the liberality of his uncle, and the promise of several orders from different gentlemen. Harry congratulated him warmly, though he regretted that Charlie should think of leaving home just as he himself returned.

The young 1adies paid their visit to Mrs. Hubbard in her bed−room, while Harry and Charlie talked over a hundred different things together; and after engaging Charles to dine at Wyllys−Roof, they walked home again.

"Miss Patsey's parlour really looks neater and smaller than ever," observed Harry. "And I don't think I have seen such an honest, good−natured, pleasant face as her's, since I left Longbridge. She seems satisfied now, with the idea of Charlie's being an artist."

"She is resigned to it, rather," said Elinor, "now that the matter is entirely settled."

"Charlie looks pale," observed Harry; "he has grown though, and he is no longer so very slight as he used to be."

"He seems to be well," replied Elinor; "but at times his spirits are not good. He has been much interested in your movements−−quite anxious about your return."

"Charlie is a right good fellow," said Harry; "I was in hopes to see a great deal of him, this winter." At this moment Jane dropped a glove; of course Harry picked it up, and he continued silent after doing so.

"There, you see, is Mr. Taylor's new house," observed Elinor, as an opening in a grove of young trees allowed a full view of a house of some size, and very great pretensions.

Jane looked at the home of her friend Adeline with interest−−Harry exclaimed, "What architecture!"

"Don't abuse it," said Elinor, "for I assure you 'Mr. Taylor's splendid mansion'−−'Mr. Taylor's magnificent seat' is very much admired."

Just as the party reached the piazza of Wyllys−Roof, Mr. Taylor's barouche drove up to the door, and in an instant Miss Adeline Taylor had thrown herself, and her fashionable morning−dress, into Jane's arms.

"I was so glad to find you were staying here!" she exclaimed. "Pa and I only arrived from Saratoga last night; I did not expect you for a month to come."

"We had a very short passage for the season," said Jane, returning the embrace quite cordially.

"We seem to have taken all our friends rather by surprise, Miss Taylor," said Harry.

"Well, if I had been in your place, I should have staid in Paris till the last minute;−−though, I dare say, YOU were in a hurry to get back to Longbridge, Mr. Hazlehurst; no doubt you wanted to see ME very much. Put I wonder that Jane did not contrive to stay there."

Harry looked a little embarrassed, and Jane, too, coloured a little; though there seemed to be no very good reason that either should do so.

"Did you find Saratoga pleasant, this summer, Miss Taylor?" asked Elinor, drawing a chair near the bench where the two friends were sitting, hand in hand.

"Oh, delightful!−−Every house full, from the cellar to the garret. How often I wished for you, Jane! if it was only earlier in the season I would make pa take us there again, just for the pleasure of showing off your new French fashions−−you would be the greatest belle of the season."

"We need not inquire who was the belle," said Elinor; "such important news reaches even sober, home−staying people like us."

"Oh, we had half a dozen belles−−all lively, pretty girls. There was a young gentleman, from Savannah, at Congress Hall, who wrote some verses about us, and called us the 'Chime of Bells;' it was a sort of imitation of 'Those Evening Bells,' and was published in the Saratoga papers. But if Jane had been there, I don't think we should have stood much chance."

{"Those Evening Bells," popular song by the Irish poet Thomas Moore (1779−1852), arranged by Sir John Stevenson (1761−1833)}

"You think the poet would have rung a bob−major, for Jane?"

"Certainly; with her trunks full of things from Paris, she would have carried all before her."

"I don't think Jane has brought a very large share of finery with her," said Elinor.

"No, indeed," said Harry; "only five trunks and three boxes, which I had the honour of getting through the Custom−House."

"But part of it was for her friends," said Elinor.

"You would have needed a large supply, I can tell you, Jane," said Miss Adeline, "if you had wanted to out−dash us; for we determined this season, some half−dozen of us, to out−do the young ladies who were there last year."

"Did you succeed?" said Hazlehurst.

"To be sure we did. We made a firm resolve not only to change our dress six times every day, but never to wear the same dress twice. We drove several families away by that manoeuvre; but you have no idea what fun it was to us, who entered into the spirit of the thing. For two days, though, we were in great trepidation. There were a couple of Baltimore girls there, great dashers, who would not enter into our agreement; and the spiteful things actually changed their dress seven times, the two first days."

"Seven changes!" said Elinor; "how did they manage that?"

"Why, they came down to breakfast in a white dress; after breakfast they would drive in another, of course; then they would show themselves in the drawing−room, after driving, in a pink muslin, perhaps; at dinner, they wore another; then after dinner, they would change again; in the evening they wore party−dresses, of course; and after they went up stairs, they would visit each other in what they called dress night−wrappers. Now, wasn't it mean in them?"

"Very," said Harry, laughing.

"To be sure it was. Changing six times was no more than was necessary; all we 'evening bells' did, was never to wear the same dress twice. Would you believe it, after putting such a bold face on the matter, the third day they disappeared suddenly! We had a good crow, I can tell you. There was a poor little innocent there, at the same time, from Boston, who tried to beat us on another tack, as Lieut. Johnson said; they called her the blue−bell. Well, she never changed her dress, morning, noon, or night−−and just to spite us. But, dear me, we only laughed−−we didn't care a fig for her; although she was very pretty, she couldn't get a man to speak to her, excepting one old fossil Professor, who wore spectacles, and walked up and down with her on the piazza all the time."

{"Lieut. Johnson" = not identified}

"She was no worthy rival for the Chime of Bells!" said Harry.

"Certainly not. But I can tell you, that after we had been there a week, two of the Chime were in great danger, and one of them no less a person than your humble servant; the other was Anne Hunter−−Jane, you remember Anne Hunter, who was at Mrs. G−−−−−'s with us? Well, Anne and I were in great trouble, one day. Now, Mr. Hazlehurst, I hope you can keep a secret."

"A lady's secret?−−Can you doubt me, Miss Taylor?"

"Well, mind now, you never mention it; but, Anne and I got down to our last dozen dresses, and we were pledged to stay a week longer. This was Monday, and on Thursday there was to be a pic−nic, given expressly to the Chime of Bells. At first, I thought I was the only one in such a deplorable state; but, happily, I discovered that Anne, whose room was next to mine, was no better off. And now, how do you suppose we managed?"

"Pray, what did you do?" said Elinor, laughing.

"To tell the truth, I sat down and cried; for I am high−spirited, and I could not bear the thoughts of such a mortification. But Anne is an excellent manager, you know, Jane−−"

"Yes, I remember her."

"Anne had a plan that carried all off triumphantly. She proposed to me, to persuade the other three 'evening bells,' that to do honour to the pic−nic, we should be dressed alike, in a sort of uniform. Well, of course, the others agreed; but then, how to find the five dresses alike! Of course, we couldn't wear anything made in Saratoga. The poet had entreated us, in a sonnet, to be all dressed in white; so we fixed upon white batiste−−but, how to get them, was the question."

"I am all curiosity−−" said Elinor.

"Oh! it was beautifully done,−−Anne proposed we should all write an advertisement for a trusty escort to New York, and post it up on the curtains of the ladies' drawing−room. What fun we had, while we were writing the advertisements! We took an opportunity, when we and our beaux had the drawing−room to ourselves, to vote the gentlemen out of it. After a while, they went; but, what do you suppose the wretches did, Mr. Hazlehurst?"

"Nothing ungallant, I trust."

"Yes; to spite us, they crowded to the windows on the piazza, till we dropped the blinds. Well, for a time, we thought we were safe; but suddenly Anne Hunter shouted out, and there comfortably seated in a tree close to the end window, where the blind was broken, we saw one of the young gentlemen with a note−book in his hand! We vowed we wouldn't be defeated, so we pinned up our pocket−handkerchiefs together, and, fortunately, they covered the peep−hole; and so we shut him out, at last."

"Your perseverance, under such obstacles, was truly surprising, Miss Taylor;" said Hazlehurst.

"Was it not? We soon wrote our advertisements. Mine was very short: 'Wanted, an agreeable youth, as escort between this and New York, apply this evening, at five o'clock.' Some were very long and ridiculous; one was in verse. Well, after we had written them, we opened the doors and windows, and the young gentlemen flocked in again. Then we went in procession, and pinned them up on the curtains. Such a time as we had−−talking and giggling−−we were in such a gale, that, at last, some of the married ladies came out to see what was the matter. But, the best fun of all, was choosing our escorts; a great many offered, and then we examined them."

"I hope they had suitable qualifications for the office."

"Oh, yes.−−I took Mr. Hunter, Anne's brother. Well, sure enough, we all set out together, the next morning; staid one day in the city; and, Thursday morning, we re−appeared with the dresses. Of course, Anne and I had taken the opportunity to get a fresh supply, besides the white batiste. We had a most delightful pic−nic. I forgot to say, that Anne's escort, the Marquis Foletti, was missing; she had to do without him−−she gave him up for lost, or

absconded, and we allowed her to choose another beau−−when suddenly, just as we were mourning over the Marquis, he appeared on the ground, and threw himself on his knees, and made us laugh more than ever. Anne had chosen him, because he had the handsomest moustaches at Saratoga; but he could not speak English very well, and had got on board the wrong boat. What times we had! Jane, I wish you had been there!"

"Your faithful esquires were rewarded, no doubt, by the gallantry of the deed itself, Miss Taylor," said Harry.

"Of course; but we nevertheless gave them, besides, full permission to say and do just what they pleased, all that day−−and you can't think how much nonsense we talked. Each gentleman took the advertisement of the lady he had escorted, and pinned it over his heart. There were several foreigners there, and you can't think how they enjoyed it; they had never had such a frolic with young ladies before, and they thought it delightful; though, to be sure, they got at last to be rather too free; and then we had to put a stop to it."

Elinor looked at Jane, to see if she seemed to sympathize in Adeline's story; but her cousin's beautiful face was still bright with the glow of pleasure from meeting her friend; no other thought or feeling was to be traced there.

"I don't believe they have any such fun in Paris, Mr. Hazlehurst."

"Not exactly.−−They have a pleasantry of their own, however, which is quite agreeable."

"I don't think I should like it. They say, a young lady dares not speak to gentlemen, nor walk with them, nor have the least bit of a flirtation. How stupid it must be!"

"But the French girls do talk to gentlemen, I assure you," replied Jane, "only they are not intimate with everybody. The young men are very attentive, too; they treat young girls with much more respect, Louisa says, than in America."

"Who cares for respect! I want to laugh and amuse myself, and have my own way," exclaimed Adeline.

"It is growing quite warm here−−you will find it pleasanter in the drawing−room, Miss Taylor;" said Elinor, not caring to listen any longer to Jane's giddy friend.

"Well, if you please, I'll run up to Jane s room, and look at the fashions−−I am dying to see some of her capes and collars. By−the−bye, I had forgotten two very important things. Here is a note for your aunt, Miss Elinor; some private communication from Ma; the coachman will take the answer. And then, I came over to ask you all to drink tea with us, this evening, very sociably; nobody but your own family and three or four friends!"

The invitation was accepted, as a matter of course.

"Good morning, Mr. Hazlehurst; I expect to be shut up with Jane, for three hours to come; I have really talked myself out of breath; but that is always the way, with me, as you know, of old." And the two girls, hand−in−hand, ran lightly up stairs, where Elinor, making an excuse of Mrs. Taylor's note, left them to a confidential tete−a−tete.

CHAPTER XI.

"A soldier may be anything, if brave;
So may a merchant if not quite a knave."
COWPER.

"Trade his delight and hope; and, if alive,
Doubt I have none, that Barnaby will thrive."
CRABBE.

{William Cowper (English poet, 1731−1800), "Hope" lines 201−210.
George Crabbe (English poet, 1754−1832), "Posthumous Tales: VIII
Barnaby; the Shopman" lines II.3−4}

WE have really been very remiss in omitting so long to notice the rapid strides with which Mr. Pompey Taylor had advanced on the road to fame and fortune, during the two years in which we have lost sight of him. He might have addressed, to the reader, the remark that the Emperor Napoleon applied to his secretary, after the conquest of Prussia and Austria: "J'ai fait des progres immenses depuis que Bourienne {sic} m'a quitte!"

{"J'ai fait des..." = I have made immense progress since Bourienne left me! Louis−Antoine Fauvelet de Bourrienne (1769−1834) was a French diplomat who served as Napoleon's private secretary during his invasion of Egypt}

It is a rule, in composition, it was so, at least, when people wrote by rule, to compare the little with the great. If we were to follow the direction, it would be easy to prove that these two individuals, the conqueror, Napoleon, and the speculator, Taylor, were not too widely separated for many points of resemblance to be traced between them. Ambition was the ruling passion of both; and both were alike insatiable. Bonaparte added kingdom to kingdom; Taylor, house to house; the emperor might believe himself equal to ruling half the world; the merchant felt capable of owning the other half. The one raised army after army; the other fitted out vessel after vessel. The energies of both were inexhaustible, and both aimed at an ever−receding goal; while each, in his own way, soon reached a height never dreamed of by the mothers who rocked their cradles. Nor would it be justice to Mr. Taylor, to suppose, that the love of money, alone, was the main−spring of his actions; he, too, was spurred on by the love of glory; dollars and cents were not the end, with him; he looked upon his thousands, in gold and paper, as Napoleon did upon his thousands in flesh and blood−−they were but the instruments which were to open the road to fame. The man of commerce, and the man of war, were alike lavish of their treasures, when the object of their lives was in view. If one was the boldest of generals, the other was the most enterprising of merchants; and Fortune favoured the daring of both. In short, Mr. Taylor was no common, plodding trader, content with moderate gains and safe investments, and fixing his hopes on probabilities−−he pursued traffic with the passion of a gambler, united to the close calculation of a miser; and yet, he spent freely what he had acquired easily.

There are merchants, who, by their education, their integrity, their talents and their liberality, are an honour to the profession; but Mr. Pompey Taylor was not of the number. We have all heard the anecdote of the young man addicted to the sin of swearing, whose conversation, during dinner, was taken down in short−hand, and, when read afterwards, shocked the individual himself. Could the thoughts and words of Mr. Taylor, during a single day, have been as fairly registered, perhaps he himself would have been astonished to find how very large a portion of them were given to gain and speculation, in some shape or other. At social meetings, whether dinners or evening parties, he seldom talked long on any other subject: he has been known to utter the word 'stocks,' just as he entered a church, on Sunday; while a question about certain lots was the first sentence which passed his lips, as he

crossed the threshold on his way out. Eating his meals under his own roof; walking down Broadway to Wall−Street, every morning, at nine o'clock, and back again every afternoon at three; still the echo of Mr. Taylor's thoughts and words was 'dollars,' 'stocks,' and 'lots'−−' lots,' 'stocks,' and 'dollars.' He had a value for everything in dollars−−his jokes turned upon stocks−−and his dreams were filled with lots. Let it not be supposed, however, that Mr. Pompey Taylor was born with the phrenological organ of the love of money more strongly developed than other human beings. By no means. He was endowed by nature with faculties and feelings as varied as other men. But, from the time he could first walk and talk, precept and example had gradually turned all his faculties in one direction; for, such had been the opinions and views of his father and elder brothers; and there was no other impulse in his nature or education, sufficiently strong to give a different bent to his energies. Under other circumstances, Pompey Taylor might have been a quick−witted lawyer, a supple politician, a daring soldier, or, with a different moral training, he might have been something far superior to either; but the field of commerce was the only one that opened to him, at his entrance into life; and it was too well adapted to the man, such as nature and education had made him, to be neglected. He found full scope, in such a sphere, for all his energies of body and mind−−he delighted in its labours and its rewards.

{"phrenological" = from the pseudo−science of phrenology, which interpreted character by feeling the bulges on the human head}

Mr. Taylor had forgotten, if he had ever known the fact, that the best pleasures of this world even, are those which money cannot purchase, the severest wants those which it cannot supply. He had no conception of any consideration equal to that which riches give. Beauty unadorned was no beauty in his eyes; and he chiefly valued talent as a means of making good investments and wily speculations. He looked upon Science as the hand−maiden of Commerce; Armies and Navies existed only to defend a nation's wealth, not its liberties, or its honour. The seat of his patriotism was in his pocket; and the only internal improvement in which he was interested, was that which opened new facilities for acquiring money. It is surprising how totally such a mind becomes unfitted to enjoy and admire any great or noble quality in the abstract; in spite of a quick wit and keen organs, such men become the most one−sided beings, perhaps, in the whole human family. To moral beauty Mr. Taylor seemed quite blind; his mental vision resembled the physical sight of those individuals whose eyes, though perfect in every other respect, are incapable of receiving any impression of an object tinged with blue−−the colour of the heavens. Even the few ideas he had upon religious subjects partook of the character of loss and gain; the simple spirit of true piety could never enter into a mind in the state of his. And yet, Mr. Taylor was looked upon as a happy man. Fortunate he certainly was, for wealth and luxury had risen around him almost as readily as if possessed of Aladdin's lamp. Had he been actually in possession of this gift of the genii, he could scarcely have found a wish to gratify, as money had already provided him with all it can supply in this country, and the pursuit of wealth itself was his delight. Deprived of this, Othello's occupation were gone.

{"Othello's occupation were gone" = William Shakespeare, "Othello", III.iii.358}

Justice to Mr. Taylor would require that we should follow him to the counting−house, for it was there that he appeared in the most brilliant light. His talents were undoubted; his sagacity, his skill, and his daring were great; and his undertakings were generally successful. Thus far all appeared very well; but those who looked closer into the matter would have found that his integrity was anything but unimpeachable, his love of money far surpassing his love of truth and justice. This part of his career must be left, however, to other hands; it is only what he was in social and domestic life, that the merchant appears among our Longbridge friends.

The first few months after he had removed to New York, the utmost extent of Mr. Taylor's ambitious dreams had been the possession of a brick house in Broadway, on a lot of ground twenty−three feet by seventy. According to the favourite rule of New York architecture, the rule of three, the building was to be three stories high, and three windows wide. But the end of the first ninety days in Wall−Street, brought an accession of several thousands, and the brilliant promise of so many more, that this plan was enlarged several inches each way. As every succeeding season brought an increase of wealth and ambition, the projected dwelling grew at last to be taller and broader by several feet, until, at length, it had reached the limits which magnificence usually attains on the island of Manhattan. Had Mr. Taylor built his house in Philadelphia, or almost any other American town, he might have laid rather a broader foundation for his habitation; but New York houses, as a rule, are the narrowest and the tallest in the land. Some of those three−story dwellings, however, whatever may be their architectural defects, contain inmates who are as much to be desired for friends as any others in the world. But to return to Mr.

Taylor's new house; we have said that it was one of the proud few which could boast its four stories and its four windows. He was perfectly satisfied with the result when finished, for his house from the garret to the cellar was a faithful copy of one opposite to him, which had been built some months earlier, and was pronounced the house of the season.

The American people may have been perfectly original in their constitution, but in most other respects they are particularly imitative. An observer, at a first glance, wonders that so much cleverness should be wasted in mere imitation; but it is, after all, the simple result of the position of the country. An intelligent people, we are furnished by books with more ideas than we have models on which to shape them. In an old state of society, there is always a class who labour after originality, and are proud to be called eccentric; but a young nation, cut off from the rest of the civilized world, must necessarily be imitative in its character until it has arrived at maturity. This spirit of imitation, to a certain extent an advantage, is, to be sure, often carried to a laughable extent when it loses sight of common sense. People seem to forget the fact that propriety must always be the first step to true elegance. As a proof of it, we see men who appear to have consulted their neighbours' tastes, habits, and means, instead of their own, in building the house they themselves are to inhabit; like Mr. Taylor, without any very good reason, they imitate their opposite neighbour. Again, it is surprising to see what time and toil are spent in following every variation of fashion in dress, by many women who certainly can ill afford it; we do not mean fashion in its general outlines, but in its most trifling details. If one could watch the progress of an idle fancy of this nature, from the moment it springs from the caprice of some European elegante, with more time and money than she knows how to throw away, until it becomes a necessity to an American housemaid, earning a dollar a week−−we have no doubt the period would be found surprisingly short.

{"elegante" = a fashionable lady (French)}

The habit of imitation just alluded to, is more striking perhaps in architecture than in anything else, for in that shape it is always before our eyes; and no place in the country is more marked with it than New York. In no town in he world are there as many dwellings so much alike; and this fact is not the result of necessity, or of any plan of architectural unity−−it is not that the plan first hit upon proved to be the most rational, or best suited to the spot and its inhabitants−−but it is chiefly the consequence of a spirit of imitation.

To return to our story: this new house of Mr. Taylor, this successful imitation of his opposite neighbour, had been opened the first of May, the general moving day in New York. It was fitted up in the richest manner, young Taylor having received carte blanche from his father to purchase handsome furniture in Paris. Rosewood and satin, gilt bronzes and Sevres vases, were all of the best kind−−and Mr. Taylor was perfectly satisfied with the effect of his two drawing−rooms. It was determined they should be shown off during the following winter, by a succession of dinners and parties. He had already tried his hand at entertaining; after having eaten a dozen great dinners with different commercial notabilities, he had given one himself just before leaving town. The affair, a man−dinner, of course, had gone off brilliantly−−thanks to his beautiful porcelaine de Sevres, his candelabras and his epergnes, his English plate and English glass; all of which showed off to great advantage the best of the good things abounding in the New York market, cooked by a Frenchman, and washed down by wines from the most famous vineyards of France, Germany, and Spain. His entertainment was pronounced as handsome as any given that winter in town; and Mr. Taylor determined that it should be only the first of a long series.

{"general moving day" = in New York City, at this time, leases for the rental of houses generally expired on May 1; "porcelaine de Sevres" = expensive chinaware from the French town of Sevres; "epergne" = an elaborate bowl used as a table centerpiece (French)}

His country−house rivalled his establishment in town. By his first plan, he had intended that it should equal that of Mr. Hubbard, at Longbridge; but eighteen months had made a material change in his affairs, which produced corresponding alterations in the building. First one large wing was added, then another; Mr. Hubbard's house had but one Corinthian portico, Mr. Taylor's had two. He was born in a house which had been painted only on one front, and he was now of the opinion of the old tar, who purchased a handsome jacket like his commanding officer, but ordered the back as well as the front to be made of satin, and meeting the admiral, pulled up his coat−tails to show that there was "no sham." Mr. Taylor could not outdo the plate−glass, and mahogany doors of Mr. Hubbard's house, but he had great satisfaction in showing him his portico on the south front, and in proving there was no sham. When the wings were added, they were completely surrounded on three sides by a colonnade. Mr. Taylor having happened, just at the moment, to make thirty thousand dollars by one successful

speculation, he sent orders to the master−builder for a double set of columns; and as a consequence, the colonnade was so very conspicuous that it became the pride of the neighbourhood. Mr. Taylor, himself, was so much struck with the first view, when completed, that he decided to name the place "Colonnade Manor." There is no accounting for taste in names, we suppose, any more than in other matters. Like No. five hundred and −−−−− Broadway, Colonnade Manor was furnished with rosewood and satin from Paris.

Mrs. Taylor, good soul, entered very little into the spirit of this magnificence. She still sat in her nursery with her younger children as much as possible, darning all the stockings of the family; an occupation which Adeline thought very ungenteel, for she never condescended to use her needle at all. To make Mrs. Taylor a fine lady had been one of the least successful of Mr. Taylor's efforts; she was much too honest by nature to assume a character for which she was so little qualified. There was but one way in which she could succeed in interesting herself in all the parade which gratified Mr. Taylor's taste; she found it gave pleasure to her husband and children, and she endeavoured to make the best of it. She wore the fine dresses purchased for her by Adeline, and drove out once in a while in her handsome carriage, to pay at least a few of the many visits urged by Mr. Taylor. Among the new acquaintances she had made in the last ten years, there were few Mrs. Taylor liked as well as Miss Wyllys; and Miss Agnes, in her turn, respected all that was honest and straight−forward in the character of her new neighbour; indeed, the whole family at Wyllys−Roof very much preferred her to the more pretending husband and daughter. The note, of which Adeline was the bearer, was an application to Miss Wyllys for advice in some domestic difficulty. It ran as follows:

"MY DEAR MISS WYLLYS:−−

"You have been so kind to me, ever since we moved into your neighbourhood, that I hope you will excuse me for asking your assistance, this morning. I have been a good deal plagued in my kitchen ever since we came into the country this spring. My cook and chamber−maid, who are sisters, are always finding some excuse for wanting to go to the city; and last night they got a letter, or pretended to get one from New York, saying that their father was very sick; and as I didn't know but it might be true, I couldn't refuse them, and they have gone for a week−−though I won't be sure it was not for a mere frolic. As it happened, Mr. Taylor and Adeline came back from Saratoga, last night, and brought a house−full of company with them; an old friend of mine whom I had not seen for years, and some new acquaintances of Adeline's. To make matters worse, my nurse, a faithful, good girl, who has lived with me for years, was taken sick this morning; and John, the waiter, had a quarrel with the coachman, and went off in a huff. You know such things always come together. So I have now only the coachman and his daughter, a little girl of twelve, in the house; happily they are both willing, and can do a little of everything. If you know of anybody that I can find to take the place of cook, or housemaid, I shall be truly obliged to you for giving the coachman their names and directions.

"Adeline is to have a little party this evening; she met several of our Longbridge friends on board the boat yesterday, and took that opportunity of asking them, as she is very anxious to make the house pleasant to her company. I dare say she has already invited all your family, and I shall be very sorry if you are not able to come, for we always miss you more than any others of our neighbours.

"Hoping you will excuse the trouble I give you, I remain, dear Madam,

"Very respectfully and truly yours,

"HESTER TAYLOR."

Miss Wyllys had no sooner read the note, than, full of sympathy for Mrs. Taylor's difficulties, she held a consultation with her female factotum, Elinor's nurse, or Mammy as she was called. All the men, women, and children in the neighbourhood, who might possibly possess some qualifications for the duties of cook, chamber−maid, or footman, were run over in Miss Agnes' mind; and she succeeded at last, by including one superannuated old woman, and another child of ten, in making out a list of some dozen names for her neighbour's benefit. The whole morning was spent by the coachman, scouring the country with the Taylor barouche and horses−−for no time was to be spent in changing harness−−in pursuit of Dianthy This, and Araminty That. Mrs. Taylor, of course, awaited his return with trembling anxiety; the Saratoga party had gone off to fish, escorted by Mr. Taylor and a younger daughter; Adeline having taken that opportunity to go to see Jane, excusing herself from accompanying the fishing set, on account of the arrival of this very intimate friend of hers. The mistress of the house, after having administered a dose of medicine to the sick nurse, and sent the little girl of twelve to make the beds and sweep, gave one melancholy look at things in the kitchen, and then remembered that she could no

longer leave this particular old friend of her's alone in the drawing−room. While talking over past times, Mrs. Taylor chose a rocking−chair commanding a view of the approach to the house: just at the moment when she began to fear the horses had run away, killed the coachman, and broken the carriage, she saw the barouche driving up the avenue, but, alas, sans cook! She kept her seat womanfully, and heard out the end of a long story which the old friend was relating about a family of relations. But at length Mrs. Taylor found that the moment for action had come; and giving her friend the choice of her own knitting−work, or a walk in the garden with her youngest child, a pretty prattling little boy, she excused herself for a few moments, under pretext of looking after the sick nurse. The old friend was quite a talkative person, and one to whom a listener was very necessary; she preferred the little boy to the knitting−work, and set out to look at−the garden.

Mrs. Taylor instantly disappeared in the direction of the kitchen.

"Well, John!"

"Well, marm, I couldn't pick up nobody, for love or money."

"Didn't Miss Wyllys know of any one in the neighbourhood?"

"Yes, marm; I have got a list here; but some of 'em had got places already; there was two that was sick; one, Araminty Carpenter, I guess, would have suited Mrs. Taylor very well, for, I know the young woman's father; but she has gone over to Longbridge, to work at the Union Hotel, for a week. There was one name written so I couldn't make it out; and two of 'em I couldn't find; folks couldn't tell me where they lived. There is a young thing down at the Mill, who looks handy, but doesn't know anything of cooking; but, I engaged her to come to−morrow, and Mrs. Taylor can see if she suits."

"Why didn't you bring her with you at once, John?"

"She couldn't come, no ways, till to−morrow; she was washing; and, if she left the work, there was no one to do it."

Let it not be supposed that Mrs. Taylor sunk under these difficulties. The fishing−party returned; and, by means known only to herself, the coachman, and the little girl of twelve, a dinner, much as usual, was provided for her guests, who were left in happy ignorance of the desertion in the kitchen.

It must be surprising, to those unaccustomed to such things, to observe with what courage and cheerfulness the mistress of an American family encounters the peculiar evils of her lot−−evils undreamt of by persons in the same station in any other part of the world. Her energies seem to rise with the obstacles that call them out; she is full of expedients−−full of activity; and, unless fairly worn out by exertion for which she has not the physical strength, always manages to keep up appearances, and provide for the comfort of her household, until her troubles are surmounted, for the time being, and she gathers strength, in a moment of respite, for fresh difficulties, when they present themselves. Even her husband and sons are seldom aware of her toils and vexations. Many people are ignorant of the number of virtues that are included, at such moments, in that of hospitality; could a plain, unvarnished account, be made out, of the difficulties surmounted, at some time or other, by most American matrons, the world would wonder at their fortitude and perseverance. Not that difficulties like those of our friend, Mrs. Taylor, are of constant duration, but they occur oftener than the uninitiated are aware of. Yet even obstacles like these seem never to interfere with that constant intercourse, from tea−parties to visits of weeks, which are exchanged between all American families and their friends. But then no people in the world are more truly hospitable−−none are more social in their feelings, than the inhabitants of these United States.

CHAPTER XII.

"Come, come; deal justly with me; come,
Come; nay, speak!"
Hamlet.

"Madam, the guests are come, supper served up, you called, my young lady asked for, the nurse cursed in the pantry, and everything in extremity."
Romeo and Juliet.

{William Shakespeare, "Hamlet", II.ii.275−276; "Romeo and Juliet", I.iii.100−102}

OF course, nothing interfered with the party at Colonnade Manor. Thanks to Mrs. Taylor, the coachman and the little girl of twelve−−quite a womanly, precocious, little thing, by−the−way−−all went off very well. Some curious person, uninitiated in similar domestic mysteries, may wish to know how things were managed at such a trying crisis. Well, in the first place, Mrs. Taylor congratulated herself that her guests had been asked to 'spend the evening,' and not invited 'to tea.' This was a piece of good luck, which diminished her cares, and prevented the deep mortification she must have felt had the tea and coffee been cold. The coachman, of course, officiated as footman; a duty to which he was already somewhat accustomed. The little girl of twelve began the evening as ladies'−maid, appearing in the dressing−room in that capacity, helping the ladies to take off their shawls and smooth the folds of their dresses, before they made their entrance in the drawing−rooms. The company soon collected−−about fifty or sixty persons, altogether−−and in party dress; each having been invited quite sociably, by Miss Adeline. They were not at all surprised to see each other, however, for they had often already practised the same agreeable deception, themselves. The company once assembled, the little girl of twelve rolled up her sleeves, and took her station in the pantry, where she replenished the cake−baskets, the lemonade and sangaree−glasses handed about by her father, the coachman. A supper table was already spread in the dining−room; it had been very prettily ornamented with flowers by Adeline, and her Saratoga friends; and a plentiful supply of fruits, ices, jellies, syllabubs, creams, and other delicacies for a light supper, had been prepared, in the course of the morning, by Mrs. Taylor and her coadjutors, the coachman and the little girl of twelve. The talkative old friend had been admitted behind the scenes so far, as to learn that the mistress of the house would be obliged to make all the good things herself; and she had shown that, besides telling a long story, she could make very excellent sponge−cake; for, unfortunately, it was discovered that it would be necessary to increase the supply of that delicacy. Adeline did her share; while her Saratoga friends were taking a morning siesta, with a novel in their hands, she had made the syllabub, and prepared the fruit. These arrangements having been made, the little girl of twelve had received orders to station herself near at hand, where she could be sent of {sic} errands up and down stairs. The coachman was told to take his place by the side−table, ready to be called upon, if necessary. Mrs. Taylor herself−−alas! that we should be obliged to reveal the fact, expected to slip out of the drawing−room at about half−past ten, and superintend the delicate operation of removing the jellies from their moulds; this would require ten minutes to do, and she hoped to make her exit and ingress unnoticed; a matter easily managed, in summer, when the doors and windows are all open, and couples arm−in−arm, are loitering about, in and out in all directions. This task performed, when she had returned to the public notice, some ten minutes after having seen everything in its place, the coachman was expected to appear at the drawing−room door, with composed manner, to announce that supper was ready−−a fact she was prepared to hear with the

expression of sublime indifference, required by etiquette. From that moment, everything would become easy; for, of course, the gentlemen would, as usual, take care of the ladies first, and then help themselves. The gallant way in which these light, standing suppers are always managed, among us, is, by−the−bye, a pleasant and sensible arrangement; nothing better could be devised, under the circumstances. The plan of operations thus sketched, we may as well say, at once, that everything succeeded to admiration.

{"sangaree" = a cold drink of flavored, diluted wine; "syllabub" = a drink of milk and wine}

The evening was pronounced very pleasant; and, as several of our friends were present, we shall follow them. There was a great deal of talking and laughing; a reasonable quantity of flirtation; and, once or twice, some romping in the corner of the room where Miss Adeline happened to be at the time. Among those who had excused themselves from accepting the invitation, were Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hazlehurst, who disliked the idea of going so far, and Mr. and Mrs. Graham, the lady being detained at home by a headach {sic}, the gentleman by a particular dislike to Mr. Taylor, who, he thought, had behaved in an ungentlemanly manner about a mortgage, in which they both happened to be interested. Mr. Graham was a man of a violent temper, and unsocial habits, generally taking little pains to conceal his feelings; and accordingly, his manner to Mr. Taylor was anything but flattering, though their acquaintance, at best, was but trifling. Mrs. Graham also disliked the whole family; and yet the intimacy between Jane and Adeline was allowed to continue, as a sort of matter of course, between school companions.

Miss Wyllys accompanied her niece to the party−−she generally made it a point to go with Elinor; for, she had old−fashioned notions on the subject, and thought that the presence of their elders was an advantage and a protection that well−educated young girls have a right to expect from their friends. She seldom spoke on the matter, however, but contented herself with giving, what she thought, a good example. Both Miss Agnes and Elinor were rather surprised to find that Jane's partiality for her giddy friend Adeline, had not been in the least diminished, by her visit to Europe. Miss Wyllys disapproved of the intimacy; but, as Jane's mother had no objections, she herself could say nothing. The two young ladies were a great deal together, in the course of the evening, as became bosom−friends after a long separation. Mrs. Taylor's old friend, the talkative lady, was introduced to several of the elder portion of the company, and was thus happily provided with listeners. Miss Adeline's fashionable acquaintances from Saratoga, were also supplied, each with a couple of attendant beaux, upon whom to try the effect of their charms. Everything thus happily arranged, Miss Adeline proposed a 'march' which was managed as usual. Young Van Horne, who had some musical capabilities, was placed at the piano, and played Washington's March, when the young people paired off in a line, and began to walk, moving in time up and down the two drawing−rooms, through the folding−doors−−each gentleman, of course, offering his arm to a lady; chaque chacun, avec sa chacune. Adeline was not quite satisfied with her cavalier, Charlie Hubbard; she did not care much about him, at any time; and, on the present occasion, he seemed less interested in listening to her own conversation, than in watching the movements of some one else; who it was, she could not say. She reproached him with this inattention.

{"chaque chacun, avec sa chacune" = each one with his own (French)}

"I declare, I don't believe you hear half I say. I never saw anybody like you."

"Charlie blushed a little, rallied, and devoted himself more exclusively to the duty of being entertained. After the second or third turn in the march, Adeline discovered Hazlehurst, who, instead of being in motion with the rest, was leaning in a door−way. As she passed him, she snapped her embroidered handkerchief in that direction, and summoned him to join the 'promenade.' Harry excused himself by saying, he was afraid he could not find any one to walk with him.

"How can you talk so! There is Miss Wyllys, I declare; I had not seen her before."−−And Adeline crossed the room to a window where Elinor was sitting quietly as a looker−on, having just escaped from a long conversation with the talkative old friend.

"Now, Miss Wyllys, I am sure you must wish to promenade!"

"Would you like to walk?" quietly asked Hazlehurst, who had followed Miss Taylor.

"No, indeed," said Elinor, smiling and shaking her head good−naturedly. "I have had one long walk, already, this afternoon, and much prefer sitting still, just now."

"You should follow Jane's example; you see, she is promenading, and, I dare say, she took the walk with you, too," said Adeline.

"Did you ever know Jane take a long walk, when she could help it?" asked Elinor, smiling. "I had really rather

sit still, Miss Taylor."

Adeline, finding that on this occasion she could not succeed in setting all her friends in motion, which she generally endeavoured to do, returned to the ranks; leaving Elinor to do as she chose. Hazlehurst took a seat by her, and made some inquiries about several of their old acquaintances in the room.

"Don't you think those two young ladies both very pretty, Mr. Hazlehurst," said Dr. Van Horne, approaching the spot where Harry was standing near Elinor, after having given up his chair to one of the Saratoga belles, when the march was finished.

"Which do you mean, sir?" asked Harry.

"Miss Taylor and Miss Graham, who are standing together near the piano."

"Yes," replied Hazlehurst, "Miss Taylor is even prettier than I had supposed she would be."

"She will not compare, however, with Miss Jane. To my mind, Miss Graham answers the idea of perfect beauty. In all your travels, did you meet with a face that you thought more beautiful?"

"I believe not," said Harry, laconically, and slowly colouring at the same time.

"Is it Jane you were speaking of, Doctor?" inquired Elinor, turning towards him. "Don't you think she has come back twice as beautiful as she was last year? It is really a pleasure to look at a face like hers."

"I am afraid, it will prove rather a dangerous pleasure, Miss Elinor, to some of the beaux, this winter."

"No doubt she will be very much admired; but she takes it all very quietly. I don't believe your great beauties as much disposed to vanity as other people."

"Perhaps not;" replied the doctor, drawing near her. "A great deal depends on education. But what do the travellers tell you about the sights they have seen, Miss Elinor?"

"Oh, we have only gone as far as the first chapter of their travels," she replied. "They have not half said their say yet."

"Well, I should like to have a talk with you on the subject, Mr. Hazlehurst. I was in hopes of meeting your brother here, to−night, but he has not come, I find; I shall have to bore you with my questions, unless you want to dance this jig, or whatever it is, they are beginning."

"Not at all, my dear sir; I shall be glad to answer any questions of yours."

"Thank you. Suppose we improve the opportunity, Miss Elinor, and give him a sharp cross−examination; do you think he would bear it?"

"I hope so," said Elinor, smiling quietly, as if she felt very easy on the subject.

"Don't trust him too far. I dare say you have not been half severe enough upon him," said Dr. Van Horne, who had a very high opinion of Harry. "But to speak seriously, Mr. Hazlehurst, I don't at all like a notion my son Ben has of going to Europe."

"What is your objection?"

"I doubt if it is at all an advantage to send most young men to Europe. I've seen so many come back conceited, and dissatisfied, and good−for−nothing, that I can't make up my mind to spoil Ben by the same process. He tries very hard to persuade me, that now−a−days, no doctor is fit to be trusted who has not finished off in Paris; but we managed without it thirty years ago."

"You must know much more than I do on that subject, doctor," said Hazlehurst, taking a seat on the other side of Elinor.

"Of course, I know more about the hospitals. But as I have never been abroad myself, I don't know what effect a sight of the Old World has on one. It seems to me it ruins a great many young fellows."

"And it improves a great many," said Hazlehurst.

"I am by no means so sure of that. It improves some, I grant you; but I think the chances are that it is an injury. We have happened to see a great deal, lately, of two young chaps, nephews of mine, who came home last spring. Three years ago they went abroad, sober, sensible, well−behaved lads enough, and now they have both come back, worse than good−for−nothing. There was Rockwell, he used to be a plain, straight−forward, smooth−faced fellow; and now he has come home bristling with whiskers, and beard, and moustaches, and a cut across the forehead, that he got in a duel in Berlin. Worse than all, his brain is so befogged, and mystified, that he can't see anything straight to save his life; and yet, forsooth, my gentleman is going to set the nation to rights with some new system of his own."

"I know nothing of the German Universities, doctor, from my own observation; but I should think it might be

a dangerous thing to send a young man there unless he was well supplied with sound common sense of his own."

"Well, there is Bill Hartley, again, who staid all the time in Paris. He has come back a regular grumbler. If you would believe him, there is not a single thing worth having, from one end of the Union to the other. He is disgusted with everything, and only last night said that our climate wants fog! Now, I think it is much better to go plodding on at home, than to travel for the sake of bringing back such enlarged views as make yourself and your friends uncomfortable for the rest of your days."

"But it is a man's own fault, my dear sir, if he brings back more bad than good with him. The fact is, you will generally find the good a man brings home, in proportion to the good he took abroad."

"I'm not so sure of that. I used to think Rockwell was quite a promising young man at one time. But that is not the question. If, after all, though it does sharpen a man's wits, it only makes him discontented for the rest of his life, I maintain that such a state of improvement is not to be desired. If things are really better and pleasanter in Europe, I don't want to know it. It would make me dissatisfied, unless I was to be a renegade, and give up the country I was born in; would you have a man do that?"

"Never!" said Harry. "I hold that it is a sort of desertion, to give up the post where Providence has placed us, unless in extreme cases; and I believe a man can live a more useful and more honourable life there than elsewhere. But I think travelling a very great advantage, nevertheless. The very power of comparison, of which you complain, is a source of great intellectual pleasure, and must be useful if properly employed, since it helps us to reach the truth."

The doctor shook his head. "I want you just to tell me how much of this grumbling and fault−finding is conceit, and how much is the natural consequence of travelling? Is everything really superior in Europe to what we have here?"

"Everything? No;" said Harry, laughing. But you would seem to think a man dissatisfied, doctor, if he did not, on the contrary, proclaim that everything is immeasurably better in this country than in any other on the globe. Now, confess, is not that your standard of patriotism?"

"Ah, you are shifting your ground, young gentleman. But we shall bring you to the point presently. Now tell us honestly, were you not disappointed with the looks of things when you came back?"

"If by disappointed, you mean that many things as I see them now, strike me as very inferior to objects of the same description in Europe, I do not scruple to say they do. When I landed, I said to myself,

"'The streets are narrow and the buildings mean; Did I, or fancy, have them broad and clean?'"

{George Crabbe (English poet, 1754−1832), "Posthumous Tales: Tale VI−−The Farewell and Return", Part II, lines 79−80}

"I feared so!" and the doctor looked much as a pious Mahometan might be supposed to do, if he were to see a Frank seize the Grand Turk by the beard. "I should have thought better of you," he added.

{"Frank" = a European Christian; "Grand Turk" = Ottoman Emperor}

"My dear sir," said Harry, laughing, "how could I help it! I must defend myself from any desire to be disappointed, I assure you. On the contrary, I wish very sincerely that everything in my native country were as good as possible in its way; that the architecture of the public buildings were of the noblest kind; the private houses the most pleasant and convenient; the streets the best paved, and best lighted in the world. But I don't conceive that the way to bring this about is to maintain le pistolet a la gorge, that perfection has already been attained in all these particulars. To speak frankly, it strikes me as the height of puerility to wish to deceive oneself upon such subjects. On the contrary, I think it is the duty of every man, so far as he has the opportunity, to aim at correct notions on everything within his reach."

{"le pistolet a la gorge" = the pistol to the throat (French)}

"Well," remarked the doctor, "you only confirm me in my opinion. I shall be more unwilling than ever to let Ben go; since even you, Harry Hazlehurst, who are a good deal better than most young men, confess the harm travelling has done you."

"But, my dear sir, I confess no such thing. I'm conscious that travelling has been a great benefit to me in many ways. I shall be a happier and better man for what I have seen, all my life, I trust, since many of my opinions are built on a better foundation than they were before."

"If I were you, I would not let him say so, Miss Elinor. His friends won't like to hear it; and I, for one, am very sorry that you are not as good an American as I took you for."

"It is quite a new idea to me, doctor," said Hazlehurst, "that mental blindness and vanity are necessary parts of the American character. We, who claim to be so enlightened! I should be sorry to be convinced that your view is correct. I have always believed that true patriotism consisted in serving one's country, not in serving oneself by flattering one's countrymen. I must give my testimony on these subjects, when called for, as well as on any other, honestly, and to the best of my ability."

"Do you know, doctor," said Elinor, "poor Harry has had to fight several battles on this subject already. Mrs. Bernard attacked him the other evening, because he said the mountains in Switzerland were higher than the White Mountains. Now we have only to look in a geography to see that they are so."

"But one don't like to hear such things, Miss Elinor."

"Mrs. Bernard asked him if he had seen anything finer than the White Mountains; what could he say! It seems to me just as possible for a man to love his country, and see faults in it, as it does for him to love his wife and children, without believing them to be the most perfect specimens of the human family, in body and mind, that ever existed. You will allow that a man may be a very good and kind husband and father, without maintaining everywhere that his wife and daughters surpass all their sex, in every possible particular?"

"You will not, surely, deny, doctor," said Hazlehurst, "that it is reasonable to suppose that Europe possesses some advantages of an advanced state of civilization, that we have not yet attained to? We have done much for a young people, but we have the means of doing much more; and it will be our own fault if we don't improve."

"We shall improve, I dare say."

"Do you expect us to go beyond perfection, then?"

"I can't see the use of talking about disagreeable subjects."

"But even the most disagreeable truths have their uses."

"That may be; and yet I believe you would have been happier if you had staid at home. While he was away from you, Miss Elinor, I am afraid he learned some of those disagreeable truths which it would have been better for him not to have discovered."

Harry stooped to pick up a glove, and remained silent for a moment.

Shortly after, supper was announced; and, although the coachman was not quite as much at home in the pantry as in the stable, yet everything was very successfully managed.

"It is really mortifying to hear a man like Dr. Van Horne, fancy it patriotic to foster conceited ignorance and childish vanity, on all national subjects," exclaimed Harry, as he took his seat in the carriage, after handing the ladies in. "And that is not the worst of it; for, of course, if respectable, independent men talk in that tone, there will be no end to the fulsome, nauseating, vulgar flatteries that will be poured upon us by those whose interest it is to flatter!"

"I heard part of your conversation, and, I must confess, the doctor did not show his usual good sense," observed Miss Agnes.

"You are really quite indignant against the doctor," said Elinor.

"Not only against him, but against all who are willing, like him, to encourage such a miserable perversion of truth. Believe them, and you make patriotism anything, and everything, but a virtue."

CHAPTER XIII.

"Why, how now, count? Wherefore are you so sad?"
SHAKSPEARE.

{William Shakespeare, "Much Ado About Nothing", II.i.289}

"WELL, Jenny, you are going to leave us to−day, it seems," said Mr. Wyllys, the next morning, at breakfast. "I am sorry for it; but, I suppose your mother has a better right to you than we have."

"I promised mamma I would not stay after to−day, sir. Aunt Agnes is to carry me over to Longbridge, before dinner."

"You must come back again, as often as you can, child. It always seems to me, that Harry and you belong here, as much as you do anywhere else. How long do you suppose your mother will stay at Longbridge?"

"We are going to New York next week. Father wishes to be in Charleston early in October."

"I can't bear to think of your going so soon. If you are once in Carolina, I suppose, we shan't see you again until next June; but, mind, you are to pass all next summer with us," said Elinor.

"That is to say, Nelly, if she has no more important engagement," added Mr. Wyllys, smiling.

"Even a very important engagement need not interfere," said Miss Agnes. "We shall be very happy, Jane, to see any Charleston friend you may see fit to bring with you."

"I don't think there is the least danger that any Charleston friend will come with me;" said Jane, blushing a little.

"Have you selected a friend from some other place, Jenny?" asked her uncle.

"Oh, no, sir!" was the answer; but her colour continued to rise, and she appeared a little uneasy. As for Harry, he had taken no part in the conversation, but seemed very busy with his knife and fork.

"Pray remember, Jane," said Elinor, "I am to have timely notice of a wedding, in my capacity of bridesmaid."

"Who knows, Nelly, but you may call upon Jane first. You have fixed upon your friend, I take it; eh, Harry?"

"I hope so;" Hazlehurst replied, in a low voice, and he drank off a cup of hot coffee with such rapidity, that Miss Wyllys looked at him with astonishment.

Elinor made no answer, for she was already at the other end of the room, talking gaily to her birds.

As Harry rose from table and walked into the next room, he tried to feel very glad that Jane was to leave them that day; he sat down, and took up a paper; but, instead of reading it, silently followed a train of thought by no means agreeable.

In the course of the morning, according to the arrangement which had been made, Harry drove the ladies to Longbridge. He thought he had never passed a more unpleasant morning in his life. He felt relieved when Elinor, instead of taking a seat with him, chose one inside, with her aunt and Jane; though his heart smote him whenever her sweet, cheerful voice fell upon his ear. He tried to believe, however, that it was in spite of himself he had been captivated by June's beauty. Was he not, at that very moment, carrying her, at full speed, towards her father's, and doing his best to hope that they should meet but once or twice again, for months to come? Under such circumstances, was not a man in love to be pitied? For some weeks, Hazlehurst had not been able to conceal from himself, that if he occupied the position of the lover of Elinor, he felt like the lover of Jane.

As he drove on, in moody silence, the party in the carriage at length remarked, that he had not joined in their conversation at all.

"Harry does not talk so much as he used to;" observed Miss Wyllys; "don't you think he has grown silent, Jane?"

"Perhaps he has," she replied; "but it never struck me, before."

"Do you hear, Harry?" said Elinor; "Aunt Agnes thinks the air of Paris has made you silent. It ought surely to

have had a very different effect."

"This detestable road requires all a man's attention to keep out of the ruts;" he replied. "I wish we had gone the other way."

"If Aunt Agnes has no objection, we can come back by the river road," said Elinor. "But your coachmanship is so good, you have carried us along very smoothly; if the road is bad, we have not felt it."

Harry muttered something about holes and ruts, which was not heard very distinctly.

"Out of humour, too; very unusual!" thought Miss Agnes. There was a something unnatural in his manner, which began to give her a little uneasiness; for she saw no good way of accounting for it.

The ladies were driven to the door of the Bellevue Hotel, where the Grahams had rooms. They found several visiters with Mrs. Graham, among whom, the most conspicuous, and the least agreeable, were Mrs. Hilson and her sister, both redolent of Broadway, elegant and fashionable in the extreme; looking, it is true, very pretty, but talking, as usual, very absurdly.

Mrs. Graham had scarcely kissed her daughter, before Mrs. Hilson gave Elinor an important piece of information.

"I am so delighted, Miss Wyllys, to hear this good news−−"

"My cousins' return, do you mean? Did you not know they had arrived?"

"Oh, yes; we heard that, of course, last week; but I allude to this morning's good news, which I have just heard from this fascinating little creature;" added the lady, catching one of Mrs. Graham's younger children, as it slipped past her.

Elinor looked surprised, when Mrs. Hilson condescended to explain.

"Mrs. Graham is to pass the winter in New York, I hear."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Elinor, turning with joyful eagerness towards Mrs. Graham. "Are you really going to stay so near us?"

Mrs. Graham was thus obliged to inform her friends of the change in her plans; she would, of course, have preferred waiting until alone with Miss Agnes and Elinor, to do so; but, Mrs. Hilson's officiousness obliged her to say something immediately. One, of her children, a little boy, had been suffering with some disease of the spine, during the last year, and a consultation of physicians, held the day before, in New York, had decided that a sea−voyage, or a long journey, was more than the poor little fellow could bear, in the present state of his health, as he had been much worse, during the last three months, since the Grahams had been at Longbridge. It was therefore settled that Mrs. Graham, Jane, and the younger children, were to remain in New York, while the boy was under the care of Dr. S−−−−−, in whom his parents had great confidence. Mr. Graham and his oldest boy were to pass part of the winter on their plantation, and then return to his family.

Miss Wyllys and Elinor, though regretting the cause, were, of course, much pleased with this arrangement; Jane, too, appeared perfectly satisfied.

"I should not be surprised, Miss Graham," continued Mrs. Hilson, "if some of your New York admirers had bribed Dr. S−−−−−; I'm sure, we are very much obliged to him for having detained you. I hope you will be somewhere near us, in the city. Emmeline is to pass part of the winter with me; and, I dare say, you will be very intimate. I wish, Mrs. Graham we could persuade you to come to our boarding−house. Mrs. Stone is really a fascinating lady, herself; and she always manages to have a charming clique at her house.−−Quite exclusive, I assure you."

"I hope to find more private lodgings−−I have too many little people for a boarding−house."

"Not at all. Mrs. Stone could give you an excellent nursery. She has several lovely little darlings, herself. Her little Algernon would make a very good beau for your youngest little Miss. What do you say, my dear," catching the child again; "won't you set your cap for Algernon?"

The little girl opened her large, dark eyes without answering. Mrs. Hilson, and her sister now rose to take leave of Mrs. Graham, repeating, however, before they went, the invitation they had already given, to a ball for the next week. It was to be a house−warming, and a grand affair. The ladies then flitted away on tip−toe.

The door had scarcely closed behind them, before Mrs. George Wyllys, who had been sitting as far from them as possible, began to exclaim upon the absurdity of the whole Hubbard family.

"They are really intolerable, Agnes;" she said to her sister−in−law. "They attack me upon all occasions. They brought Mrs. Bibbs and Mrs. Tibbs to see me, and joined me in the street, yesterday: they are almost enough to

drive me away from Longbridge. I can't imagine what makes them so attentive to me−−plain, sober body, as I am−−what can they aim at?"

"They aim at universal fascination, I suppose;" said Elinor, laughing.

"And must we really go to this house−warming?" asked Mrs. Wyllys.

"Elinor and I have already accepted the invitation;" said Miss Agnes. "My father wished us to go, for he really has a great respect for Mr. Hubbard."

"Well, I can't say that the gentlemen strike me as so much superior to the ladies of the family. 'Uncle Josie' seems to admire his daughter's nonsense; and 'Uncle Dozie' never opens his lips."

"There is not a shade of fascination about them, however," said Elinor.

"I grant you that," said Mrs. Wyllys, smiling. "I shall decline the invitation, though, I think."

"That you can do very easily;" said Miss Agnes.

The ladies then followed Mrs. Graham to an adjoining room, to see the little invalid, and talk over the new arrangement for the winter.

It was fortunate for Harry, that they had left the drawing−room before he entered it; for he no sooner appeared at the door, than the same little chatter−box, who had betrayed the change in her mother's plans to Mrs. Hilson, ran up to him to tell the great news that they were not going back to Charleston, but were to stay in New York all winter, 'mamma, and Jane, and all of them, except papa and Edward.' The varying expression of surprise, pleasure, and distress, that passed over Hazlehurst's face, as he received the intelligence, would have astonished and perplexed Miss Agnes, had she seen it. He had depended upon Jane's absence to lighten the course which he felt it was his duty to pursue; and now she was to be in New York! Of course, she would be half her time with Elinor, as usual. And, if he had already found it so difficult, since they had all been together, to conceal the true state of his feelings, how should he succeed in persevering in the same task for months?

He determined, at least, to leave Longbridge, for a time, and remain in Philadelphia, until the Grahams were settled in New York.

The same evening, as the family at Wyllys−Roof, and himself, were sitting together, he announced his intention.

"Can I do anything for you, in Philadelphia, Elinor?" he asked; "I shall have to go to town, to−morrow, and may be detained a week or ten days."

"Are you really going to town?−−I did not know you were thinking of it. I wish I had known it this morning, for I am very much in want of worsteds for the chair−pattern Jane brought me; but, unfortunately, I left it at Aunt Wyllys's. Did you say you were going to−morrow?"

"Yes, I must be off in the morning."

"Then I must give up my pattern, for the present."

"Is there nothing else I can do for you?"

"Nothing, thank you−−unless you bring some new books; which, we will leave to your taste, to choose."

"Is not this rather a sudden move, Harry?" said Mr. Wyllys, who had just finished a game of chess with Miss Agnes. "I haven't heard you mention it before?"

"I intended to put it off; sir; but, on thinking the matter over, I find I had better go at once."

"I wish you would look about you a little, for lodgings for us; it is time we secured them. I suppose, you will want us to go to town early, this winter, Nelly, won't you? It will not do for Master Harry to be wasting half his time here, after he has once taken seriously to law; you know he will have two mistresses to wait upon, this winter."

"It is to be hoped they will not interfere with each other," said Miss Agnes, smiling.

"That is what they generally do, my dear. By−the−bye, Nelly, I suppose Louisa will have Jane in Philadelphia, with her, part of the winter."

"Yes, sir, after Christmas; it is already settled, much to my joy."

"So much the better!" said her grandfather.

"So much the worse!" thought Hazlehurst.

"Your Paris party will be all together again, Harry?" continued Mr. Wyllys.

"Yes, sir;" was Hazlehurst's laconic reply. 'I wish I could forget it,' thought he. So much had he been annoyed, throughout the day, that he soon after took up a candle, and, wishing the family good−night, went to his own

room.

"I am afraid Harry is not well," said Miss Wyllys, after he had left them. "He seems out of spirits."

Elinor looked up from her work.

"Now you speak of it," replied Mr. Wyllys, "I think he does seem rather out of sorts."

Nothing more was said on the subject; but some unpleasant thoughts suggested themselves to Miss Wyllys; for, during the last day or two, Hazlehurst's manner had repeatedly struck her as unnatural, and she feared that something weighed upon his mind. As for Elinor, her nature was as far as possible from being suspicious; and, least of all, would she have mistrusted Harry; she merely reproached herself for having laughed once or twice, during the day, at his expense, when he had been very absent. She remembered he seemed a little annoyed, at the time, though he never used to mind such things−−'I am afraid he thought it unkind, if he was not well,' she said to herself, and determined to make amends, the next morning, by presiding at his early breakfast, before he set out.

CHAPTER XIV.

"What loud uproar, bursts from that door?"
COLERIDGE.

{Samuel Taylor Coleridge (English poet, 1772−1834), "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" (VII) line 592}

WE shall follow the example of the good people of Longbridge, its party−going inhabitants, at least, and discard, for the moment, all other topics, in order to give due justice to the expected ball at the Hubbards. It was understood that this house−warming was to be the most brilliant affair, of its kind, that had taken place, in the neighbourhood, within the memory of man. Mrs. Hilson and Miss Emmeline Hubbard had staked their reputations, for elegance and fashion, upon the occasion. The list of invitations was larger than any yet issued at Longbridge, and all the preparations were on a proportionate scale of grandeur.

About ten days before the eventful evening, Mrs. Hilson and Miss Emmeline were closeted with their intimate friends, Mrs. Bibbs and Mrs. Tibbs, engaged in drawing up a plan of operations for the occasion. Probably the 'city−lady,' as Mrs. Hilson always called herself, had invited the two friends as counsellors, more with a view of astonishing them by a display of her own views of magnificence, than from any idea that their suggestions would be of importance.

Miss Emmeline was seated, pencil in hand, with several sheets of paper before her, all ready, to take notes of the directions as they were settled. Mrs. Bibbs and Mrs. Tibbs were placed on a sofa; and Mrs. Hilson threw herself into a rocking−chair.

"In the first place, Emmeline," said the 'city−lady,' "we must have boned turkey: put down boned turkey."

"I thought you were going to make out the list of invitations first," said the sister.

"Just put down the boned turkey, for that is absolutely necessary; and then we can run over the names."

Miss Emmeline wrote as she was directed. A long list of names was then put down; there had already been a private family meeting upon the subject, at which, after many endeavours of Mrs. Hilson to unite the two advantages of extreme exclusiveism, and the largest number of invitations ever heard of at Longbridge, Mr. Hubbard had decided the matter by insisting that his daughters should ask every person who had ever been a guest at their house before, and all those from whom they themselves had accepted invitations.

"Don't talk to me of fashionable people, and exclusives and inclusives−−I choose to have all my old neighbours, do you hear, girls, and any one else you please."

This was the only point upon which their father insisted; and as he left the expense of the arrangements entirely to themselves, the ladies thought it most prudent not to argue the matter. Instead, therefore, of aiming at having their party very select, it was now agreed that it should be very general.

"It will be a regular mob," said Mrs. Hilson, as she finished reading to her sister scraps of lists of which her lap was full; "but with so large a visiting circle as ours, it was not to be avoided, I suppose. Have you put down the boned turkey, Emmeline? that at least will give to the entertainment an aristocratic character, at once."

"Yes, to be sure, here it is," said Emmeline, taking up another sheet of paper. "We must have boned turkey, of course."

Now it so happened that neither Mrs. Bibbs nor Mrs. Tibbs, though such fascinating ladies, had ever seen, tasted, or heard of boned turkey before. But, of course, they did not confess such shameful ignorance. Boned turkey had never yet figured at a party at Longbridge. We say figured at a party, and we speak advisedly, as all must know who are aware of the all−important position occupied at an American party by the refreshments, in the opinion of both host and guests. The brilliancy of the lights, the excellence of the music, the wit and gallantry of the gentlemen, the grace and beauty of the ladies−−would be of no avail in giving fame to a party if the

refreshments were not as abundant, and as varied as possible. It is true these good things are generally excellent in their way, which is probably one reason why they receive so much attention. The highest distinction to be attained in these matters is the introduction of some new delicacy; next to this, is the honour of being one of the first to follow so brilliant an example; but, of course, those unfortunate individuals who have neglected to procure the favourite dainty of the season, after it has once appeared on fashionable tables, lose all claim to honourable mention, and sink beneath notice. In this way, each dish has its day; a year or two since, Charlotte Russe was indispensable at an entertainment; last winter Bombes were in high request; and at the period of the Hubbard house−warming, Boned Turkey had received the place of honour on the New York supper−tables. People could neither flirt nor dance, they could talk neither pure nonsense, nor pure speculation, without the Boned Turkey in perspective. The fashion had indeed spread so far, that it had at last reached what Mrs. Hilson generally called her clique.

"Pa thinks we shall have some difficulty in getting boned turkey at this season; it is rather early; but I am determined to have it if money can procure it. You know I am very ambitious, Mrs. Tibbs−−I am not easily satisfied."

Mrs. Tibbs, a pretty little woman with light hair, wearing a fashionable lilac muslin, assented, of course.

"Taking for granted then, that we have the boned turkey, what shall we put down next?" asked Miss Emmeline. "Terrapin−soup, pickled−oysters, lobsters, chicken−salad, and anything in the way of game that can be found in the market; do you think that will do for the substantial dishes, Mrs. Bibbs?"

Mrs. Bibbs, a pretty little woman with black hair, wearing a fashionable green muslin, assented, of course.

"I think that will do, Emmeline," said Mrs. Hilson; "a large supply of each, you know. By−the−bye we must have four dishes of boned turkey; nothing so mean as to have a small quantity."

Then followed a long list of lighter delicacies; gallons of ice−cream with every possible variety of flavour; flour and eggs, cream and sugar, prepared in every way known to New York confectioners. Kisses and Mottoes were insisted upon. Then came the fruits, beginning with peaches and grapes, and concluding with bananas and other tropical productions, until at length even Mrs. Hilson's "ambition" was thus far satisfied.

{"Kisses and Mottoes" = wrapped candies enclosing short witty verses or "mottoes"−−ancestors of the "fortune cookie"}

"I think our set−out will have quite an aristocratic appearance, Emmeline; including, of course, the boned turkey. Then we must have colored candles, they are so much more tasty−−all green and pink. Alonzo will secure the orchestra, the best in the city; −−−−−'s band. We must have two dressing−rooms in the third story, one for the gentlemen, one for the ladies−−and a little fainting−room besides; the small east room will do for that−−we can put in it the easy−chair, with the white batiste cover I brought over from the city, with a pitcher of iced−water, and restoratives, all ready. It is always best, Mrs. Bibbs, to have a pretty little fainting−room prepared beforehand−−it makes the thing more complete."

The lady in the green muslin agreed entirely with Mrs. Hilson; she thought it would be unpardonable not to have a fainting−room.

"The third story will be reserved for the dressing−rooms, the second entirely devoted to the supper and refreshments, and the first floor given up to the dancers and promenaders. I declare I shan't know how to look if we can't procure the boned turkey."

The lady in the lilac muslin agreed that when everything else was so genteel, it would be unfortunate indeed to fail in the boned turkey.

The disposition of the furniture, the variety of lemonades, was then settled, as well as other minor matters, when the four ladies sat down to write the invitations on the very elegant and fanciful note−paper prepared for the occasion.

"The first thing I shall do, Emmeline, will be to write a letter expressly to Alonzo, to insist upon the confectioner's procuring the boned turkey."

We shall pass over the labours of the ensuing week, devoted to the execution of what had been planned. Various were the rumours floating about Longbridge in the interval; it was asserted by some persons that a steamboat was to bring to Longbridge all the fashionable people in New York; that it was to be a sort of "Mass−Meeting" of the "Aristocracy." By others, all the fiddlers in New York and Philadelphia were said to be engaged. In fact, however, nothing was really known about the matter. Mrs. Bibbs and Mrs. Tibbs had confided

all the details to a score of friends only, and every one of these had, as usual, spread abroad a different version of the story. We have it, however, on the best authority, that every day that week a letter in Mrs. Hilson's handwriting, directed to the most fashionable cook and confectioner in New York, passed through the Longbridge post−office, and we happen to know that they were all written upon the negotiation for the boned turkey, which at that season it was not easy to procure in perfection.

The eventful evening arrived at length. The fanciful note−papers had all reached their destination, the pink and green candles were lighted, the fainting−room was prepared, the kisses and mottoes had arrived, and though last, surely not least, four dishes of boned turkey were already on the supper−table. Mrs. Bibbs and Mrs. Tibbs had gone the rounds with the two ladies of the house, and admired everything, after which they returned to the drawing−room. Mrs. Bibbs in blue, and Mrs. Tibbs in pink, were placed in full array on a sofa. Mrs. Hilson and Miss Emmeline stationed themselves in a curtseying position, awaiting their guests. Mr. and Mrs. Clapp, with Miss Patsey and Charlie, were the first to arrive. Our friend, Patsey, looked pleasant, good−natured, and neatly dressed, as usual; the silk she wore was indeed the handsomest thing of the kind she had ever owned−−it was a present from Uncle Josie, who had insisted upon her coming to his house−warming. Patsey's toilette, however, though so much more elegant than usual, looked like plainness and simplicity itself, compared with the gauzes and flowers, the laces and ribbons of Mrs. Tibbs and Mrs. Bibbs, who were sitting on the sofa beside her. Presently, a thin, dark, sober−looking young man walked in at a side−door; it was Alonzo, Mrs. Hilson's husband. Honest, warm−hearted Mr. Hubbard soon followed, looking as usual, in a very good humour, and much pleased with the holiday he had provided for his daughters, and the satisfaction of seeing all his old friends in his new house, which he had prepared for himself. If ever there was a man who spoilt his children, it was Mr. Joseph Hubbard. Had he had sons, it might possibly have been different; but his wife had been a very silly, very pretty, very frivolous woman; the daughters resembled her in every respect, and Mr. Hubbard seemed to have adopted the opinion that women were never otherwise than silly and frivolous. He loved his daughters, laughed at their nonsense, was indulgent to their folly, and let them do precisely as they pleased; which, as he had made a fortune, it was in his power to do. As for Uncle Dozie, the bacheler {sic} brother, who had lived all his life with Mr. Joseph Hubbard, he was already in the drawing−room, seated in a corner, with folded arms, taking a nap. It was singular what a talent for napping this old gentleman possessed; he had been known to doze over a new book, pronounced by the papers "thrillingly interesting," and "intensely exciting;" he has slept during a political speech, reported as one continued stream of enchaining eloquence, delivered amid thunders of applause; and now, under the blaze of astral lamps, and pink and green candles, while the musicians were tuning their fiddles, and producing all sorts of discordant sounds, he was dozing as quietly as if in his own rocking−chair. Uncle Dozie seldom talked when he could help it; the chief business and pleasure of his life consisted in superintending his brother's vegetable−garden; he had never been known to take a nap among his beets and cabbages, which he seemed to admire as much. as he did his nieces. The vegetables, indeed, engrossed so much of his care and attention, that three times in the course of his life, he had lost by carelessness a comfortable little independence which his brother had made for him.

{"astral lamp" = a variety of Argand lamp (the brightest oil lamp of the period) especially designed to cast its light downward}

The company began to pour in. Mrs. Taylor and the talkative old friend were among the earliest, and took their seats on the sofa, near Miss Patsey, Mrs. Bibbs, and Mrs. Tibbs. Adeline, with the Saratoga fashionables, soon followed; having remained longer in the dressing−room, in order to wait until each could appear with a beau to lean on. The Longbridge elite arrived in large numbers; Uncle Dozie woke up, and Uncle Josie shook hands as his friends wished him many happy years in his new house. Miss Emmeline and Mrs. Hilson flitted hither and thither; while the dark and sober−looking Alonzo occasionally bent his head gently on one side, to receive some private communications and directions from his more elegant moiety. No one was received by the ladies of the house with more fascinating smiles, than a tall, slim Englishman, with a very bushy head of hair, who had made Mrs. Hilson's acquaintance at their boarding−house not long since, and being tired of occupying a third or fourth−rate position in his own country, was now determined to show off what he thought airs of the first water, in this. He was just the attendant in whom Mrs. Hilson gloried.

"I think the West−End is fully represented here, this evening, Emmeline," said the fair lady as she tripped past her sister, followed by Captain Kockney, after the rooms were uncomfortably full.

"Some very pretty women 'ere, Mrs. 'Ilson," observed Captain Kockney; "that's really a lovely creature just come in, and what a piece of ugliness it is alongside of her."

"Miss Graham? Yes, she is our great beauty. Shall I introduce you?"

"Not now, for pity's sake; wait till that ugly face has moved out of sight."

"Do you think Miss Wyllys so very ugly? Perhaps she is; but she is one of our country neighbours, and I have seen her so frequently that I am accustomed to her appearance−−indeed we are quite intimate. When one knows her, her conversation is excessively delightful; though she wants more association with city−life to appear to advantage."

"Now, pray don't introduce me there, I beg. I saw too many ugly women the last season I was at 'ome. Our colonel had three daughters, 'orrid frights, but of course we had to do the civil by them. It almost tempted me to sell out; they were parvenues, too−−that made the matter worse, you know."

{"parvenues" = upstarts (French)}

"Oh, yes, I hate parvenoos; I am thoroughly aristocratic in my nature. Indeed, it is a great misfortune for me that I am so, one is obliged, in this country, to come so often in contact with plebeians! I am afraid you must suffer from the same cause, while travelling in the United States."

"What, from the plebeians? Oh, I made up my mind to that before I came, you know; I believe I shall enjoy the change for a time. One doesn't expect anything else from you Yankees; and then I had a surfeit of aristocracy in London, the last season. We had half−a−dozen crowned heads there; and first one met them everywhere in town, you know, and then at every country−house."

"How delightful it must be to live surrounded by royalty in that way!"

"There you're quite out. It's a great bore; one has to mind their p's and q's at court, you know−−I never go to Windsor if I can help, it."

"Well, I should never tire of a court−−I am thoroughly patrician in my disposition. I have a good right to such tastes, Captain Kockney, for I have a great deal of noble blood in my veins."

"Now, really! what family do you belong to?"

"The duke of Percy; a noble family of Scotland. Pa's name is Joseph P. Hubbard. Don't you pity people who have no nobility in their families?"

"'Pon my soul, I don't know how a man feels under such circumstances. It's a queer sensation, I dare say."

"Dr. Van Horne," continued Mrs. Hilson, to a young man who came up to make his bow to her, "I have a great mind to ask a favour of you. Will you undertake to bleed me?"

"I should be sorry if you required my services in that way, Mrs. Hilson."

"Ah, but it would be a real obligation; I want to get rid of all but my Percy blood. Perhaps you don't know that our family is distinguished in its descent?"

"From 'old Mother Hubbard,'" thought young Van Horne; but he merely bowed.

"Yes, our ancestors were dukes of Percy, who were beheaded in Scotland for being faithful to their king. It is very possible we might claim the title of a Scotch Peer." Mrs. Hilson had read too many English novels, not to have a supply of such phrases at command. "If you could only find the right vein, I would insist upon your taking away all but my patrician blood."

"Would not the operation leave you too perfect, Mrs. Hilson?"

"Perhaps it might make me vain. But it could scarcely unfit me more for living in a republic. How I wish we were governed by a despot!−−don't you?"

"Not in the least,"−−'but I wish you were,' the young man added, to himself, as he moved away towards Jane and Elinor, who were in a corner talking to his sisters. "All the fools in this country are not travelled fools, as I wish my father would remember," he continued, as he edged his way through the crowd.

"And he that aye has lived free May not well know the misery, The wrath, the strife, the hate, and all, That's compassed in the name of thrall."

{I have not identified this verse}

"You have mustered quite a pretty set of little plebeians 'ere to−night. Now, that's quite a nice−looking little creature standing by the door," continued Captain Kockney; "what do you call her?"

"Her name is Taylor−−Adeline Taylor; they belong to the aristocracy too; shall I introduce you?"

"Is she married? If she is, I've no objections; but if she isn't, I had rather not. It's such a bore, you know,

talking to girls−−bread−and−butter misses!"

"How ungallant you are!"

"Ungallant! Why? I suppose you know it's a settled thing that none of US talk to girls in society. Most of them are so milk−and−water, and the rest are so deep, they're always fancying a man means something. Why, last spring we cut Lord Adolphus Fitz Flummery, of OURS, just because he made a fool of himself, dangling after the girls."

"But don't gentlemen ever speak to an unmarried lady in England?"

"The saps do−−but not your knowing ones. We make an exception though, in favour of a regular beauty, such as that little girl on the other side of the room; that Thomson girl, didn't you call her?"

"Miss Graham−−you are difficult to please if nothing else will suit you. But of course it is natural for aristocratic minds to be fastidious."

"To be sure it is, that's what makes us English aristocrats so exclusive. If that little Graham girl comes in our way though, I've no objection to making her acquaintance. And if you have got a great fortune here to−night, I'll make an exception for her−−you may introduce me. Is there such a thing as an heiress in the room?"

"An heiress? No, I believe not−−but Miss Taylor is quite a fortune."

"Is she? Well then, you may introduce me there too. We have to do the civil to the rich girls, you know; because after a while most of us are driven into matrimony. That's the governor, I take it, near the door."

"The governor? Oh, no, our governor does not live at Longbridge."

"Doesn't he? Well, I thought you introduced him just now as the governor, and I fancied some one called him 'Ubbard; that's the governor's name, isn't it?"

"No, indeed. That's Pa you are speaking of."

"Just so−−that is what I said. You call your paternities PA, do you?−−we always call the old fellows governors, in England."

"Do you call your father Gov. Kockney? I did not know that governor was an English title; it sounds very plebeian in my ears."

"Now, what DO you mean? ha! ha!−−you are delightful. You put me in mind of a good scene at the drawing−room, last June. Though, perhaps, you don't know what the drawing−room is?"

"Oh, yes; I know that it means Court. My tastes are so exclusive, that I may say I have lived in English High−Life from the time I married, and became intimate with Mrs. Bagman. I feel quite at home in such scenes, for I read every novel that comes out with Lords and Ladies in it. What were you going to tell me about Court?"

The story was interrupted by Miss Hubbard, who tripped across the room to carry her sister off with her.

"Now you are not going, I hope? Why not stay 'ere; I am sure this sofa is the most comfortable thing in the room."

"I must go to receive some friends of mine, come over expressly from the city."

"Pray, keep me clear of the cits! But now, if you will go, just leave me your bouquet as a a consolation. Thank you.−−Oh, yes, I'll take good care of it."

"I hope you will, for it's a ten dollar bouquet, and I'm very proud of it. You must not steal a single flower, mind."

"Mustn't I?−−Do you dare me?" and the agreeable Captain began to pull out several flowers. Mrs. Hilson, however, was hurried away.

Mr. Taylor, Mr. Hubbard, and Alonzo moved towards the sofa where she had been sitting.

"Do you think that Stewart will be chosen President of the Franklin Insurance?" inquired Mr. Hubbard.

"I think not, sir−−he rather mismanaged the affairs of the Hoboken Bank. Lippincott will be the President, I take it. He has magnificent talents for business. You know he has purchased the thirty lots in 50th street, that were sold at auction, yesterday."

"A good purchase, I should say."

"How's the Hoboken stock now?" inquired Alonzo. A murmuring about 'five per cent.'−−'six per cent.'−−'par'−−'premium,' followed, and was only interrupted by the approach of young Van Horne and Elinor.

"I beg your pardon, Miss Wyllys," said Mr. Hubbard, making room for her. "Oh, yes, Mr. Van Horne, here is a place for you, and another couple besides. Whom are you looking for?"

"Charles Hubbard, sir; I want him for a vis−a−vis."

"Charlie is already placed, I see; but here is a gentleman; perhaps you would like to dance, sir?"−−addressing Captain Kockney, who was still in possession of the sofa and the flowers. "I hope my daughter has introduced you to some of the young ladies."

"Now, really; if I am to dance, I prefer Mrs. 'Ilson."

And, accordingly, the Captain, by no means sorry to be forced to dance, rose with a victim−like look, half strode, half sidled towards Mrs. Hilson, and putting his elbow in her face by way of an invitation, led her to the quadrille. The contrast between these two couples, placed opposite to each other, was striking, and yet common enough in a mixed ballroom. Captain Kockney was desperately nonchalant, his partner full of airs and graces; their conversation was silly, ignorant, and conceited, beyond the reach of imagination−−such things must be heard to be believed. Young Van Horne was clever, and appeared to less advantage in dancing than in most things. Elinor the reader knows already; it was a pleasure to follow her as she moved about with the happy grace which belonged to her nature. Her partner, half in joke, half in earnest, was engaging her interest with his father in behalf of the visit to Europe. Elinor promised to do all in her power; and they chatted away cheerfully and gaily, for they were young and light−hearted; and yet, even in a ball−room, they meant what they said, and knew what they were talking about, for both were sensible and well educated. Jane and young Bernard were next to Mrs. Hilson; Adeline and Charlie Hubbard next to Elinor. Miss Taylor had declared that she would allow no one but herself to fill the place opposite to Jane, causing by her decision no little flirtation, and rattling merriment; but, of course, this was just what the young lady aimed at. These two pretty, thoughtless creatures, the belle and the beauty, held a middle position between Mrs. Hilson and Elinor. Frivolous as they were, there was more latent good about them, than could be found in the 'city lady,' who was one frothy compound of ignorant vanity, and vulgar affectation. The class she represented was fortunately as small in its extreme folly, as that to which Elinor belonged, in its simple excellence.

Any one, indifferent to dancing or speculation, seeking amusement as a looker−on, would have been struck, at Uncle Josie's house−warming, with the generally feminine and pleasing appearance of the women; there were few faces, indeed, that could be called positively ugly. Then, again, one remarked, that puerile as the general tone might be, mixed as the company was, there were no traces whatever of coarseness, none of that bold vulgarity which is so revolting.

There was a certain proportion of elderly men collected on the occasion−−they were seen, with a few exceptions, standing in knots, talking great speculations and little politics, and looking rather anxious for supper, and the boned turkey. Of the mothers and chaperons, who filled the sofas, as representatives of a half−forgotten custom, some were watching the flirtations, others looking on and enjoying the gaiety of the young people. Both fathers and mothers, however, were very decidedly in the minority, and, according to American principles, they allowed the majority undisputed sway. The young people, in general, held little communication with their elders, and amused themselves after their own fashion; the young ladies' bouquets afforded a favourite subject for small−talk; they were all carefully analysed−−not botanically, but according to the last edition of that elegant work, the Language of Flowers, which afforded, of course, a wide field for the exercise of gallantry and flirtation.

{Probably, Frederic Shoberl (1775−1853), "The Language of Flowers," (numerous editions, some published by the Cooper family's regular publisher in Philadelphia)−−but there were many similar books on the "poetic meaning" of different flowers}

Among the dancers, the four young ladies we have pointed out were acknowledged the most conspicuous. According to Mrs. Tibbs and Mrs. Bibbs, Jane's was the most beautiful face in the room, although there were two or three competitors for the title; Adeline was pronounced the most successful of the rival belles; Mrs. Hilson the most elegant and airy; Elinor the plainest of the gay troop. Probably, most of those who thought about the matter, would have decided as the Longbridge ladies did−−although, on the point of Mrs. Hilson's elegance, many would have protested. There was one person, at least, who followed Elinor's graceful figure with partial interest; Miss Agnes found so much that was pleasing to her, in the fresh, youthful appearance of her adopted child−−in the simple good−taste of her white dress−−in the intelligence and character of her expression−−in her engaging manner, that she forgot to regret her want of beauty; she no longer wondered, as she had sometimes done, that Harry should so early have appreciated her niece. Those who knew Elinor thoroughly, loved her for the excellence of her character; strangers neglected her for any pretty face at her side; but every one thrown in her society, must have acknowledged the charm of her manner. This pleasing manner, however, so frank, yet so

feminine, so simple, yet so graceful, was only the natural result of her character, and her very want of beauty. She was never troubled by the fluttering hopes and fears of vanity; she never seemed to think of effect; when in society, her attention was always given in the simplest and most amiable way to others. Forgetful of self, she was a stranger to every forward affectation, to every awkwardness of mauvaise honte; her good sense, her gaiety, a sweet disposition, and an active mind were allowed full play, under no other restraints than those of a good education; those of principle, and those of youthful, womanly modesty. Such was Elinor in the eyes of her aunt, but it must not be supposed that this was the general opinion of Uncle Josie's guests; by no means; many remarks were made upon Miss Wyllys's being so decidedly plain; and even her dancing was thought inferior by some of the company to the more laboured graces of Mrs. Hilson, or the downright indifference of Adeline: as for Jane, she unfortunately never danced in time.

{"mauvaise honte" = bashfulness, false shame (French)}

At the proper moment supper was announced−−the boned turkey appeared in full glory. "What is that?"−−"Boned turkey"−−"Shall I give you boned turkey?" "I'll thank you for a little boned turkey"−−were sounds heard in every direction. It was very evident the boned turkey was fully appreciated, and gave great satisfaction−−thus putting the finishing touch to the pleasures of Uncle Josie's house−warming. We must not forget to mention the mottoes, which were handed about in silver baskets, for, as usual, they caused many tender and witty speeches. This was a part of the entertainment in which Adeline delighted; Jane seemed quite satisfied with it, and Mrs. Hilson was in her element among these little bits of pink paper and sentiment.

Before the supper was more than half over, however, the rattling of spoons and plates, the requests for "boned turkey," and the flirting over mottoes were suddenly interrupted, and everything hushed for a moment, by calls for a doctor! "Where is Dr. Van Horne?" "Have you seen Dr. A?" "There is Dr. B."

"Alonzo, the fainting−room; remember," said Mrs. Hilson.

But it proved to be none of the company who required a physician. A stranger, a sailor, some one said, who had been for the last week at a low tavern opposite, had been seized with a fit; Dr. Van Horne was soon found, and hastened to the relief of the sick man. The interruption was soon forgotten; the mottoes and boned turkey were again in demand. Dr. Van Horne did not return, however; his family went home without him; and Mrs. Clapp, on looking around for her husband, found that he also had disappeared.

"I saw Clapp going into the tavern last evening," observed Uncle Josie. "Perhaps this poor fellow is some client of his; he may have gone to look after him."

Mrs. Clapp was obliged to ask Uncle Dozie to accompany her home; and as he was no somnambulist, with all his napping, he carried his niece safely to her own door.

Miss Wyllys was one of those who left the house immediately after supper. Adeline and Jane ran up stairs before Elinor and herself−−like the Siamese twins, each with an arm encircling the other's waist. The close intimacy between Jane and Adeline continued to surprise Elinor. She began to think there must be something more than common, something of the importance of a mystery which drew them so often together, causing so many confidential meetings. Even when the two girls were in society, she could not but observe that Adeline often made some allusion, or whispered some remark that seemed both pleasing and embarrassing to Jane. Miss Taylor was evidently playing confidante, and occasionally Jane appeared to wish her less open and persevering in the affair. As for Mrs. Graham, she was too much occupied with the care of her younger children to pay much attention to her daughter's intimacies. She rather disliked Adeline and all her family, and Mr. Graham had a real antipathy for Mr. Taylor; still Jane was allowed to do as other young girls about her, select whom she pleased for her associates. Mrs. Graham was one of those mothers who devote themselves with great assiduity to the care of their childrens' {sic} bodies, their food and raiment, pains and aches−−leaving all anxiety for their minds to the school−mistress, and their characters to themselves. With the eldest daughter this plan had succeeded very well; Louisa Graham was clever and well−disposed, and had taken of her own accord what is called a good turn; and Mr. Robert Hazlehurst had every reason to congratulate himself upon his choice of a wife. Mrs. Graham seemed to take it as a matter of course that the same system would succeed equally well with all her family. But Jane's disposition was very different from her sister Louisa's; she had no strength of character, and was easily led by those about her. The greatest fault in her disposition was thought by her family to be indolence; but Miss Wyllys sometimes wished that she had less selfishness, and more frankness.

{"Siamese twins" = Chang and Eng (1811−1874), born joined together in Thailand (Siam), of Chinese

parents, who were exhibited in America for many years by P.T. Barnum; the condition was named after them}

Elinor was not a little startled at something which passed in Miss Hubbard's dressing−room, between Jane and Miss Taylor, and which she accidentally overheard, before she was aware the conversation was confidential.

"Don't pretend any longer, Jane, that you didn't know it," whispered Adeline, as they were stooping together over a bundle of hoods and shawls. Jane made no answer. "Now, confess that you knew he was serious before you left Paris."

"I did not think much of it for some time," said Jane.

"Well, I supposed from your letters that you knew long ago that he was desperately in love with you. Trust me, we'll settle it all between us."

"Oh, hush," said Jane, "there is somebody coming−−I know it's wrong−−"

"Nonsense−−wrong indeed! I should like to know where is the great harm if he does break his engagement?"

Elinor moved away when she found the conversation was meant to be private. But she had unintentionally heard enough to make her anxious for Jane. "Was not Adeline leading her into difficulty?" She felt uneasy, and thought of nothing else during her drive home. It would not do to consult Miss Wyllys; but she determined to speak to Jane herself, the first time she saw her. Unfortunately, her cousin was going to New York, and nothing could be done until she returned to pass a fortnight at Wyllys−Roof before going to town for the winter.

CHAPTER XV.

−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−−"the reward
Is in the race we run, not in the prize."
ROGERS.

{Samuel Rogers (English poet, 1763−1855), "Italy: A Character"
lines 39−40}

MISS PATSEY had never, in her life, been to a regular ball, before this house−warming of Uncle Josie's; but not even the novelty of a ball could keep her in bed an hour later than usual. Charlie and herself had returned home some time after midnight, with the Wyllyses; but the next morning she rose with the chickens, and before the October sun, to pursue, as usual, her daily labours. It was truly surprising how much Patsey Hubbard found time to do in a single day, and that without being one of your fussy, utilitarian busy−bodies, whose activity is all physical, and who look upon half an hour passed in quiet thought, or innocent recreation, as so much time thrown away. Our friend Patsey's career, from childhood, had been one of humble industry, self−forgetfulness, and active charity; her time in the gay hours of youth, as well as in the calmer years of mature experience, had been devoted to the welfare and happiness of her parents, her brothers and sisters. From a long habit of considering the wants and pleasures of others first, she always seemed to think of herself last, as a matter of course. She had had many laborious, anxious hours, many cares; but it is far from being those who have the most trouble in this world, who complain the loudest; no one had fewer wants, fewer vanities, fewer idle hours than Miss Patsey, and, consequently, no one could be more generally cheerful and contented. There is nothing so conducive to true, healthful cheerfulness, as the consciousness of time well−spent: there is no better cure for the dull spirit of French ENNUI, or the gloom of English BLUES, than regular, useful occupation, followed by harmless recreation.

Any one who had followed Patsey Hubbard through the varied duties of a single day, would have acknowledged that there is no spectacle in this world more pleasant, than that of a human being, discharging with untiring fidelity, and singleness of heart, duties, however humble. The simple piety of her first morning prayer, the plain good sense of her domestic arrangements, and thorough performance of all her household tasks, her respectful, considerate kindness to her step−mother, and even a shade of undue indulgence of Charlie−−all spoke her character−−all was consistent.

Happy was Patsey's little flock of scholars. Every morning, at nine o'clock, they assembled; the Taylor children usually appeared in Leghorn gipsies, and silk aprons; the rest of the troop in gingham "sun−bonnets," and large aprons of the same material. There were several little boys just out of petticoats, and half−a−dozen little girls−−enough to fill two benches. The instruction Patsey gave her little people was of the simplest kind; reading, spelling, writing, and arithmetic, learning a few simple verses, with sewing and marking for the girls, made up the amount of it. Most people, in these days of enlightenment, would have been very much dissatisfied with her plan, for it actually excluded all the sciences, and all the accomplishments. Patsey had two reasons for confining herself to the plainest branches of education only; in the first place, she did not think herself capable of teaching anything else; and, secondly, she doubted whether her scholars were capable of learning anything better or more useful for themselves. Mr. Taylor thought she had very low views of infant education; and yet, you could not have found anywhere a set of children, between three and ten, who were more thoroughly taught what their instructor professed to teach. Happy would it be for these little creatures, if they never acquired any worse knowledge than they gained under Patsey's care! She had an eye to their tempers, their morals, and their manners; she trained the little girls to be modest and gentle−−the little boys to be respectful and obliging; while she endeavoured to make all alike honest, open, cheerful, and sincere. Were not these lessons quite as important to most children, between the ages of three and ten, as chemistry, astronomy, and natural philosophy?

{"Leghorn gipsies" = fashionable hats (named after Leghorn, Italy) with large side flaps; "marking" = embroidering identifying names or initials on linen}

The day following Uncle Josie's house−warming, Miss Patsey released her little flock an hour earlier than usual; they were allowed to pass the time playing in an adjoining meadow, until sent for by their parents. There was to be a tea−party at the "old gray house" that evening−−a very unusual event; ten invitations had been sent out. The fact is, Miss Patsey had received a basket of noble peaches, the day before, from one of her neighbours; and Uncle Josie had already, early in the morning, sent over a wagon−load of good things to replenish his niece's larder−−the remains of the last night's supper; among other delicacies there was a bit of boned turkey, for Mrs. Hubbard's especial benefit. Patsey scarcely knew what to do with so many luxuries. She sent a basket of fruits and jellies to a couple of sick neighbours, by Charlie; still, there was more than her mother, Charlie, and herself, could possibly do justice to in a week. She determined to give a little tea−party; it was eighteen months since she had had one, and that had been only for the Wyllyses. Dr. and Mrs. Van Horne, the Taylors, the Wyllyses, and the Clapps were accordingly invited; and Patsey proceeded to burn some coffee, and make short−cake. The little parlour was more carefully swept and dusted than ever, five additional chairs were brought in, and a fire was made, on account of Mrs. Hubbard. Then, about four o'clock, the ladies made their toilette; Mrs. Hubbard was dressed in a smart new calico, with a cap, made by Elinor, and was then seated in the best rocking−chair. As for Patsey, herself, she could not think of wearing the elegant new dress, Uncle Josie's present−−that was much too fine; she preferred what had now become her second−best−−a black silk, which looked somewhat rusty and well−worn. To tell the truth, this gown had seen good service; it had been not only turned, but re−turned−−having twice gone through the operation of ripping and sponging; and doubtful as the fact may appear to the reader, yet we have Miss Patsey's word for it, that a good silk will bear twice turning, but then it must be a silk of a first−rate quality, like her own. It had been, indeed, the standing opinion of the family for the last five years, that this particular dress was still "as good as new." As for the changes in fashion that this black silk had outlived, who shall tell them? It was purchased in the days of short waists and belts, "gig−ohs," and "pal−reens," as they were called by the country damsel, whose scissors first shaped the glossy "gro de nap." Waists, long, longer, longest, succeeded; sleeves, full, fuller, fullest, followed; belts were discarded, boddices {sic} began to appear; still Miss Patsey's silk kept up with the changes, or rather, did not entirely lose sight of them. If you had seen her at a little tea−party at Wyllys−Roof, wearing this silk, "nearly as good as new," with a neat and pretty collar of Elinor's work, you would have been obliged to confess that her dress answered a rule given by a celebrated philosopher−−you would not have remarked it. Had you chanced to meet her of a Sunday, in Mr. Wyllys's carriage−−the Wyllyses always stopped on their way to St. John's Church, at Longbridge, to offer a couple of seats to the Hubbards, who were set down at the door of their father's old Meeting−house−−had you seen her of a Sunday, with a neat straw hat, and the black silk gown, you would have been obliged to acknowledge that her dress had the double merit, by no means common, of according with her circumstances, and the sacred duties she was going to fulfil; the devotion of her neighbours would not be disturbed by admiration of her toilette.

{"burn some coffee" = roast some coffee; "gig−oh" = a puffed "gigot" or "leg of mutton" sleeve; "pal−reen" = "pelerine", a cape or mantle; "gro de nap" = "gros de Naples", a weave of silk with a corded effect (French)}

At five o'clock, Miss Patsey's company began to assemble; the Wyllyses were the first to appear; then came Mrs. Taylor, Mrs. Van Horne, and Mrs. Clapp; Adeline excused herself, she thought it a bore, Charlie was not worth flirting with. The doctor, Mr. Taylor, and Mr. Clapp, were expected after tea. And a pleasant, good−natured evening it proved to be. Miss Patsey's coffee was excellent; the little black girl, engaged for the occasion, performed her duties to admiration. Mrs. Taylor thought that she had scarcely passed such a quiet, pleasant afternoon, since the halcyon days before her husband was a rich man; she was much interested in discussing with Miss Patsey, and Miss Wyllys, and Mrs. Van Horne, various recipes for making bread, hoe−cake, and other good things. As for Elinor, she told Charlie she had left her work at home, on purpose that she might have time enough to look over all his sketches−−everything he had to show, old and new. The drawings, and several oil−paintings were accordingly produced, and looked over by the young people, and Mr. Wyllys, who had taken a chair by the table, and joined them. Elinor knew nothing of drawing, but her general taste was good; she asked many questions about the details of the art, and was amused and interested by Charlie's remarks.

{"left her work at home" = the knitting or similar hand−work engaged in by ladies while they conversed}

"Show us everything, Charlie," said Mr. Wyllys. "I befriended your genius, you know, in the days of the slate

and compound interest; and, of course, I shall think it due to my own discernment to admire all your works."

"Of course, you are not afraid of my criticisms," said Elinor; "I don't know enough to be severe."

"People who know little, my child, generally make very severe critics," said Mr. Wyllys.

"When they know LITTLE, grandpapa; but mine is honest, humble ignorance. I know nothing at all on the subject."

"Do you remember, Miss Elinor, that Hogarth said anybody possessing common sense was a better judge of a picture than a connoisseur?"

{"Hogarth" = William Hogarth (1697−1764), English artist and printmaker.}

"Did Hogarth say so?−−I shall begin to feel qualified to find fault. That is a very pretty group of children, grandpapa."

"Very pretty;−−some of Miss Patsey's little people. And here is another, quite natural and graceful, Charlie."

"I never see my sister's little scholars but I am tempted to sketch them. Children are such a charming study; but I am never satisfied with what I do; a picture of children that is not thoroughly childlike is detestable. Those are mere scratches."

"What are these faint outlines of figures, with dashes of colouring here and there?" asked Elinor.

"Oh, those are mere fancies, made entirely for amusement. They are rude sketches of my own ideas of celebrated pictures that I have never seen, of course; only as exercises for idle moments−−one way of practising attitudes of figures, and composition. I keep them more as a lesson of humility than anything else, for me to remember my own poor conceits when I see the originals, if that happy day ever come."

"I thought you gave yourself up entirely to landscapes, Charlie−−do you think seriously of pursuing both branches?" asked Mr. Wyllys.

"No, sir; I give the preference to landscapes; I find, at least, that field quite wide enough. It seems scarcely possible to unite both, they are so different in character and detail, and require such a different course of study."

"That is the great point with you, my boy; you must not waste too much time upon the ideal portion of the art; you must remember that the most beautiful ideas in the world will be lost, if the execution is not in some measure worthy of them."

"I am so well aware of that, sir, that I have done nothing but study the practical part of my trade for the last three months, and I feel that it has been of service to me."

"There is water in all your sketches, I believe," said Elinor. "You must be very partial to it."

"I am, indeed−−it is a most delightful study−−I should be afraid to tell you all the pleasure I have in painting water−−you would laugh at me, if I once set off upon my hobby."

"Not at all; you have made me an honest admirer of every variety of lakes and rivers, since I have seen your pictures."

"When did you first take to water, Charlie?" asked Mr. Wyllys.

"Oh, long ago, sir, when I was a little bit of a shaver. Have you never when a child, Miss Elinor, received great pleasure, perhaps a lasting impression, from some natural object that you still remember distinctly?"

"Yes, I know what you mean−−I recollect perfectly several things of the kind. I believe children have more observation, and feeling for what is beautiful, than is generally supposed."

"It is very probable that most children have similar sensations. I am glad that you do not laugh at me; there are few persons to whom I confess my violent partiality for water; most people would think it ridiculous."

"You are right, Charlie; one can talk to the world in action only; it never believes the truth in any shape, until forced to acknowledge it. You are pursuing the right course, however; you have spoken quite clearly in your view from Nahant−−your friends have every reason to urge you to persevere. But does not Mr. −−−−− tell you to pay more attention to your foliage and buildings? you rather neglect them for the water."

"Yes, sir; I am well aware of my defects in that respect, and next summer I hope to devote a great deal of time to foliage."

The conversation was here interrupted by the arrival of Mr. Van Horne and Mr. Taylor, followed shortly after by Mr. Clapp.

"You are late, William," said pretty little Mrs. Clapp to her husband. "Did you leave the children all safe? Did the baby cry for me?"

"Perfectly safe−−all sound asleep," replied Mr. Clapp, passing his fingers through his curls. But his wife, who

knew every expression of the face she thought so handsome, fancied William looked pale and uneasy; some business had gone wrong, perhaps.

"Quite a select circle," observed Mr. Taylor, sitting down by Miss Wyllys, leaning his chair back, and rolling his thumbs, one over the other.

"I have not had a pleasanter evening in a great while," said Mrs. Taylor. "It puts me in mind, husband, of old fashioned tea−parties, when we lived altogether in the country. We used to go at two o'clock, and stay until sunset. I think such sociable parties are much pleasanter than late, crowded balls."

"Ha! ha!−−that may be your opinion, Mrs. Taylor; a quiet party does very well where one is intimate, no doubt; but I conclude that younger ladies, Adeline, and her friends Miss Graham and Miss Wyllys, would give a different verdict."

"Miss Taylor seems quite partial to large parties," said Elinor, quietly, for the remark was addressed to her.

"Yes, Adeline and her 'chum' both like plenty of balls and beaux, I reckon."

"What has become of your patient, doctor?" inquired Miss Patsey. "The poor man at the tavern−−do you think he will get well?"

"I have no doubt the fellow will outlive half−a−dozen such fits. I left him last night under guard of two men, to keep him from hanging himself; and this morning, when I went to look after him, he was off. He was so much better, that he had been persuaded by some messmate to ship for a cruize−−only a three years' whaling voyage. Regular Jack−tar fashion−−a frolic one day, a fit the next, and off for the end of the world the third."

"He has left Longbridge, has he?" said Mr. Wyllys. "I was just going to inquire after him, for they have a story going about, that he used very threatening language in speaking of myself and Hazlehurst. Did you happen to hear him, doctor?"

"He did use some wild, incoherent expressions, sir, to that effect, when I was with him; but the threats of a raving man are not of much consequence."

"Certainly not. But I have no idea who the man can be; I don't know a single common seaman by sight or name−−at least, the only one I ever knew is long since dead. It is singular that this fellow should have known my name even; they say he was a stranger at Longbridge."

"Entirely so, I believe."

"What was his name?"

"William Thompson, they told me."

"If he is a sailor, he probably has a dozen aliases," interposed Mr. Clapp, who had been listening very attentively.

"By−the−bye, Clapp, they say he included you in his kind wishes."

"Yes, sir, so I understand."

"William, you never mentioned it to me!" said his wife.

"No, my dear; I did not attach any importance to the story," replied the lawyer, pulling out his handkerchief with one hand, and running the other through his hair−−looking a little nervous and uneasy, notwithstanding.

"He did not exactly threaten you, Mr. Clapp, while I was with him," said the doctor; "he seemed rather to depend upon you as an ally."

"Still more singular," said Mr. Clapp, with a glance at Mr. Wyllys.

"That was very strange!" exclaimed his wife−−"what could the man mean?"

"It is by no means easy to explain the meaning of a drunken man, my dear. It is just possible he may have heard my name as a man of business. I have had several sailors for clients, and one quite recently, staying at the same tavern."

"I dare say, if explained, it would prove to be Much ado about Nothing," said Mr. Wyllys. "Since the fellow was drunk at the time, and went off as soon as he grew sober, the danger does not seem very imminent."

{"Much ado about Nothing" = an allusion to Shakespeare's play of that name}

"Precisely my opinion, sir," said Mr. Clapp.

"Grandpapa, do you remember the sailor who was found near our house, one night, about two years ago? It was my birth−day, and we had a little party−−have you forgotten?"

"True, my child; I have never thought of the fellow since; but now you speak of him, I remember the fact."

"Do you not think it is probably the same person?−−you know Harry had him locked up: perhaps he owes you

both a grudge for the treatment he received at Wyllys−Roof, upon that occasion."

"That accounts for the whole affair, Miss Elinor−−you have cleared up the mystery entirely," said Mr. Clapp, looking much relieved. He not only appeared grateful to Elinor for the explanation given, but seemed to extend the obligation to all the family; for he was particularly attentive to Mr. Wyllys, and Miss Agnes, during the whole evening−−and the next morning, early, drove out to Wyllys−Roof, expressly to carry some brook−trout, for Mr. Wyllys's breakfast. The lawyer informed several persons, who alluded to the story, of this simple explanation, which seemed to satisfy all who heard it. The whole affair was soon forgotten, for a time, at least.

CHAPTER XVI.

"Weak and irresolute is man;
The purpose of to−day
Woven with pains into his plan,
To−morrow rends away."
COWPER.

{William Cowper (English poet, 1731−1800), "Human Frailty" lines 1−4}

AFTER an absence of a week, or ten days, Harry returned to Wyllys−Roof, not at all sorry to hear that he was too late to see the Grahams, as they were going to New York the next morning. He was very attentive to Elinor−−pointedly so. Once or twice, she was going to jest with him upon the subject, and inquire the cause of this studied gallantry; but observing he was still a little out of spirits, she contented herself with thanking him for the books he had brought her.

The next day proved so mild, so hazy, and Indian−summer−like, that Hazlehurst proposed to take advantage of it, to give the ladies a row on the river. They were out for a couple of hours, landed on the opposite bank, and paid a visit to their friends, the Bernards, who lived a mile or two below them. The air was delightful, the country looked beautiful−−fresher, perhaps, than at midsummer; for the heat was no longer parching, and the September showers had washed away the dust, and brought out the green grass again. Harry had become interested in the conversation, and was particularly agreeable; Miss Agnes was pleased with his remarks, and Elinor thought she had never passed a pleasanter morning; she was little aware that it was to be followed by many anxious, painful days.

They landed, as usual, at the boat−house; and the ladies prepared to walk slowly across the lawn, while Harry secured the boat and oars. As they approached the house, they were surprised to see several of the servants collected on the piazza, listening so intently to a lad that they did not see the ladies. Old Hetty, a superannuated negro cook, who had lived all her life in the family, was wringing her hands and wiping her eyes with her apron; while Mammy Sarah, Elinor's former nurse, a respectable white woman, was talking to the boy.

Elinor quickened her pace, and hastened before her aunt, to inquire into the cause of this distress.

"What is it, Mammy?" she asked, on reaching the piazza. "What is the matter?"

"Oh, dearie me; Miss Elly, Miss Elly!" exclaimed old Hetty; with a fresh burst of tears.

"Tell us−−Hetty−−Mammy−−what has happened?" said Miss Wyllys, as she approached.

"Oh, Miss Aggess, Miss Aggess−−dreadful news!" said the old negro woman, burying her face in her apron.

"My father?" asked Miss Agnes, faintly, and trembling with alarm.

"No, ma'am," said Mammy Sarah, looking very sad, however; "Mr. Wyllys is very well, and we were hoping he would come in before you, so that we could get at the truth."

"Let us hear what you have to say, at once, Mammy," continued Miss Agnes, anxiously.

"Billy, here, has brought bad news from Longbridge."

"Dreadful news!" interposed old Hetty. "Oh, Miss Aggess! Billy say Miss Jane−−"

"What is it?−−Speak plainly!" cried Miss Wyllys.

"There's an accident happened to the steamboat," added Mammy.

"B'iler bust−−dearie me−−Miss Jane's scall to death!" exclaimed Hetty.

A cry of horror burst from Elinor and her aunt, and they turned towards Mammy Sarah.

"I hope it isn't quite so bad, ma'am," said Mammy; "but Billy says the steamboat boiler did really burst after she had got only half a mile from the wharf."

A second sufficed for Miss Agnes and Elinor to remember Hetty's fondness for marvels and disasters, and they hoped ardently that the present account might be exaggerated. They turned to the boy: "What had he heard?" "Whom had he seen?" Billy reported that he had seen the boat himself; that he had heard the cries from her decks, which the people in the street thought had come from some horses on board, that must have been scalded; that another boat had gone out to the Longbridge steamer, and had towed her to a wharf a few rods from the spot where the accident happened; that he had seen, himself, a man on horseback, coming for the doctor; and the people told him five horses had been killed, two men badly hurt, and Mr. Graham's eldest daughter was scalded so badly that she was not expected to live.

Miss Wyllys's anxiety increased on hearing the boy's story; she ordered the carriage instantly, determined that under any circumstances, it would be best to go to Longbridge at once, either to discover the truth, or to assist Mrs. Graham in nursing Jane, if she were really badly injured. At this moment, Harry returned from the boat−house.

"What is the matter?" he exclaimed, springing up the piazza steps, and looking round upon the sad and anxious faces.

"We have heard bad news from Longbridge," said Miss Wyllys; but before she could explain herself, old Hetty burst into tears again, and turning to Hazlehurst, exclaimed:

"Oh, Massa Harry!−−dreadful news!−−Miss Jane scall to death in steamboat!"

Miss Wyllys was so much struck with the effect of these words on Harry, that for an instant she forgot to say "she trusted the story had been exaggerated." Hazlehurst lost all colour−−stood speechless and motionless for a moment. Elinor was too much agitated herself to speak. Suddenly, Harry met Miss Agnes' eye; he turned from her, rushed through the house, and continued walking rapidly up and down the avenue, apparently forgetful of everything but his own feelings. Amid all her anxiety for Jane, Miss Wyllys could not but remark Hazlehurst's manner−−he seemed entirely overcome, by his emotion; and yet he had not asked one question, nor made one offer to do anything for Elinor, or herself; and one would have thought it more natural that at such a moment he should have remained with them, pained and distressed as they were. Elinor only thought that Hazlehurst's feelings did credit to his heart; her own was full of grief for the suffering of her playfellow and companion, whom she had loved almost as a sister.

Some twenty minutes were passed in this manner by the aunt and niece, with feelings better understood than described. They were waiting for the carriage, and nothing could be done in the mean time; it seemed an age to Elinor before the coachman could be found, and the horses harnessed. While her aunt and herself were in tears, pacing the piazza together, they were surprised by the appearance, on the Longbridge road, of the old−fashioned chair in which Mr. Wyllys usually drove about his farm. Miss Agnes distinctly saw her father driving, with a lady at his side. They were approaching at a very steady, quiet pace. As they entered the gate, Miss Agnes and Elinor hastened to meet them; they saw Harry stopping to speak to Mr. Wyllys, and then Miss Wyllys heard her father's voice calling to herself.

{"chair" = a light, one−horse carriage}

"All safe!" he cried. "It was a misunderstanding; Jane is quite well; though a poor young woman, bearing the same name, has been scalded."

"We were in hopes the news had not reached you yet," said Mrs. George Wyllys, who accompanied her father−in−law. "We were all dreadfully alarmed, at first, for the accident was very much exaggerated."

Miss Wyllys and Elinor were too thankful for Jane's escape, to express anything but the relief they felt on hearing of her safety.

"No one killed," continued Mr. Wyllys. "They lost a couple of horses; two of the men were hurt, but not dangerously; and the new chambermaid, whose name is Jane Graham, had her feet badly scalded. But there is so little harm done, considering what might have happened, that we have reason to be very thankful for every one on board."

"You may imagine how much alarmed I was," continued Mrs. Wyllys; "for I happened to be sitting at my own window, which overlooks the river, you know, and I heard the noise and cries from the boat, and knew the Grahams were on board."

Long explanations followed: Mr. Wyllys had had his fright too. He had heard at the saddler's, that half Mr. Graham's family were killed. Now, however, it only remained for them to be thankful that their friends had all

escaped, and to hope Jane's namesake would soon recover.

"But how long is it since you heard the story? why did you not send Harry off at once, to get at the truth?" asked Mr. Wyllys.

"We were going ourselves," replied Miss Agnes.

"What has become of Harry?−−Where is he?" asked her father.

But Harry had disappeared.

"He was much distressed at the news," said Elinor.

"No wonder; it was a horrible idea. But he should have jumped on horseback, and rode over to Longbridge to find out the truth."

Elinor looked round once more for Hazlehurst, as they entered the house; but he was certainly not there.

"And what are the Grahams going to do?" asked Miss Wyllys.

"They are off again this afternoon," replied her father, taking a seat on the sofa.

Hazlehurst was not seen again all the morning. Dinner came, and he had not joined the family.

"He is in his room," said Elinor; "I heard him walking as I passed his door. I am afraid he is not well."

The servant who was sent to let him know that dinner was on table, returned with the answer, that Mr. Hazlehurst had a bad head−ache, and begged Miss Wyllys would excuse him.

"That long row in the sun must have given Harry a head−ache, Aunt Agnes," said Elinor; "I am sorry we went so far."

"Perhaps so," said Miss Agnes; although she did not seem wholly to be of Elinor's opinion.

"Hazlehurst is no such tender chicken, Nelly; you must not spoil him, child−−do you hear?" said her grandfather, smiling in a way that made Elinor colour. Miss Agnes was silent during dinner; but as the whole family had scarcely recovered from the alarm of the morning, the shade of anxiety on her face was not remarked.

Harry remained in his room. As he had requested not to be disturbed, he was left alone. Once, however, in the course of the evening, a knock was heard at his door, and a servant appeared.

"Miss Elinor sends you a cup of tea, sir, and hopes your head is better," said Thomas.

"Miss Elinor is very good−−I am much obliged to her," was Harry's answer, in a low, thick voice; but the cup of tea remained untasted, while Hazlehurst resumed his walk across the room. When, shortly after, Elinor's voice was heard singing her grandfather's favourite air of Robin Adair in lower tones than usual, Harry again started from the table, where he had laid pen and paper preparatory to writing, and striking his hand against his forehead, he exclaimed:

{"Robin Adair" = Irish folksong, though often identified with Scotland, with words ca. 1750 by Lady Caroline Keppel; it is the only specific tune Elinor is ever heard to sing}

"Ungrateful wretch, that I am!"

The next morning Elinor was up early, and taking the garden basket, she went out to gather all the late flowers she could find, to fill a jar for the drawing−room−−singing gaily, as she went from bush to bush, and gathering here a sprig of honeysuckle, there violets or a late rose, blooming out of season, and a few other straggling blossoms. After loitering about the garden for half an hour, she returned to the house. She was surprised to see the coachman, at that early hour, driving up the avenue in the little wagon used for errands about the country.

"Where have you been, Williams?" she asked, as he drove past her towards the stable.

"To carry Mr. Hazlehurst over to Upper Lewiston, in time for the six o'clock boat, Miss."

Elinor could scarcely believe what she had heard. At the same moment, Mr. Wyllys stepped out on the piazza.

"What is this, Elinor?" he asked. "They tell me Harry is off; did you see him this morning?"

Elinor was obliged to say she had not.

"What can it mean! did he get any letters by last night's mail?"

"Not that I know of," said Elinor, much surprised, and a little alarmed.

They found Miss Agnes in the drawing−room; she, it seemed, already knew of Hazlehurst's departure. She said little on the subject, but looked anxious and absent. Elinor scarcely knew what to think; she was afraid to trust herself to make any inquiries, preferring to wait until alone with her aunt after breakfast. The meal passed over in silence. Mr. Wyllys looked uneasy; Elinor was at a loss to know what to think; neither of the ladies paid much attention to the morning meal that day.

Miss Agnes rose from table, and went to her own room; Elinor, neglecting her usual task as housekeeper,

hastened to follow her aunt, her mind filled with indistinct fears and anxieties. Miss Agnes was walking about her room, looking pained and distressed. Several letters were lying on a table near her; two were unopened; one she had been reading.

"Letters!−−my dear Aunt, from whom? Tell me, I conjure you, what you know! Has anything happened to Louisa−−to Jane? Did Harry leave no message for me?" cried Elinor, hurrying towards her aunt, whose face she watched for an answer to each question, as she asked it. Miss Wyllys made an effort to compose herself, and held out her hand to Elinor.

"My dearest Aunt!−−pray tell me what distresses you−−Ha! Harry's handwriting!" she exclaimed, as her eye fell on the open letter by Miss Wyllys−−"I know that letter is from Harry; do not conceal anything; is it for me?"

"This letter is to me, my child," replied her aunt, taking up the one she had been reading; wishing to give Elinor all the preparation in her power, for a blow which she knew must fall heavily, since it was so entirely unexpected.

"But there are two other letters," cried Elinor, "one of them is for me, I am sure. Let me see it at once, Aunt; you cannot deny that it is for me−−and if it contain bad news, you know that I can command myself when necessary."

Miss Agnes's hand trembled as she took the letters.

"My child! My beloved Elinor!" she said.

"Dearest Aunt, you torture me! Tell me, I beseech you, what we have to fear!"

"You shall know all," Miss Agnes replied, seating herself; and endeavouring to be calm. "You will be much distressed, my child; but I know that you will be now, what you always have been, reasonable, and true to yourself−−to your grandfather−−to me," added Miss Wyllys, in a voice almost inarticulate.

A thousand indistinct ideas passed through Elinor's mind with the rapidity of lightning, while her aunt was speaking; illness of some absent friend suggested itself−−yet who could it be? Not Harry, surely, for he had gone over to Upper Lewiston that morning−−yet her fears instinctively centred upon Hazlehurst.

"It is something relating to Harry, I am sure," she said. "Is he ill?−−is he in trouble?" she asked in a faint voice, while a prayer for resignation sprang from her heart, with the words.

"You are right," replied Miss Wyllys, in a faltering voice; and seating herself by her niece, she continued, "He is well. If he is in trouble, it is from his own choice. Have you no suspicions, my dearest child, of what has happened?"

"Suspicions!"−−exclaimed Elinor, in astonishment, "what is there for me to suspect? My dearest Aunt, I am more and more perplexed−−explain it all yourself−−who is it you are concerned for?"

"My only concern is for you, dearest; my only regret, that trouble should have been brought on you by those dear to you−−by your grandfather, by myself, by your cousins."

"By you!−−by my cousins−−what cousins?"

"Harry−−Jane−−Have you remarked nothing?"

"Harry! what can he have done?"

"You must forget him," said Miss Wyllys; and as Elinor looked eagerly in her aunt's eyes, she read there all that Miss Agnes had not courage to tell in words.

Half starting from her seat, she exclaimed, "Harry!−−and Jane too!" and as a deadly paleness came over her face, she fell back, unconscious, on the sofa. Her faintness lasted but a moment; too short a time, indeed, to allow the impression of what she had heard to pass from her mind. She burst into tears. "Oh, Aunt Agnes!−−Is it really true?−−Can Harry have changed? can he have been so unkind to me?−−And Jane, too!" she exclaimed at intervals.

Her aunt answered only by her caresses, silently pressing her lips upon Elinor's forehead.

Elinor threw her arms about Miss Agnes's neck, weeping bitterly.

"But is it really true? Is there not some mistake? Is it possible he felt so little for me? Oh, dearest Aunt!−−and Jane, too!"

Miss Wyllys said that she knew nothing of Jane's feelings; but that the manner of both Jane and Harry had struck her several times as singular; though now but too easily accounted for. During the last ten days, she had begun to fear something wrong.

"Never, for one second, had I a doubt of either!" cried Elinor. She now dreaded to receive the letter, she had

before asked for so eagerly.

A package had been given by Harry to the chambermaid, that morning, requesting her to place it in Miss Agnes's hands as soon as she left her room. It contained three letters. That to Miss Agnes herself, was full and explicit. He now wrote, he said, because he felt concealment to be no longer possible, after the manner in which he had betrayed himself on hearing of the steamboat accident. He felt convinced that his emotion had been observed by Miss Wyllys, and he almost hoped the suspicions of Elinor had been aroused. He hoped it, for he felt that longer concealment would be unworthy of Elinor, and of himself, since he had not been able to control his feelings. He acknowledged that a frank confession was now due to her.

"I know," he said, "that you will reproach me severely for my want of faith, and I feel that I deserve far more than you will say. But do not think that I erred from deliberate forgetfulness of all that I owed to Elinor. I was for a long time unconscious of the state of my own feelings; and when at length I could no longer deceive myself, the discovery of my weakness was deeply painful and mortifying. You know what has been my situation since last spring−−you know to what I have been exposed. Greater caution might no doubt have been used, had I not been misled by blindness, or self−confidence, or vanity, call it what you please. No one can reproach me as severely as I reproach myself. But although my feelings had escaped my own control before I knew it, yet I determined from the first that my actions should at least be worthy of Elinor. I instantly became more guarded. No human being, I believe, until to−day, suspected my folly. Do not reproach Jane. The fault is entirely with me; Jane has been blameless throughout."

He concluded by hoping that his letter would not for a moment be considered by Miss Wyllys or Elinor, as an attempt to break his engagement, which he was still anxious to fulfil. But he thought that, now the explanation had been made, a separation for some time would be preferable for all parties. He proposed to travel for six months, and at the end of that time be hoped to have conquered his own weakness, and to be forgiven by Elinor.

Bitter tears were shed by Elinor, in reading this letter.

The note to herself was short. He had not the courage to repeat to her directly, what he had said to Miss Wyllys.

"I feel unworthy of you, Elinor, and I cannot endure longer to deceive so generous a temper as yours. You must have remarked my emotion this morning−−Miss Wyllys now knows all; I refer you to her. I shall never cease to reproach myself for my unpardonable ingratitude. But painful as it is to confess it, it would have been intolerable to play the hypocrite any longer, by continuing to receive proofs of kindness which I no longer deserve. It is my hope, that in time you will forgive me; though I shall never forgive myself.

"H. H."

There are said to be young ladies with hearts so tender, as to be capable of two or three different love affairs, and an unlimited number of flirtations, in the course of a twelvemonth; but Elinor's disposition was of a very different stamp. Her feelings were all true and strong; her attachment for Harry little resembled that mixture of caprice and vanity to which some young people give the name of love. With something of fancy, and a share of the weakness, no doubt, it was yet an affection to which every better quality of her nature had contributed its share. Hazlehurst's determination never to forgive himself for the sorrow he had caused her, was a just one. His fickleness had deeply wounded a heart, warm, true, and generous, as ever beat in a woman's bosom.

Bitterly did Elinor weep, that first day of grief, humiliation, and disappointment. She did not hesitate, however, for a moment, as to the course to be pursued, and even felt indignant that Harry should have believed her capable of holding him to his engagement, with the feelings he had avowed. She answered his note as soon as she could command herself sufficiently to write.

"I do not blame you−−your conduct was but natural; one more experienced, or more prudent than myself, would probably have foreseen it. Had you left me in ignorance of the truth until too late, I should then have been miserable indeed. My aunt will take the first opportunity of letting our mutual friends know the position in which it is best we should continue for the future. May you be happy with Jane.

"ELINOR WYLLYS."

Elinor, at this moment, felt keenly the disadvantages of homeliness, which she had hitherto borne so cheerfully, and had never yet considered an evil. Beauty now appeared to her as a blessed gift indeed.

"Had I not been so unfortunately plain," thought Elinor, "surely Harry could not have forgotten me so soon. Oh," she exclaimed, "had I but a small portion of that beauty which so many girls waste upon the world, upon

mere vanity; which they are so ready to carry about to public places−−through the very streets, to catch the eye of every passing stranger, how highly should I prize it, only for the sake of pleasing those I love! What a happy thought it must be to those blessed with beauty, that the eyes of their nearest and dearest friends never rest upon them but with pleasure! How willingly would I consent to remain plain to ugliness, plain as I am, in the eyes of the world, for the precious power of pleasing those I love!"

Mr. Wyllys and Miss Agnes, of course, approved the step Elinor had taken. They were both deeply pained by Harry's conduct; they both regretted having allowed the engagement to take place so early, and at the moment of Harry's absence. Miss Wyllys, indeed, blamed herself severely for not having used all her influence to prevent it. With her father, on the contrary, indignation against Harry was the strongest feeling.

"Heartless young coxcomb!" he exclaimed; "to dare to trifle with Elinor. I had a good opinion of him; I thought he had too much sense, and too much feeling, not to appreciate Elinor, though her face may not be as pretty as some others. Agnes, he must never be asked to Wyllys−Roof again. I can never forget his treatment of my grandchild."

CHAPTER XVII.

"May this be so?"
SHAKSPEARE.

{William Shakespeare, "Much Ado About Nothing", III.ii.117}

WHILE the family at Wyllys−Roof were in this distress, Miss Agnes had received the parting visit of the Taylors. The porticos of Colonnade Manor rose before closed windows; the house was abandoned for the winter; while Mr. Taylor and Miss Adeline were engaged in putting the finishing touch to the elegance of No. five hundred and −−−−−, Broadway, preparatory to the display of the winter.

Mr. Taylor was getting at home in New York. The atmosphere of a large town, thoroughly commercial, was just fitted to his nature. He had certainly every reason to be satisfied with the rapidity with which he had mounted towards the top of the Wall−Street ladder. He was already cheek−by−jowl with certain heavy men of the place; he walked down Broadway of a morning with "Mr. A. of the Ocean," and up again of an afternoon with "Mr. B. of the Hoboken;" he knew something of most of the great men of the commercial world; and as for the rest of the community, he cared little enough for them or their interests. His house was as handsome and as finely furnished as he could wish, his children were as expensively dressed, as expensively schooled, as any in the land. He had become accustomed to the first burst of luxury, and began already to look upon a hundred things as necessaries, of the uses of which he had been ignorant five years before. He thought New York a commercial paradise; not only the place to make a fortune, but the very spot to spend it in. He wondered at Mr. Hubbard; who could be satisfied to retire from business so early, and was content to live at Longbridge, the village where he was born. Mr. Taylor looked upon himself as already a great man, but he intended to be a greater man still, by a million, or more.

About a week after the Taylors arrived in town, they gave a party−−quite a small affair, very sociable, some eighty or ninety people only. The following morning, Mrs. Taylor, fatigued with the toils and cares of gaiety, went to her own room to refresh herself by darning more stockings than usual; while Mr. Taylor, who had laboured hard the evening before by endeavouring to be very 'affable' to some twenty new acquaintances, sought the relief of his counting−house. As he walked down Broadway, his thoughts were divided between two subjects. He had purchased some lots the previous week, which proved so indifferent a bargain, that he was anxious to persuade a particular friend to take them off his hands. He had also just received letter from his son, lately Tom Taylor, now T. Tallman Taylor, Esquire. The young man had made very heavy demands upon his father's banker lately. Mr. Taylor was perfectly satisfied that his son should spend his money freely, and had given him a very liberal allowance, that he might be enabled to cut a figure among his countrymen in Paris. But his progress in acquiring habits of extravagance had become of late rather more rapid than was desirable. As he was to return, however, in the course of a few weeks, his father hoped that he would be able to play the dandy in New York at less cost than in Paris.

Mr. Taylor's meditations were interrupted by Mrs. Hilson, who stopped to speak to him as he passed; she wished to inquire if Miss Adeline were at home, as she was anxious to see her, having a piece of news to communicate. Having given a satisfactory answer, the merchant pursued his course towards the regions of commerce, at one extremity of Broadway, and the city−lady went her way towards the regions of fashion in the opposite direction.

Mrs. Hilson had already returned to her suite of apartments, and her intimate friend, Mrs. Bagman. At the boarding−house she patronised; and every morning between the hours of twelve and three, she might be seen at the window of the drawing−room, if it rained, or flitting up and down Broadway if the sun shone, generally attended by Captain Kockney, the long {sic} Englishman, whom she took great pleasure in showing off to the public. On the present occasion she was alone however, and fortunate enough to find Miss Adeline and the French

furniture visible, for it was the first time she had been in the new house. The rose−coloured damask, and the pea−green satin of the two drawing−rooms was much admired, and many compliments were lavished upon the gilt clocks, the Sevres vases, when Mrs. Hilson remembered she had a piece of news to share with Miss Taylor.

"And such news−−so unexpected to us all; you will be so surprised! The engagement between Miss Wyllys and Mr. Hazlehurst is actually broken off!"

Adeline was not so much astonished as Mrs. Hilson supposed she would be.

"I am very quick at seeing such things," she said. "I was sure it would come to that; though Miss Wyllys did not seem to suspect anything herself. But no wonder−−an engagement of two years is too long for anybody. I am sure that in two years I should get tired of the handsomest beau in New York."

The ladies had each their surmises as to which of the parties had taken the first step, and what was probably the cause; but although Miss Taylor had a pretty correct idea of the state of things, she did not express her opinion on the subject very decidedly. Mrs. Hilson soon made her curtsey, expressing the hope that they should see each other very often during the winter; a hope which Miss Adeline was determined not to gratify, for Mrs. Hilson's standing was not sufficiently fashionable to satisfy her. The visitor had no sooner left the room, than she ran up stairs to put on her last Paris hat, and her handsomest cashmere, and then hurried off to Barclay−Street to enjoy a confidential meeting with Jane.

The young ladies were closeted together for an hour. We have no authority for revealing what passed, and can only observe that Jane returned to the drawing−room with a heightened colour, and there was a certain expression of mystery still lingering about Miss Adeline's face.

"Have you any commands for Boston, Mrs. Graham?" the young lady inquired in her usual flippant manner. "I think I shall go there next week, to pay a short visit to a friend of mine; I wish I could hear of an escort."

Mrs. Graham thanked her civilly, but declined the offer of her services.

"Have you really made up your mind to go to Boston?" asked Jane.

"Why, not positively. It depends, as I said before, upon my finding an escort. I have six pressing invitations from different quarters, most of them acquaintances that I made last summer at Saratoga; and I have been hesitating between Albany, Boston, or Baltimore. I am determined to go somewhere to spend the next three weeks, till the gaiety begins in earnest, and Tallman comes back."

"Is your brother expected so soon?" asked Mrs. Graham.

"Yes, he must have sailed now. We heard from him last night; he will be here next month, I hope, just in time for the first great parties. What would you advise me to do, Jane, to get rid of the time until then?"

"I had much rather you would stay at home; if you go, I shall miss you very much."

"But then we shall have the pleasure of corresponding−−I like the excitement of receiving a good long letter, full of nonsense, above all things."

"You must not forget to let me know which way you are really going," said Jane. "I will write, though I can't promise you a long letter; I never wrote a long letter in my life."

"Well, you must write, at any rate, I shall see you half−a−dozen times between this and Monday. I rather think I shall decide upon Boston. Miss Lawrence says there are some delightful young gentlemen there, and has promised to give me a ball. If I go, I shall try hard to bring Miss Lawrence back with me. Mind, Jane, you don't make too many conquests while I am gone. You must reserve yourself for the one I have recommended to you. Oh, by−the−bye, Mrs. Graham, I forgot to tell you the news; I am astonished you have not heard it already."

"Pray, what is it?" asked Mrs. Graham.

"It seems the engagement between Miss Wyllys and Mr. Hazlehurst has been broken off."

"You are mistaken, surely! We have heard nothing of it, and it is highly improbable. If there be such a story, let me beg you will not mention it again, Miss Taylor!"

"Oh, there is no mistake, I'm quite sure. I have heard it three times already this morning, from Longbridge people; first Mrs. Hilson told me, and then I met John Bibbs, and Edward Tibbs, who said the same thing. Mrs. George Wyllys, it seems, contradicted the engagement openly; Miss Hubbard heard her, and wrote it to her sister."

"How grieved I should be if this story were to prove true; you surely never remarked anything, Jane?"

"Elinor seemed to me just as usual; but Adeline thinks there has been some change," said Jane, a little embarrassed.

"Oh, yes, give me credit for being quick−sighted; I suspected something the first time I saw them together after Mr. Hazlehurst came back."

"It is what none of their other friends appear to have done, Miss Taylor," said Mrs. Graham, a little severely.

"I dare say not; but I am very quick at seeing such things. If Jane has any mysteries, she had better not pretend to keep them from me. But it is no wonder that the engagement was broken off−−I don't believe in long engagements. We must not let Jane drag matters on at that rate when her turn comes;" and then kissing her friend tenderly, and making a curtsey to Mrs. Graham, without remarking the disapproving expression of that lady's face, the lively Adeline left the mother and daughter alone.

"I dislike that Miss Taylor, excessively, Jane," observed her mother, "she is very disagreeable to me; I wish you would find some better companion while we are in New York. There are the Howards, and de Vaux's−−very amiable, pleasant girls, and for a great many reasons far better associates for you."

"But I don't know them so well. Adeline is a great belle, mamma, as much so as any girl in town."

"She is not at all to my taste, I confess. Your father, too, dislikes the Taylors very much. The way in which she spoke of this story about Elinor's engagement was really unfeeling. Not that I believe it; but breaking off an engagement without good reason, is no such trifle in my opinion, as it seems to be in that of Miss Taylor."

Jane looked quite agitated; she blushed so much that her mother would probably have remarked it, had she not been, at the moment, stooping over her little invalid boy, who was lying on the sofa near her.

"Miss Taylor has no claim whatever upon you, that I can see," continued Mrs. Graham. "It is true she was kind to you when you were ill with the whooping−cough at school; but so were your other companions−−and I am sure she has not been half so considerate and good to you as Elinor, and yet you seem to prefer Miss Adeline now."

Poor Jane looked down, and coloured still more.

"Adeline would do anything for me, mother," she said, in a low voice; "You don't know how much she is attached to me; I can't help liking her," and Jane began to shed a few tears.

"Foolish child!" said her mother, beginning to relent, as she usually did on such occasions, "I don't wish you to be uncivil to her; but I should like you to be more with Kate Howard, and Anne de Vaux;" and the conversation ended, as several others of the same description had done, by leaving things precisely as they were before. Mrs. Graham, indeed, looked upon herself as having showed much decision on the occasion, and acted as a watchful mother, by having made these objections, fruitless as they proved to be.

The report that the engagement between Elinor and Harry had been broken off, was soon known to be correct. It caused some surprise to all who knew them, and much regret to their friends. Mrs. Stanley, who felt a warm interest in both Harry and Elinor, was grieved and disappointed. The Grahams, and Mrs. Robert Hazlehurst, felt very unpleasantly when the cause of the rupture came to be suspected. Mrs. Graham was, however, relieved by finding that there was no understanding between Harry and her daughter−−thus far at least all was right; no explanation had taken place between them, and Jane even assured her mother that when in Paris, she had had no idea that Hazlehurst was attached to her. Still there were many blushes whenever the subject was alluded to, there were confidential meetings with Adeline, and other symptoms which left little doubt to her friends that Jane's feelings were interested. Mrs. Graham was obliged to console herself with the idea, that the mischief had, at least, been unintentional on the part of her daughter.

Harry, himself, was much mortified by the reception of Elinor's note, which, by showing the full consequence of his conduct, made it appear more culpable in his own eyes than he had yet been willing to believe it. He even wrote a second time, begging Elinor to re−consider her decision. Full as his fancy was of Jane, yet his regard, one might say his affection, for Elinor, was too well−founded, and of too long standing, for him to endure quietly the idea of having trifled with her. She remained firm, however; her second answer was as decided as the first. Harry's self−reproach was sincere, at least, and he had never before felt so much dissatisfied with himself.

He was less eager than one might suppose, to profit by his newly−acquired liberty. He was in no hurry to offer Jane the attentions which had so lately been Elinor's due. It is true that his position was rather awkward; it is not every faithless swain who is obliged to play the lover to two different individuals, within so short a period, before the same witnesses. At length, after doing penance for a while, by encouraging humiliating reflections, some fear of a rival carried Hazlehurst on to New York, in his new character of Jane's admirer. The first meeting was rather awkward, and Harry was obliged to call up all his good−breeding and cleverness, to make it pass off without

leaving an unpleasant impression. "Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coute," however, as everybody knows. The sight of Jane's lovely face, with a brighter colour than usual, and a few half−timid and embarrassed glances from her beautiful dark eyes, had a surprising effect in soothing Harry's conscience, and convincing his reason that after all he had not acted so unwisely. He soon showed himself very much in earnest in seeking Jane's favour; though he persuaded himself that he must always do justice to Elinor's excellence. "She is just the woman for a friend," he observed to himself, "and friends I trust we shall be, when the past is forgotten. But Jane, with her transcendant {sic} beauty, her gentle helplessness, is the very creature that fancy would paint for a wife!"

{"Ce n'est que le premier...." = it's only the first step that hurts (French)}

CHAPTER XVIII.

"Be patient, gentle Nell, forget this grief."
Henry VI.

{William Shakespeare, "2 Henry VI", II.iv.26}

THE Wyllyses remained later than they had intended in the country. Elinor, indeed, proposed to her aunt that they should pass the winter at Wyllys−Roof, but Miss Agnes and her grandfather were unwilling to do so. The variety of a life in town would be preferable for her sake to the quiet monotony of a country winter. They knew she had too much sense to wish to play the victim; but it was only natural to believe, that in a solitary country life, painful recollections would force themselves upon her oftener than among her friends in town, where she would he obliged to think less of herself, and more of others.

It had been a great relief to her to find, that Jane had not acted as unworthily as Miss Agnes had at first feared; in spite of what she herself had overheard at Miss Hubbard's party, Elinor threw off all suspicion of her cousin, as soon as she learned that Jane denied any previous knowledge of the change in Harry's feelings. Hazlehurst, himself, had said in his letter that she was blameless.

"Then," she exclaimed, "I shall at least be able to love Jane as before!" She immediately sat down, and wrote her cousin a short, but affectionate letter, containing only a slight allusion to what had passed. Jane's answer, of course, avoided wounding her feelings, and their intercourse was resumed.

"The time will come, I trust," she thought, "when Harry, too, will be a friend again." But she felt the hour had not yet arrived. She could not so soon forget the past. It was no easy task, suddenly to change the whole current of feeling which had filled her mind during the last two years. In spite of her earnest resolutions, during the first few weeks, thoughts and feelings of the past would recur too often. For some time Elinor was very unhappy; she felt that the strongest and deepest affections of her heart had been neglected, rejected, undervalued, by one whose opinion she had learned to prize too highly. She wept and blushed to think how much she had become attached to Harry, since she had looked upon him as her affianced husband. She could not but feel herself free from all reproach towards him; it was he who, unsought by her, had wished to draw a closer tie between them. He had succeeded but too well, and then he had forgotten her. The temptation which had proved too strong for him, would not have deserved the name, had the case been reversed, had she been exposed to it. And yet she did not reproach him; men think so much of beauty, and she was so very plain! It was but natural at such a moment, that she should be oppressed by an over−wrought humility. She accused herself of vanity, for having at one time believed it possible Harry could love one like herself. But how happy was Jane!

Her efforts to struggle against low spirits were the greater, for the sake of her aunt and her grandfather. She made it a duty to neglect no regular task, and much of her time was occupied as usual; but the feelings which she carried about to her employment, were very different from what they had been heretofore. It was her first taste of sorrow; well might her aunt deeply reproach Hazlehurst for his versatile conduct towards her beloved child. Elinor flattered herself that Miss Agnes knew not half of what she felt. In general she succeeded in being quite calm, and attentive to others; she was always sweet−tempered, and unrepining. But she could not read, herself, the expression of her own countenance, so tenderly watched by her aunt. She was not aware that the musical tones of her voice were no longer cheerful; that instead of the gay, easy conversation in which she used to bear her part, she was now at times absent, often silent; she whose graceful wit and youthful spirits had been until lately the joy of her family. Mr. Wyllys's indignation against Hazlehurst would have been boundless, if he could have seen him at such moments, as was often now the case, sitting by the side of Jane, admiring the length of her eye−lashes, the pearly smoothness of her complexion, and the bright colour of her lips, as she uttered some very common−place remark. Such had now become Hazlehurst's daily pleasure, his daily habit.

["versatile" = inconstant, fickle}

Miss Agnes purposely left to her niece, this year, all the arrangements for their removal to town; and Elinor was obliged to be very busy. It happened too, quite opportunely, perhaps, that just at that time Mrs. George Wyllys was coming over oftener than usual, to consult her father−in−law and Miss Agnes. Against Mr. Wyllys's advice, she had to withdraw her eldest boy from the school where he had been first placed, and now a new choice was to be made. Mr. Wyllys recommended a small establishment in their own neighbourhood, recently opened by Miss Patsey's brother; he thought it equally good with the one she had in view, and with the additional advantage of more moderate terms, and a smaller number of boys. But Mrs. Wyllys had a great deal to say on the opposite side of the question; the low price was an objection in her eyes.

"There, my dear sir, you must allow me to differ from you. I have always intended to devote a large portion of my means to the education of my children; economy in such a case, I cannot look upon as economy at all."

"Certainly, Harriet, you are perfectly right to secure to your children every advantage in your power. But this is not a case in point. Thomas Hubbard, you know, was a principal in the very school which you have in view, and only withdrew last spring on account of ill health. He still continues the same system, and has the same masters, with the advantage of only four boys besides Evert, to occupy his attention."

This was too plain to be contradicted. "But in my opinion, sir, a large school is very much to be preferred for a boy. I have thought a great deal on the subject, since Evert has been of an age to leave me."

"But what are your reasons for preferring a large school to a small one?"

"I think it a better preparation for their entrance into life. And then they have the advantage of choosing their intimates from a larger number of boys; Evert's disposition will make it particularly desirable for him. I am sure, if he were shut up with two or three boys only, he would find it so dull that he would be disgusted."

"Well, my dear, I view the matter in a different light," replied Mr. Wyllys, who would never allow himself to be silenced, or forced to advise anything against his conscience; though many men would have been worried into it by such a woman. Unfortunately, Mrs. Wyllys was the only guardian of her children, and Mr. Wyllys was often obliged to see his daughter−in−law act in a manner that he thought ill−judged; but though very good−natured, he could never be talked into being a party to such plans. "It is precisely on account of Evert's high spirits that I should like a small school for him. He would be less likely to get himself and others into scrapes; he would be more under his master's eye."

"I think, sir, from the conversation I had with Mr. Stone, he is just the man to obtain an influence over Evert."

"You would like Hubbard still better, if you knew him."

"I doubt it very much, sir; I am sick of the very name of Hubbard. Those Longbridge Hubbards are enough to spoil a paradise."

"Well, Harriet," said Mr. Wyllys, "you seem to have made up your mind; so have I; now what is to be done?"

"Of course, sir, your opinion has great weight with me; you know I am always guided by you."

"Then the matter is settled, and Evert goes to Hubbard's."

Mr. Wyllys thought he had succeeded, on this occasion, in gaining his point, by taking his daughter−in−law at her word; but the very next morning she drove over to Wyllys−Roof, with a new view of the subject; and it was not until after half−a−dozen more conversations, that the matter was finally settled, by Mr. Wyllys refusing to give any more advice; when his daughter−in−law, of her own accord, determined to send her boy to Mr. Hubbard's school. It must be confessed that some women, endowed too with certain good qualities, are very trying, and possess a most vexatious vein of caprice. In the mean time the child was taken sick; he was ill for several weeks, and Elinor assisted in nursing him.

Independently of these consultations, and cares about her little cousin, there were other claims upon Elinor's attention at this time, and those the least romantic in the world. Within the last few weeks, all the men of Longbridge seemed to have their heads full of a new rail−road, one of the first that were made in this country. All the property Elinor had inherited from her father was in this village, and so placed as to have its value very much increased by this intended piece of internal improvement. Mr. Hubbard was one of those most interested in the project, which was of some importance to Mr. Wyllys, also. The gentlemen had many meetings on the subject, and Elinor was obliged to hear a great deal that was going on; which houses were to be pulled down, which streets widened, what engineer was to be employed, where the rails were to come from, at what time they hoped to get the act through the Assembly. Mr. Taylor, of course, was not the man to allow anything approaching to

speculation, to take place in his neighbourhood without having something to do with it himself. He came over to Longbridge expressly to help matters on; and as Colonnade Manor was shut up, Mr. Wyllys, always hospitably inclined, asked him to his own house for a day or two. With such a spirit under their roof, little else was heard of besides stocks and lots, wharves and stores. Elinor's property was known to be much interested in the affair, and Mr. Hubbard and Mr. Taylor thought it necessary to congratulate her. Mr. Taylor, indeed, would have been much shocked had he known how very little she cared about the matter.

{"a new rail−road" = The Camden and (Perth) Amboy line crossed New Jersey in 1833, and the Philadelphia and Columbia (Penn.) line opened in 1834}

"We shall have to consult you, Miss Elinor, in our proceedings," said Mr. Hubbard, as they were sitting at the dinner−table; perhaps you don't know it, but you will be one of our stockholders, and much interested in our success, I assure you."

"My grandfather tried last night to give me some notions on the subject, Mr. Hubbard; but I am afraid he was not very successful."

"Oh, I don't know that," said Mr. Wyllys; "I shall make quite a business woman of you, yet, Nelly." In fact, her grandfather had taken the moment to assure Elinor that it was high time she should have some just ideas on such subjects, and insisted on her listening to all his explanations, and doing her best to comprehend them. Elinor tried to be a docile pupil, and really acquired some useful information, which may appear singular to romantic young ladies, who set up for broken−hearted; as her only object, however, was to gratify her grandfather, we hope she will be forgiven for anything so much out of character in a heroine.

"It is a beautiful speculation, Miss Wyllys," observed Mr. Taylor. "I suppose you know enough about these things, to be glad to hear that in a year or two, you will probably realize two hundred per cent. on your lots in Water−Street, where the depot is to be built."

"It all sounds very grandly, certainly," said Elinor, smiling.

"We shall make a fortune for you, Miss Elinor," added Mr. Hubbard. "You will be the great lady of Longbridge."

"I dare say, Nelly, you will find some way of spending the money; young ladies know very well how to get rid of it, let it come ever so fast."

"Yes, sir, my daughters are very expert at that; Emmeline thinks nothing of giving fifty dollars for a flimsy pocket−handkerchief, and as much for a flighty−looking hat. But I've no objections; I'll tell you in confidence, that is what we make our money for, Miss Elinor−−for our children to spend," added Mr. Hubbard, smiling good−naturedly. "I dare say you will find a right use for some of yours. It will be in good hands, and I hope you may long enjoy it," said he, making a bow to Elinor, as he drank off a glass of Madeira.

{"fifty dollars for a flimsy pocket−handkerchief" = this remark by Mr. Hubbard reflects James Fenimore Cooper's little−known novelette, "The Autobiography of a Pocket−Handkerchief" (1843), as do many aspects of the greedy and ostentatious Taylor family whom Emmeline Hubbard seeks to emulate}

Mr. Taylor, though he joined in the toast with some "affable" remark, as usual, could not help regretting that so much money, and consequently the power of making so much more, should not be in the hands of one who could turn it to better account than Miss Elinor Wyllys. He had a very poor opinion of Mr. Wyllys's money−making abilities, and thought him very "unenterprising." That gentleman, on the contrary, when brought in closer contact with Mr. Taylor, began to have a clearer insight into his character, and while he found him uncommonly clever, discovered that several of his propositions betrayed anything but high principles. He began to believe that Mr. Graham's dislike was not ill−founded.

Mr. Hubbard, in the mean time, who had known Elinor from a child, was thinking how he could say something agreeable about love and beaux, supposed always to be pleasant subjects to young ladies. He felt some doubts about hinting at Hazlehurst, for he thought he had heard the engagement was broken off. Happily for Elinor, the party rose from table before anything had suggested itself.

At length Mrs. Wyllys's boy recovered, and was sent off to school; and this rail−road matter was also satisfactorily settled. As there was nothing more to detain the family in the country, the Wyllyses went to Philadelphia, and took possession of their lodgings for the winter.

CHAPTER XIX.

"Had you not lately an intent, speak truly,
To go to Paris?"
SHAKSPEARE.

{William Shakespeare, "All's Well That Ends Well", I.iii.218−219}

MISS TAYLOR paid her visit to Miss Lawrence. One morning at breakfast she informed her parents that she intended to make an excursion to Boston. "Whom was she going to see?" asked her father. "Miss Lawrence, a young lady who had passed three days at the Springs, at the hotel where they stayed, and with whom she had become very intimate." "How long was she going to be absent?" inquired her mother. "She thought of remaining a fortnight; perhaps three weeks, if she found it very pleasant. Mr. Powell, the young gentleman who was to be her escort, had been introduced to her the evening previous at a ball, and she thought him sufficiently fashionable in his appearance, to have the honour of taking charge of herself and her baggage." Her father observed that he would bring a supply of money for her, when he came home to dinner; her mother offered to look over her stockings. Everything thus settled, the next morning Mr. Taylor and Miss Adeline drove to the East−River wharf, where the Boston boat lay: here they met with a slight difficulty; the gentleman engaged as an escort could not be found; something had interfered with his journey. Nothing was easier than to pick up another, however. Mr. Taylor looked about him, saw a face he knew slightly, and remembered the name that belonged to it.

"Good morning, sir; are you going to Boston, Mr. Hopkins?"

Mr. Hopkins bowed, and declared that he was going to Boston.

"I have a daughter on board, sir; and the young gentleman who was to be her escort is not here; will you be so good as to look after her?"

Mr. Hopkins would be very happy to take charge of Miss Taylor. But Adeline was almost in despair when she saw him. How could one of the most dashing belles in New York, consent to sit, in view of all the passengers, side−by−side with such a fat, rusty, snuffy, little old gentleman, who more green spectacles, and had a red silk handkerchief spread on his knee? Suppose he should ask her to walk, how could she pace up and down the promenade−deck arm−in−arm with such a figure? She, Adeline Taylor, whose travelling dress was faultless, and who had expected to have a charming flirtation with Albert Powell! What could she do? The fates, and the warning bell, decided the question; it was too late to look out for some better−looking escort. Mr. Taylor had hardly time to shake hands with his daughter, and jump on the wharf, ere the whizzing of the steam had ceased, and the plashing of the wheels was heard. Adeline sank on a bench beside the rusty old gentleman for a moment, but soon fled to the ladies' cabin for refuge.

During the whole jaunt, the fat, snuffy Mr. Hopkins was kind and good−natured to Adeline, whenever she would allow him. He thought she must be lonely, and she had been obliged to confess that she knew no one on board; so the old gentleman held it incumbent on him to be sociable. He took some pea−nuts out of his pocket, and offered her a handful; he gave her a couple of newspapers to read; asked her questions about her family, brothers and sisters, and seemed to look upon her as a school−girl. He was not the least impressed with her elegance and finery, and quite unaware of her belle−ship; he even once called her "my dear." Then, the red silk handkerchief was always either on his knee, or in his hand! It would he difficult to say whether Adeline would have survived the mortification of such an escort, had it not been for two circumstances, which changed the current of her thoughts. There were several elegantly dressed young ladies on board, and she soon succeeded in getting up an intimacy with two of them; they exchanged cards and invitations to each other's houses, and through the same means Adeline was introduced to a couple of beaux. Between breakfast and dinner, these new bosom−friends and herself were inseparable, but, unfortunately, they were only going half−way. The grief of

separation was, however, somewhat assuaged with Miss Taylor by sea−sickness, which, as every one knows, is very destructive to sentiment and sensibility. As long as they were tossing about near Point Judith, the snuffy old gentleman, who was not in the least sea−sick himself, was very faithful in his inquiries after Adeline, and proposed several remedies to her, through the stewardess. At length they reached Boston. As they drove to the door of Miss Lawrence's father, Mr. Hopkins asked "how long she intended to remain in Boston?" "About a fortnight," Adeline replied.

{"Point Judith" = prominent cape on the coast of Rhode Island, south of Narragansett}

"I shall be going back to New York about the same time, my dear, and if you have not got some one more to your taste, I'll take care of you on your way home, with pleasure," said the fat old gentleman, sprinkling a handful of snuff on Miss Taylor's grey silk, and brandishing the red handkerchief at the same time.

Adeline's thanks were very faintly uttered; but gratitude is not a fashionable virtue. It was fortunately so dark that the rusty old gentleman could scarcely be seen as he took leave of the elegant Miss Taylor at Mr. Lawrence's door, and thus the young lady's mortification was over.

At the end of the three weeks, Adeline returned home, bringing glowing accounts of the delights of Boston, and talking a great deal about several "delightful young gentlemen," and occasionally mentioning a certain Theodore St. Leger. She had heard that the Boston people were all BLUE; but it must be a calumny to say so, for she had had a very lively time−−plenty of fun and flirtation. Miss Lawrence returned with her, and of course a party was given in her honour; there were some eighty persons present, all free from the shackles of matrimony, apparently to give the Boston young lady an opportunity of meeting a representation of her peers, the marriageable portion only of the New York community. The evening was pronounced delightful by Miss Lawrence; but all the guests were not of the same opinion.

{"BLUE" = literary or learned, from "blue−stocking"}

"What an absurd custom it is, to have these young people parties," said Harry Hazlehurst, who was on one of his frequent visits to New York at the time, and was sitting in Mrs. Graham's drawing−room, with that lady, Jane, and Mrs. Stanley.

"I agree with you; it is a bad plan," observed Mrs. Stanley.

"The first of the kind that I went to, after we came home, made me feel ashamed of myself; though Dr. Van Horne, I suppose, would accuse me of high−treason for saying so."

"But most young people seem to enjoy them," said Mrs. Graham.

"It is paying us but a poor compliment to say so. One would think the young people were afraid to laugh and talk before their fathers and mothers. I really felt the other night as if we were a party of children turned into the nursery to play, and eat sugar−plums together, and make as much noise as we pleased, without disturbing our elders. It is a custom that appears to me as unnatural as it is puerile. I hope you don't like it," he added, turning to Jane.

"I care very little about it."

"I am glad, at least, you do not defend it."

"There are a few families you know, Harry, who never give those kind of parties," observed Mrs. Stanley.

Hazlehurst's conscience felt a twinge, for he knew she was thinking of Elinor, whom Miss Wyllys had never allowed to give these UNMARRIED parties; though she went to other houses, when asked.

"Miss Taylor had collected a tribe of Europeans of all sorts, last night; half−a−dozen Englishmen, and a vulgar Frenchman," observed Harry, by way of changing the conversation. "I was surprised when my friend Townsend told me he was invited; he did not know the Taylors, and only arrived a week since."

"Adeline invited him on purpose; Miss Lawrence is very fond of foreigners, and you know Mr. Taylor calls on all the strangers who arrive," said Jane.

Harry's lip curled a little.

"How disagreeable that Captain Kockney is," continued Jane.

"More than disagreeable," replied Harry. "I should not have used so soft a word. I was not a little amused, by−the−bye, to see how the fellow cooled off when Townsend and Ellery came in. Your low set of English have such a thorough awe of those a few degrees above them."

"That Mr. Kockney is so very forward and vulgar," said Mrs. Graham, "that I wonder anybody can endure him. I was disgusted with his manner on board the steamboat from Longbridge, the other day."

"He is beneath notice," said Harry.

"I am not sure, either, that I like your friend, Mr. Ellery, Harry."

"Ellery is no friend of mine; but, pray, don't name him in the same breath with that Kockney."

"Oh, no, Mr. Ellery is a gentleman, evidently; but I don't like his manners, there is something affected about him."

"Certainly, he knows how to play the coxcomb, and condescends to do so quite too often. But I hope you like Townsend; he is really a fine fellow."

"Mr. Townsend has very different manners."

"Yes, he has the best English manner; quite natural, and not afraid to be civil. It is only the best of the English who are quite free from nonsense. Ellery aims at effect, half the time; Townsend has too much sense to do so."

"Well, I really wonder," said Jane, "how Mrs. Hilson can endure that Captain Kockney."

"The silly little soul knows no better."

"To be sure, she is quite as ridiculous as he is."

"She is really very silly," said Mrs. Stanley. "It is a pity that good, worthy Mr. Hubbard should have daughters so little like himself, and so much like their mother."

"She is very pretty, though, and dresses very well," said Jane. "Would you believe it, mamma, the other day, when she called at Adeline's she wore a collar precisely like the prettiest of those I brought from Paris."

"Does she visit a great deal at Mrs. Taylor's?" inquired her mother.

"Oh, no; Adeline can't endure her. But she cannot get rid of her entirely, because they meet in the country. Adeline would like to drop the acquaintance altogether, but she says Mrs. Hilson won't let her, because Mrs. Taylor's is the only fashionable house where she visits."

"These Taylors have really done wonders in the last few years," said Mrs. Stanley, smiling.

"They have been quite as persevering, I dare say, as Mrs. Hilson can be. They are a very vulgar, pushing family," observed Mrs. Graham.

Jane coloured, and Harry feared she would shed a tear or two. She was quite agitated. "Dear Jane," he thought," what an affectionate heart she has!" By way of consoling her, probably, and at the same time obtaining a better view of her downcast face, he took a seat beside her. He even refrained from making an observation which he had in petto, upon the volatile character and manners of Miss Taylor, reserving it for the future; determining that when they were man and wife, Jane should have the full benefit of his opinion of her friend.

{"in petto" = in mind}

Let it not be supposed that Harry was too sure of success, in thus looking forward to his marriage with Jane as no very improbable event. Since he had appeared in the family as her suitor, her manner had been encouraging. There were blushes and moments of embarrassment which looked very favourably; and had he been obliged to proclaim all his hopes, he would have confessed that the same flattering signs had been observed by him in Paris, and had contributed not a little to increase the warmth of his own feelings. There was now a rival in the field, and one by no means to be despised; but, although young de Vaux was good−looking, agreeable, and very much in love, Jane did not seem disposed to smile upon him. To do her justice, she was no coquette; she was too indolent by nature, to labour very hard to secure several conquests at the same time. Miss Graham was very much admired, however, and was generally proclaimed the beauty of the season; while Harry soon began to feel the vanity of the favoured man.

But if she were a beauty, Adeline was a belle; a pretty, and a rich belle, moreover, and Miss Taylor's train of admirers was much larger than that of Miss Graham. So numerous indeed were her followers, that she was seldom seen alone. If she visited, it was with an attendant beau; if she were walking in Broadway, she had generally one on each side of her; and at a party she was always talking to half−a−dozen young men at a time. Miss Adeline was, undeniably, a very popular belle. But all this homage was sometimes attended with difficulties: one morning she wrote an urgent note to her friend Jane, requesting that she would come to see her, for she was unwell herself, and wanted advice in a momentous affair.

The sympathising Jane had no sooner appeared, than Adeline exclaimed, {sic}

"I am so perplexed, that I really don't know what to do! You must decide for me."

"How can I help you? What is the matter?" inquired Jane.

"Why you know to−night is Mrs. Thompson's great ball, and I am going, of course; though I have a very bad

cold."

"Yes, you are really quite hoarse."

"No wonder! I have been so pestered by serenades for the last fortnight, that I have not had one good night's rest. I had to get up and show myself at the window, until I caught one cold after another."

"Perhaps you had better not go to−night."

"You may be sure I shan't stay at home unless I have to keep my bed; I am already engaged for five dances. But just look at the centre−table."

Jane turned her eyes towards the table, which was covered with flowers.

"How beautiful they are!" she exclaimed, going to look at them. "One, two, four, six bouquets!−−Where did they all come from?"

"Don't ask me; I am sick of the very sight of flowers!"

"This, with the variegated camellias, is beautiful!"

"Yes, it's pretty enough; but what shall I do with it?"

"Why, take it to the party this evening, of course."

"No, indeed; it came from Mr. Howard, and I can't endure him."

"Which have you chosen, then?"

"That is the very question; I don't know how to settle it."

"Take this one with the passion−flower."

"No, that I shan't; for it was sent just to spite me. Mr. Grant sent it−−and I told him last night that I hated passion flowers, and everything else that is sentimental. What shall I do?−−It is so provoking!"

"Suppose you put them all in water, and go without any."

"My dear Jane, how you talk! That's what I never did in my life. Go to a ball without a bouquet!−−I can't think of such a thing!"

"We can untie them, and make up one ourselves, taking the prettiest flowers from each."

"That won't do, either; for it's only the gardeners that can do up these things decently. I wouldn't, for the world, carry one that looked as if I had made it up myself."

"Well," said Jane, in despair, "I really don't know what else to advise."

"I do believe the young gentlemen have leagued together to provoke me! And this is not all, there are three more in water up−stairs."

"You might take the first that came; perhaps that would be the best plan."

"Would you have me take this ridiculous−looking thing, with only one camellia in it! No, indeed;" and for a moment the two young ladies sat down by the centre−table, looking despondingly at each other and at the flowers.

"If I could only take the one I like best, it would be the easiest thing in the world; but, you know, all the other gentlemen would be offended then."

"Which do you like best?" asked Jane.

"Why this one, with the white camellias; it came from Theodore St. Leger; he told me he would send one with white flowers only." Adeline's colour rose a little as she spoke, and as that was not a common occurrence with her, it looked suspicious.

"Did Mr. St. Leger dance with you last night?"

"Why, no, child, he never dances; I didn't see him dance, all the time we were in Boston."

"I thought you liked him," said Jane, with innocent surprise.

"I like him well enough, after a fashion; as well as one can like a man who never dances, and don't talk much. He is very stupid, sometimes, and dresses very badly too."

"Is he handsome?" asked Jane.

"No, he is as ugly as he can be; I really think he looks just a little like that old Mr. Hopkins, his uncle."

"What in the world makes you like him then?"

"I am sure I don't know. But don't fancy I really care about the man. He is going back to Boston next week, and I don't suppose I shall ever see him again; but I thought I would take his bouquet, to−night, because he was so polite to me; and he will be there. Oh, my dear Jane, talking of Boston, I have hit upon an idea!"

"Well, what is it?"

"I saw a girl at a party there−−by−the−bye, it was Theodore St. Leger's sister−−who had her dress trimmed

with natural flowers; that's just the thing for me!" cried Adeline, clapping her hands. The difficulty thus happily removed, the young ladies ran up stairs, to determine more fully upon trimming a certain white crape with the eight bouquets, divided for the purpose. The white one, the offering of Mr. St. Leger, was reserved for the place of honour, in Adeline's hand.

CHAPTER XX.

"Thy young and innocent heart,
How is it beating? Has it no regrets?
Discoverest thou no weakness lurking there?"
ROGERS.

{Samuel Rogers (English poet, 1763−1855), "Italy: The Nun" lines 71−73}

SISTERS' children, though bearing different names, and classed by the world in different families, are generally much more alike than those of brothers; they are apt to have more habits, tastes, and feelings in common. And the reason is evident; it is usually the mother who controls the internal family policy, who gives the colouring to what may be called the family atmosphere. The father may pass a statute once in a while, but the common−law which regulates the every−day proceedings of the little community flows from the mother; and we all know that the character is moulded rather by daily practice in trifles, than by a few isolated actions of greater importance in themselves. The aims and views which people carry with them through life, generally spring up from seeds received in the nursery, or at the family fire−side. Even with men this is the case. The father may inculcate this or that political creed into his son, he may direct his choice to this or that profession; but the manner in which the youth carries out his political principles, the way in which he fills his profession, will depend on the impulses and motives cultivated in childhood, and early youth; for it is then that the character receives its bias. The mother's influence and example are often to be traced in those minute shades of taste and opinion, which are the foundation of our partialities, or our dislikes; and, of course, the daughters of a family, from being more constantly subject to this influence, imbibe a larger share of it. It is immaterial whether the mother be aware of the importance of her duties, of the weight of this responsibility, or not; for good or for evil, the effect will still be felt, though varying, of course, in different circumstances.

Elinor had not seen her cousin, Mary Van Alstyne, her mother's niece, for several years, and she now met her in Philadelphia with great pleasure. Miss Van Alstyne was some five or six years older than herself; this difference in years had, indeed, been the chief reason why they had never yet been very intimate. But the same distance which separates girls of twelve and eighteen, is, of course, less thought of at twenty and six−and−twenty, when both are fairly launched into the world. Mary Van Alstyne and Elinor found much to like in each other on a closer acquaintance; and Miss Wyllys observing that the two cousins suited each other so well, drew them together as much as possible, in order that Elinor might have some one to fill the empty places of her former companions, Jane and Harry.

Mrs. Robert Hazlehurst was a near neighbour of the Wyllyses in Philadelphia; but Elinor had too much dread of meeting Harry, to go there often; and it was only when she knew that he was in New York, that she went to his brother's. The change in their position was too recent to allow of her seeing him with composure; their family connexion, and the intimate terms upon which they had hitherto lived, only made their present estrangement much more awkward than usual. Elinor tried to think it fortunate that he should now be so often in New York.

The first time he was in Philadelphia after the Wyllyses were settled there for the winter, Elinor escaped seeing him. As she came in one morning from a ride with her grandfather, she found his card on the table. It told the whole story of what had passed; for she could not remember his having ever left a card at their house before; he had been as much at home there as herself, until the last six weeks. The sight of it caused her a very painful feeling, and did away all the good effect of the pleasant ride she had just taken on the banks of the Schuylkill. As she walked slowly up−stairs to change her habit, her eyes filled with tears; and had she been endowed with the proper degree of romance for a regular heroine, she would probably have passed the morning in hysterical sobs.

But as she had quite as much good sense, as fancy and feeling, she was by no means romantic; she had never fainted but once in her life; and although it must be confessed she had wept during the last few weeks, yet it was always in spite of herself, at moments when the tears were forced from her by some sudden recollection of the past, or some distressing glimpse of the future. On the present occasion, instead of encouraging solitary grief, she returned to the drawing−room, and read aloud to her aunt, who was busy with her needle.

But Harry's second visit to Philadelphia was not to pass without their meeting. Mr. Wyllys, Miss Agnes, and Elinor were spending the evening at the house of a friend, when, to the surprise and regret of all parties, Hazlehurst walked in with one of the young men of the family, with whom he was intimate. It was the first time they had met since the alarm on the piazza at Wyllys−Roof. Poor Elinor, at the first glance, when the door opened, turned deadly pale, as she always did when agitated. Harry, as he crossed the room to make his bow to the lady of the house, felt excessively uncomfortable; when he turned, not a little embarrassed, towards the rest of the party, he received a slight and cool movement of recognition from Mr. Wyllys, who was standing at a corner of the fire−place. Miss Agnes made an effort to say good evening, in her usual tone; and Harry replied that he was very glad to find they were to be in Philadelphia for the winter, words which were as far from the truth as possible. Elinor would have given much to look and speak as calmly as her aunt; but she could only bow in silence, for at the moment she dared not trust her voice. The lady of the house, who knew very well how to account for a meeting which seemed very ceremonious between near connexions, who had always been so intimate, did her best to make matters go off well; and her son, who was also in the secret, rattled away to Elinor to the best of his ability. But there was a very perceptible touch of cool disapprobation in Mr. Wyllys's manner, and a something that was not quite natural, in the tones of Miss Agnes's voice. Harry felt as if he were doing penance, and he felt, moreover, as if he richly deserved it. But the worst was to come. There was another lady present, a New Yorker, who had lately seen Hazlehurst very often with the Grahams, in his character of Jane's admirer, and she innocently asked him when he was going to return to New York. "In a day or two," he replied. "You will not leave the post vacant very long, I dare say," observed the lady. Harry's answer was not very distinctly heard, and he coloured as much as it is in the power of man to do. The lady happily observed how much he was annoyed, and changed the conversation. Hazlehurst was not in a mood to pay a long visit: he soon rose to take leave. Elinor, in the mean time, made a great effort for self−command. She knew that she was the injured party, and yet she felt superior to all the littleness of resentment−−she acquitted Harry and Jane of all intentional trifling with her feelings. The gentle, quiet dignity of her manner gradually expressed what was passing in her mind. As Harry passed near her, and bowed, collecting all her self−possession, she wished him good−evening, with a calm, sweet voice.

It was now Hazlehurst's turn to be much the most embarrassed of the two; he bowed, and muttered something about calling, in a voice much less clear than her's had been; then fairly giving up the matter in despair, he quitted the ground with another bow. On leaving the house, he walked rapidly down Walnut−Street, very much dissatisfied with himself, and out of humour with his friend, for having brought him into such an awkward scene.

The next day, when Elinor thought over what had passed, she felt relieved that the first meeting, which she had so much dreaded, was over; although she knew it must he a long time before she could see Jane and Harry with perfect composure; she knew there must be other unpleasant moments in store for her. There was no danger but that Elinor would do all in her power to subdue her feelings for Harry, and yet she sometimes reproached herself with having done too little; her interest in him was still too strong. She shrunk sensitively from longer encouraging any weakness for him; it had now become a want of delicacy to do so, it would soon be almost sinful. She knew that if she did not succeed in the endeavour it would be her own fault only; for her whole education had taught her that there was no passion, of whatever nature, too strong to be conquered by reason and religion, when their aid was honestly sought.

Miss Agnes, on the contrary, who knew how unexpectedly, and how deeply, Elinor's feelings had been wounded, was fearful that her adopted child was making too great an effort for self−control; with a girl of her principles and disposition there was danger of this. Elinor, since the first day or two, had sensitively avoided every approach to the subject when conversing with her aunt. Miss Agnes knew that time alone could teach her the lesson of forgetfulness, and she now dreaded some reaction; although admiring Elinor's courage and resolution, she wished her occasionally to give a more natural vent to her feelings. It struck her that the time for one open conversation on the subject had come, and the result proved that her opinion was correct. Elinor threw

off a constraint that was not natural to her character, and which had been kept up from an exaggerated sense of duty. She now spoke with perfect frankness, nothing was concealed; grief, regrets, struggles, all were confided to her aunt, whose sympathy was grateful to her, while the advice given with kindness and good sense, was of real service.

Many young people who knew Miss Wyllys, would have smiled at the idea of her being a good counsellor on such an occasion, for her own life, though useful and happy, had been quite uneventful. The death of her mother, and the marriage of her brothers and sister, had left her, when still a young and pretty woman, the only companion and solace of her father. These duties were soon increased by the charge of her orphan niece, and her time and attention had since then seemed engrossed by these cares and pleasures. Miss Wyllys was actually never known to have had a regular suitor. Whether she might not have had her share of declared admirers had she chosen to be encouraging, we cannot say; it is a subject upon which we have no authorities.

Of course Miss Agnes could not be expected to know anything about love, beyond what she had learned from books, or from observation. She was, nevertheless, a much better adviser than many a younger and more experienced friend. Where the head and the heart are both in the right place, instinct soon teaches us how to sympathize with our fellows in all troubles that really belong to our nature.

It appeared to Elinor as if, in future, there would be an additional tie between her aunt and herself; for she looked forward to leading a single life, hoping to pass her days like Miss Agnes, in that sphere of contented usefulness which seemed allotted to her.

When Elinor had returned to her own room, after the conversation to which we have alluded, she went to a writing−desk, and drew from it a letter. It was the same she had received on her seventeenth birth−day. It was from her mother. During the lingering illness which caused her death, Mrs. Wyllys, deeply anxious for the welfare of her orphan daughter, had written several of these letters, adapted to her child's capacity at different ages, and placed them in the hands of Miss Agnes, with the request they might be given to Elinor at the dates marked on the envelope of each. They had proved a precious legacy for the young girl, and a guide to Miss Agnes in her education; for the aunt had never forgotten that she was the mother's representative only; Elinor having always been taught to give the first place to her parent's memory. It seemed, indeed, as if her mother's spirit had never ceased to linger near her, exerting its silent influence. The letter to which Elinor attached so high a value is given below.

"Wyllys−Roof, August 13th, 18−−.

"MY OWN BELOVED CHILD,

"You will not receive this letter until you have reached the age of womanhood, years after your mother has been laid in her grave.

"To separate from you, my darling child, has cost your mother a bitter pang. There is no severer trial of faith to a Christian woman, than to leave her little ones behind her, in a world exposed to evil and sorrow; and yet, although so near death myself, it is my wish that you may live, dearest, to taste all that is good in life. Few mothers are blessed in death, as I am, with the power of leaving their orphans to such kind and judicious guardians as your grandfather and aunt; should they be spared, you will scarcely feel the loss of your parents. Oh, how fervent is my prayer that they may live to guard, to cherish you! And when the task they have so piously assumed is fully completed, may they long enjoy the fruits of their cares!

"It is with singular feelings that I write to you as a woman, my child, and appeal to thoughts and sentiments, of which you are at this moment so utterly unconscious; sitting, as you now are, at my feet, amid your playthings, too busy with a doll, to notice the tears that fall upon these last lines I shall ever have it in my power to address to you. But the hope that this letter may, one day, long after I have left you, be a tie between us, my Elinor, is grateful to your mother's heart, and urges me to continue my task. I have a double object in writing these letters; I wish to be remembered by you, dear, and I wish to serve you.

"During the last few months, since my health has failed, and since you, my child, have been the chief object of interest to me in this world, I have often endeavoured to pass over in my mind, the next dozen years, that I might fancy my child, what I trust she will then be, qualified in every essential point to act for herself, in the position to which she belongs. I trust that when this, my last letter, is placed in your hands, you will already have learned to feel and acknowledge the important truths that I have endeavoured to impress on you, in those you have previously received. You are already convinced, I trust, that without a religious foundation, any superstructure

whatever must be comparatively worthless. I should he miserable, indeed, at this moment, if I could not hope that sincere, single−hearted piety will be the chief influence of your life; without it, you could never know true happiness, or even peace. Rest assured, my child, that while it sweetens every blessing, it soothes under every evil. Many have given the same testimony when they stood, like your mother, within the shadow of death. I have every reason, my beloved daughter, to hope that under the guidance of an humble, sincere Christian, like your aunt, you also will arrive at the same blessed conviction; I know that so long as she lives, her example, her prayers, her vigilance will never be wanting. I have every reason to believe that you will be led to seek that which is never earnestly sought in vain.

"I must be brief, dear child, lest my strength should fail. From the many thoughts that crowd upon me, I can only select a few, which my own experience has taught me to value as important. In the first place, let me warn you never to forget the difference between Christian education, and all others. Remember that Christian education has for its foundation the heart−felt conviction of the weakness of human nature; for a being bearing the name of a Christian to lose sight of this truth, is the grossest of all inconsistencies. The great and the learned among those who are merely philosophers, preach, as though to know what is good, and to practise it, were equally easy to mankind. But the Christian alone knows that he must look beyond himself for guidance, and for support. He knows only too well, that there are times when the practice of some plain and evident duty, costs his feeble nature a severe struggle−−in no instance will he dare trust his own strength alone. He knows that even in those cases where duly is also a pleasure, he must still be watchful and humble, lest he fall. One would think this truth so obvious, from daily observation, as to be undeniable; but it is now the fashion to laud human nature, to paint flattering pictures only. Humility is thought debasing; but Truth alone is honourable, and Humility is Truth. You will find the actions of those who acknowledge this truth, more honourable to the human race, than the deeds of those who deny it. The true dignity of human nature consists, not in shutting our eyes to the evil, but in restraining it; which, with our Maker's help, we may all do, for the blessing of our Creator is still within our reach, still vouchsafed to the humble Christian. If such be your views, my daughter, you will be prepared to find difficulties in acquiring and practising those virtues which it is the duty of life to cultivate; you will be prepared to meet those difficulties with the sincere humility of a Christian, and with Christian exertion.

"My child, love the Truth, and the Truth only.

"Cultivate daily a pious, thankful, humble disposition.

"Love those near you heartily; live for them as well as for yourself.

"Eschew all envy, and petty jealousies, and rivalries; there is perhaps no other evil that so often poisons our daily blessings.

"Cultivate your judgment. Never forget the difference between things of importance and trifles; yet remember that trifles have also their value. Never lose sight of the difference between form and spirit; yet remember that in this material world, the two should seldom be put asunder. The true substance will naturally have its shadow also.

"Cultivate a sweet, frank, cheerful temper, for your own sake, and for the sake of those you love.

"Cultivate your abilities in every way that comes naturally within your reach; it is seldom worth while for a woman to do more than this. In all you learn, aim at giving pleasure to others, aim at being useful to them, as well as at improving your own faculties.

"Enjoy thankfully all the blessings of life; and they are innumerable.

"There is one subject, of some importance to you individually, my child, which I have not yet alluded to in either of my letters; I have purposely deferred it until you will be better fitted to understand me. You will have one personal evil to contend against, my dear Elinor; your face will be plain, your features will be homely, darling. It is a weakness, my child, and yet I regret you should suffer from this disadvantage; rest assured, that in every little mortification to which you may be exposed, your mother, had she lived, would have felt with you. I trust that this will be the first time your attention will be seriously fixed upon the subject, and that as a child you will scarcely have thought upon it. Let us then, dear, look upon the matter together for a moment, calmly and steadily; we will not blind ourselves to the advantages of beauty, neither will we exaggerate the evils of a want of it. You will soon discover, from your own observation, that beauty in women, as in children, is delightful in itself; it throws a charm over the words and actions of the favoured person. In a worldly sense it is also a woman's power; where other qualifications are equal, you may often observe that beauty alone confers a striking superiority. In some respects its advantages are even greater than are usually allowed, in others again they are far

less. Were we to judge by the space it fills in general observation, and in conversation, we should believe it the one all−important qualification in women, that nothing else can be compared with it. But to adopt this opinion would be grossly to exaggerate its importance. Nor can we believe, on the other hand, what some prudent writers for the young have affirmed, that the superiority of beauty is only momentary; that the eyes tire of a beautiful face which they see daily, that in all cases it vanishes with early youth. No, my child, I do not wish you to believe this, for I cannot believe it myself. For years, the beauty of my sister Elizabeth has been a daily source of pleasure to me, and I doubt not to others also. My aunt, Mrs. Graham, though past fifty, is still a handsome woman, and her appearance must be pleasing to every one who meets her; while, on the contrary, people still amuse themselves at the expense of Miss Townley, whose face is strikingly plain. Hundreds of examples might be cited to prove that the charm of beauty does not generally vanish so soon, that one does not tire of it so easily. And then if a woman lose her beauty entirely, still the reputation of having once possessed it, gives her a sort of advantage in the eyes of the world. If mere notoriety be an advantage, and in the opinion of the worldly it is so, the superiority of beauty over ugliness lasts longer than life; many women are remembered, who had nothing but beauty to recommend them to the notice of posterity. But observe, my child, that if these advantages are evident, they are chiefly of a worldly nature. A beautiful woman may receive general admiration, and that homage which gratifies vanity, but she must depend on other qualities if she wish to be respected, if she wish to be loved through life. I hope, my child, you will always be superior to that miserable vanity which thirsts for common admiration, which is flattered by every offering, however low, however trivial. I trust that the mere applause of the world will have no influence upon your heart or your understanding. Remember what it is that we call the world−−it is a ground governed by a compromise between the weaknesses of the good among us, and the virtues of the bad; the largest portion of vanity and folly−−sometimes even vice−−mingled with the least portion of purity and wisdom that a community bearing a Christian name will tolerate. You, I trust, will learn to seek a higher standard.

"If borne in a right spirit, my dear Elinor, the very want of beauty, or of any other earthly good, may be the means of giving you the benefit of far higher blessings. If it make you more free from vanity, from selfishness, it will make you far happier, even in daily life. It may dispose you to enjoy more thankfully those blessings actually in your possession, and to make a better use of them.

"Under this and every other disadvantage, my child, remember two things: to give the evil its just importance only, and to make a right use of it.

"I trust that your temper will be such, that you will not for a moment feel any inclination to repine that others should enjoy a blessing denied to you, my love. Refrain even from wishing for that which Providence has withheld; if you have a right faith, you will be cheerful and contented; if you are really humble, you will be truly thankful.

"Do all in your power, my Elinor, towards making your home, wherever it may be, a happy one; it is our natural shelter from the world. If in public you meet with indifference and neglect, you can surely preserve the respect of those who know you; and the affection of your friends may always be gained by those quiet, simple virtues, within the reach of every one.

"In one way, my dearest child, the want of beauty may affect your whole career in life−−it will very probably be the cause of your remaining single. If I thought you would be united to a husband worthy of your respect and affection, I should wish you to marry; for such has been my own lot in life−−I have been happy as a wife and a mother. But I am well aware that this wish may be a weakness; the blessings of Providence are not reserved for this or that particular sphere. The duties and sorrows of married life are often the heaviest that our nature knows. Other cares and other pleasures may be reserved for you, my child. In every civilized Christian community there have always been numbers of single women; and where they have been properly educated, as a class they have been respectable−−never more so than at the present day. They often discharge many of the most amiable and praiseworthy duties of life. Understand me, my child; I do not wish to urge your remaining single; that is a point which every woman must decide for herself, when arrived at years of discretion; but I would have you view a single life with sufficient favour to follow it cheerfully, rather than to sacrifice yourself by becoming the wife of a man whom you cannot sincerely respect. Enter life prepared to follow, with unwavering faith in Providence, and with thankfulness, whichever course may be allotted to you. If you remain single, remember that your peace is more in your own hands than if married−−much more will depend solely on the views and dispositions you encourage. As appearance has generally so much influence over men, and marriage is therefore a less probable

event to you than to others, my love, let your mother caution you to watch your feelings with double care; be slow to believe any man attached to you, unless you have the strongest proof of it.

"Whatever be your position, never lose sight, even on trifling occasions, of common sense, and good−feeling. Remember, in any case, to guard carefully against the peculiar temptations of your lot, to bear patiently its evils, and to enjoy thankfully its peculiar blessings.

"There are many things that I should still wish to say to you, my beloved daughter; and yet I know that the cautions I give may be unnecessary, while other evils, which I have never feared, may befall you. My inability to guide you as I wish, my darling child, directs us both to a higher source of wisdom and love. Let us both, at all times, implicitly place our trust where it can never fail, though blessings be not bestowed in the way we fond creatures would choose."

[Here followed a sentence, in words too solemn to be transferred to pages as light as these.]

"Love your aunt, your second mother, truly and gratefully. She has already bestowed on you many proofs of kindness, and she has always been a faithful friend to your father, and to your mother. Love the memory of your parents, my child; think of us sometimes−−think of your father−−think of your mother. Honour their memory by a recollection of their instructions, by a well−spent life. Since your birth, my child, I have scarcely had a hope or a fear, unconnected with you; if I were to ask to live, it would be only for your sake, my darling daughter.

"Your mother's tenderest blessing rests upon you, my beloved Elinor, through life!

"MARY RADCLIFFE WYLLYS"

This letter had been often read and studied by Elinor, with the gratitude and respect it deserved, as a legacy from her mother; but lately she had been disposed to enter more fully into the feelings by which it had been dictated. Every word which applied to her present situation, sunk deeply into her heart.

CHAPTER XXI.

"Merrily, merrily dance the bells;
Swiftly glides the sleigh!"
Newspaper Verses.

EARLY in December, a new glazed card was to be seen on most of the fashionable tables in New York. It was of the particular tint most in favour that season, whether bluish or pinkish we dare not affirm, for fear of committing a serious anachronism, which might at once destroy, with many persons, all claim to a knowledge of the arcana of fashionable life. Having no authorities at hand to consult, the point must be left to the greater research of the critical reader. This card bore the name of T. TALLMAN TAYLOR; but whether in Roman or Italic characters we dare not say, for the same reason which has just been frankly confessed. It was, however, a highly fashionable bit of pasteboard, as became the representative of a personage who returned to New York, claiming the honours of fashion himself. This was no less a person than the Son of Mr. Pompey Taylor. But the T. Tallman Taylor, whose whole appearance was pronounced unexceptionable by the New York belles, from the points of his boots to the cut of his moustaches, was a very different individual from the good−looking, but awkward, ungainly youth, introduced to the reader two or three years since, at Wyllys−Roof. He had, in the mean time, learned how to stand, how to sit, how to walk, how to talk in a drawing−room. He had learned what to do with his cane and his hat, how to manage his pocket−handkerchief and his gloves; branches of knowledge which an American who sets about acquiring them, usually learns quite rapidly. He was also very much improved in riding and dancing, and was said to fence well. These, with the addition of a much better French accent, were the principal changes perceptible to the ladies, who pronounced them all for the better. Among the young men he was soon found to be an excellent judge of Chateau Margaux and Rudesheimer; some also thought him knowing in horse−flesh, while others doubted his qualifications in that respect. His father, moreover, soon discovered that he had become an adept in the art of spending money; among his intimates, cards, and the billiard−table, with other practices of that description, were hinted at, as the way in which he got rid of his dollars. But as these were subjects not mentioned in general society, it was as yet the initiated only, who were aware of young Taylor's Paris habits of this kind.

{"Chateau Margaux and Rudesheimer" = two famous wines}

His father had, of late years, learned to set too high a value upon the world, and everything worldly, not to be much gratified by the change that had taken place in his son. As for Adeline, she gloried in his six−feet and his black moustaches, his Paris waistcoat and London boots; while his honest−hearted mother would have loved him just as much under any other metamorphosis he had chosen to assume. Such as he was, young Taylor soon became quite a favourite beau with the New Yorkers, and was invited to most houses. He proved himself quite a ladies' man; no lazy, grumbling dandy, but a smiling, assiduous beau. He had not been in New York a month, before he was known to have sent a number of bouquets to different belles, and was supposed to have given more than one serenade to his sister's friend, Miss Hunter.

The last day of December, all New York was set in motion by a fall of snow, sufficient to allow of pretty good sleighing for four−and−twenty hours. Like such occasions in general, it became a sort of holiday. And really, the novelty, the general movement, the bustle and gaiety, the eagerness to enjoy the pleasure while it lasts, always render such scenes very enlivening. Every vehicle with runners, and every animal bearing the name of a horse, are put in requisition for the day. The dashing sleighs crowded with gaily dressed people, the smiling faces and flying feathers of the ladies, the rich cloths and furs, the bright colours of the equipages, and the inspiriting music of the merry bells, give to Broadway, at such times, quite a carnival look. The clear, bracing air disposes people to be cheerful; even the horses feel the spirit of the moment; they prance their heads proudly, and shake the bells about

their necks, as if delighted with the ease and rapidity of their motion; sympathizing foot−passengers stop to give their friends a nod, and follow their rapid course with good−natured smiles. Young people and children are collected for a frolic, and family parties hurry off to drink coffee and mulled wine, to eat plum−cake and waffles at the neighbouring country−houses. It is altogether a gay, cheerful sight, enjoyed with all the more zest from its uncertainty.

Hazlehurst was delighted, as he went to his window, the morning in question, to find the roofs and pavements covered with snow. For several years he had had no sleighing, and he promised himself a very pleasant day. Mrs. Stanley was going to remain quietly at home. He sent to a livery−stable to secure a good horse and a pretty cutter for himself and immediately after breakfast hurried off to Mrs. Graham's lodgings, with the hope of obtaining Jane as a companion. "And who knows," thought he, "what may happen before evening."

He had just reached Mrs. Graham's door, when a very dashing sleigh, drawn by four fine horses, drew up from the opposite direction. Young Taylor was in the coachman's seat; Miss Hunter, Adeline, and a quiet−looking young man, whom we shall introduce as Theodore St. Leger, were in the sleigh. Miss Adeline threw off her over−cloak, and as she gave her hand to Mr. St. Leger, to jump from the sleigh, called out to Harry in her usual shrill voice, {sic}

"Good morning, Mr. Hazlehurst, you are exact at the rendez−vous, for of course you got my note. But you ought to have brought a lady with you; you mustn't run away with Jane; she is to be of our party in the sleigh, do you hear?" continued the young lady, trying hard to look pretty and positive, at the same time. "I hope you didn't mean to ask her to go with you."

"Yes, I did," replied Harry, rather stoutly. "Miss Graham told me the other day, she quite longed for sleighing, and made something very like a promise to go with me if we had any snow."

"Oh, but not to−day; I must have her in the sleigh with me! Now, Jane, dear," continued the young lady, tripping into the drawing−room followed by her brother and Harry, "put on your hat at once, that's a good girl; we wouldn't miss having you for the world."

Harry had often been provoked with Adeline's constant appropriation of Jane to herself, when they were together; and he determined, if he could prevent it, she should not succeed this time.

"Miss Taylor is very decided," he said, "but so am I. And I think you must remember you were pledged to me for the first sleighing, if we were so fortunate as to have any."

"It's no such thing, I'm sure;−−is it, Jane?"

"Pray, remember we are two to one, Miss Graham," said young Taylor, on the other side, in an insinuating voice.

"But we can all go together," said Jane, blushing, and scarcely knowing what to do.

"If Mrs. Graham were here," added Harry, "I think she would certainly trust you with me. I have a very good horse, one that I have driven all along, and he is perfectly safe."

"So are ours, all four of them," said Adeline; "and I'm sure there must be more safety with four safe horses, than with one!"

"Perfectly safe, Miss Graham, I assure you," added young Taylor. "Of course I should not press you unless I felt sure you would run no risk."

"Pshaw!" said Adeline. "Why should we stand here, talking about the risk and danger, like so many old grey−beards. Put on your hat, dear, that's a darling, without any more palaver. Anne Hunter and Mr. St. Leger are waiting for us at the door; you know we are going to Bloomingdale, to lunch, at Mrs. Hunter's. We shall have a charming time; and Mr. Hazlehurst is going with us too. Of course you got my note," she added, turning to Harry.

{"Bloomingdale" = a fashionable and still rural area of Manhattan Island, though a part of New York City} "No, I did not; but I should have been obliged to decline your invitation, Miss Taylor," said Hazlehurst, bowing a little stiffly. "I have made arrangements for going on Long Island."

"Oh, that's a pity; I am really sorry, for I wanted you to be of our party; only I couldn't have you run away with my friend Jane. Silence gives consent, Jane. You didn't answer my note, this morning."

"Perhaps I had better not go at all," said Jane, not a little perplexed. "Mamma is not at home, and will not know what has become of me."

"Nonsense, child; Mrs. Graham will know you are in very good hands. You have been out with me a hundred times before, and you surely don't think there is any more danger because Tallman is of the party."

"I hope not," added young Taylor, in an insinuating manner; "I'm a first−rate whip, Miss Graham."

"Now, just tell the truth; didn't you mean to go with me, before Mr. Hazlehurst came in?" said Adeline−−"no fibbing, mind."

"I only received your note ten minutes since," replied Jane; "but I did think of going with you."

"I should like to know why you hesitate, then. First come, first served. Now, the best thing you can do, Mr. Hazlehurst, is to change your mind, and ask one of the Miss Howards, and join our party, too. I really wish you would!"

"You are very good," said Harry, coldly; "but I must beg you to excuse me."

Jane allowed herself to be shawled and cloaked by young Taylor, and the affair was settled. But Harry thought she did not seem quite satisfied with herself, for she changed colour several times, and he even remarked that her fingers trembled as she tied the strings of her hat. This rather softened his feelings towards her; but he still felt extremely provoked with the meddling Adeline, and her officious brother. As he did not wish to play the worsted man, however, he tried to put a good face on the matter, and accompanied the party down−stairs, helped the ladies into the sleigh, wished them a pleasant drive, and went off himself, at a rapid pace, towards the Long−Island ferry.

He was exceedingly out of humour with Adeline, and reproached Jane not a little for allowing herself to be so often guided by her trifling friend. The occurrence of the morning, hastened his determination to bring matters to a conclusion. That very evening should decide the point. He must have been more than modest to have doubted the result; Jane's manner he had long thought just what he could wish from one so little demonstrative as herself. Hubert de Vaux, it is true, had been very assiduous of late, but Jane had never given him any sign of preference, sufficient to excite Harry's jealousy. Mr. Graham was expected every day from Charleston, to pass the remainder of the winter with his family; as he had already given one daughter to the elder Hazlehurst, and no serious objection could be raised against Harry, his prospects were very promising. Before long, the gentle, lovely Jane would be his own; his would be the enviable lot, of carrying off the beautiful prize.

Hazlehurst had time to make these reflections, and disperse his ill−humour, before he reached the wharf at Brooklyn. Here he met Charlie Hubbard, whom he had not seen for some time, not, indeed, since his rupture with the Wyllyses. Charlie's greeting was not quite as warm as usual; he did not seem as much pleased at this unexpected meeting, and the offer of a seat in Harry's cutter, as one might have supposed. Hazlehurst was so cordial, however, and urged the young painter so much to take a turn with him on the Island, that, after a little hesitation, Hubbard accepted.

"Come, Charlie; I am sure you haven't any very good reason for not making the most of the snow, like the rest of us."

"Perhaps not," said Charlie; and he took his seat with Harry.

Hubbard gave a good account of himself and his family. He had received several orders; and his pet picture of the moment was going on finely. His youngest sister was in town, taking music lessons, to fit her for her future occupation; and he had just sent Miss Patsey a pair of globes for her school, as a New Year's gift; the most expensive present, by−the−bye, Charlie had ever made in his life.

"I feel quite rich," said the young man, "since I pocketed a hundred a−piece for my two views of Nahant. To be sure, I never expect to make a fortune; if I can earn enough to support my mother and sister, and paint only such pictures as I please, that is all I want of the good things of this world."

"It's all very well to say so now, Charlie, that you have received your two hundred; but wait till you are the great Mr. Hubbard, and expect two thousand for your last view of Coney−Island."

"That day will never come, to me, or to any other man, perhaps, in this country," replied young Hubbard. "I go to work with my eyes open, as you well know. My uncles have talked the matter over with me a hundred times, if they have once; they have showed me what I could do if I took to making money, and what I could not do if I took to painting. They have offered to help me on; Mr. Taylor would take me into his counting−house, to−morrow; and Hilson offers to make me an auctioneer. But I have chosen my profession, and I shall abide by it. I have no wish for wealth. I should never be tempted to sell my soul for money−−no, nor my good name, or my independence: for I do not feel willing to barter even my time and tastes for riches. I can honestly say, money has no charms for me. A comfortable subsistence, in a very moderate way, is all I should ask for."

"I know it, Hubbard, and I honour your decision," said Hazlehurst, warmly. "It is impossible, however, but

that genius like yours should make its way; and I hope you may meet with all the success you deserve, even though it bring you more money than you wish for: one of these days when there is a Mrs. Hubbard, you may want more than you require now."

A shade of feeling passed over the young artist's fine face, as Harry carelessly uttered these words; it seemed to spring from some painful thought. It was unobserved by Hazlehurst, however, who was not looking at his companion at the moment. Charlie was soon roused by Harry's inquiries as to his plans for travelling in Europe. The young men then spent a pleasant hour in discussing different works of the great masters, which Hubbard, as yet, knew only from engravings and books. Surrounded by snow and ice, they talked over the atmospheres of Italy and Greece.

CHAPTER XXII.

"Happy New−Year!"

THE streets had been cleared of the snow for New−Year's day, by a thaw, and a hard shower in the night. The sun rose bright and clear; and, as usual, early in the morning, that is to say morning in its fashionable sense, the greater part of the male population of the town were in motion, hurrying in all directions towards the houses of their female friends and relatives. It appeared as if the women had suddenly deserted the city, and the men were running about, half−distracted, in pursuit of them. After the markets and churches were closed, few indeed were the females to be seen in the streets; while, on the contrary, troops of men of all ages, were hurrying over the side−walks of Broadway, usually enlivened by the gay dresses and bright faces of the ladies. There were young men running a race against time, carrying lists in their hands with an impossible number of visits to be paid during the day; there were boys taking their first steps in this yearly course of gallantry; there were elderly men walking more leisurely from one favoured house to another. All, but a few grumblers here and there, looked smiling and good−humoured. As the black−coated troop hastened hither and thither, they jostled one another, now nodding, now shaking hands; here, old friends passing without seeing each other; there, a couple of strangers salute one another in the warmest manner. The doors of the houses seemed to open of themselves; men were going in, men were coming out. The negroes looked more lustrous and light−hearted than ever; the Paddies, cleaner and more bothered; the regular Knickerbockers, to the manner born, were, of course, in their element.

{"visits" = for men to make short calls at as many homes as possible on New Year's Day was an old New York City custom; "Paddies" = Irish; "Knickerbockers" = traditional term for native New Yorkers}

We have heard nice calculations as to the precise number of calls, that an able−bodied, well−trained New−Year's visiter can accomplish between midnight and midnight; allowing, of course, a couple of hours for the toilette, and a moment to snatch a mouthful at breakfast and dinner: it is affirmed, however, that as great generals have passed days of battle without food, so your chivalrous Knickerbocker should be willing to forego, on such an occasion, even a sight of the roast turkey and cranberries. Allowing the individual, however, something to sustain nature, that he may be the better enabled to perform his duties, it is supposed that a beau, in good visiting condition, should pay his court in not more than three hundred, nor less than fifty drawing−rooms. But, then, to do this, a man must have method; he must draw up his plan of action before−hand; he must portion out his districts, as they lie on each side of that longest of streets, Broadway; he must not only study the map of the city closely, but he must possess an accurate knowledge of the localities; he must remember that some houses have stoops of twelve steps, that some drawing−rooms are not on the first floor. He must NOT allow himself to be enticed into any flirtation whatever, beyond a glance or a smile; he must NOT indulge the hope of calling twice upon the sweet creature he most admires; he must NOT be tempted to sink, even for a moment, upon the most comfortable of ottomans or divans; he must NOT return home to re−adjust his locks, to change either boots, gloves, or handkerchief. We have heard it asserted, that owing to some unfortunate weakness of this kind, many a promising youth, unaccustomed, probably, to the hardships of such visiting, has been distanced in the gallant race of the day, by more methodical men−−by men who were actually encumbered with over−shoes and greatcoats!

It is amusing to watch the hurried steps of some experienced visiter without doors; the decision of his movements, the correctness of his calculation in passing out of one house into another; and one is sure to know a raw recruit, by his anxious, perplexed manner and expression.

The scene within doors is quite as amusing as it is without. Everything wears a holiday look; it is evidently no common morning reception; the ladies' dresses look gayer and fresher, their smiles brighter than usual; the house, the furniture, and the inmates, all wear their most agreeable aspect. The salver of refreshments speaks at once the occasion; for there, in the midst of richer cakes, stands the basket of homely "New−Years' cookies," bequeathed to their descendants by the worthy vrows of New−Amsterdam. The visiters appear, first singly, then in parties. Here comes a favourite partner of the young ladies, there a mere bowing acquaintance of the master of the house. This is an old family friend, that a neighbour who has never been in the house before; here is a near relative, there a passing stranger. The grey−haired old gentleman who has the arm−chair wheeled out for him, announces his fiftieth visiting anniversary; the buckish youth, his grandson, has already made his bow, and off again; so {sic}

finish his gallant duties. Now we have a five minutes visit from a declared lover; and who follows him? One who advances slowly and steadily, with a half−inquiring look; the lady of the house sees him, gives a glance of surprise, is gratified, accepts the offered hand immediately. That is a reconciliation; old friendship broken off, now renewed, a misunderstanding forgotten−−that is one of the pleasantest visits of the day. All come, bow, look, and speak their friendly good−wishes, and are off again to make room for others.

{"New Years' cookies" = the Dutch in New York had special recipes for cakes and "cookies" for each major holiday, such as New Year's Day; vrows" = wives, in old Dutch New York}

Long may this pleasant, cheerful, good−natured, lively custom be perpetuated among us! As long as the side−walks of Manhattan and the canals of Amsterdam last, so long may Santa Claus bring his Christmas gifts to the little folk; and so long may the gallant Knickerbockers pay to their female friends the homage of a PERSONAL visit at New−Year's. Cards on every other day in the year, if necessary; but, on New Year's, carry your good wishes in person. Should not, indeed, a custom so pleasant spread throughout the whole country, like crackers, waffles, Dutch blood, and many other good things brought originally from Holland?

On the particular New−Year's day at which we have arrived in our narrative, an individual of the reader's acquaintance, instead of joining the busy throng of visiters, was seen turning his steps through a bye−street, towards the Battery. He walked slowly through Greenwich−Street, apparently busy with thoughts of his own, and entering the Battery−Gate he continued for some time pacing the paved walk near the water.

"There is a fellow who seems to have nothing to do to−day," said a young man to his companion, as they were hurrying across the Battery from one end of State−Street to the other. "I should like to hire him as proxy, to show himself in a score or two of houses in my place. I should hand him over half my list at once, if I thought the ladies would submit to the exchange; he looks like a presentable chap, too."

"Why, it is actually Harry Hazlehurst! What can he be doing, moping about in that fashion?"

"Hazlehurst, is it? Oh, ho!−−you have heard the hubbub they have had at the Graham's, I suppose?"

"Not I−−What is it?"

"There was quite a scene there, yesterday; my sister had the news from Adeline Taylor, a great friend of her's; so it comes very straight."

"I thought all was going on there as smoothly as possible. I expected an invitation to the wedding before long."

"To be sure; so did everybody. But it seems the beauty has ideas of her own. In the first place she refused Hazlehurst, rather to the astonishment of himself and all his friends, I believe."

"Refused Hazlehurst!−−You don't say so!"

"And that is only half the story. She took the same opportunity, while weeping and trembling, to confide to her mamma that her heart had been for some time, how long I cannot tell you precisely, the property of Tall. Taylor."

"What, Tallman Taylor? That is news, indeed−−I never should have dreamt of such a thing."

"Miss Adeline Taylor is the authority. It seems the affair has been going on, no one knows how long, and Miss Taylor has had the management of it. These girls are sly minxes; they are not to be trusted, half of them."

"And what says Taylor to all this?"

"What does he say? Why he is in a sort of ecstasy of despair, I suppose; for the Grahams won't hear of the match. It was no news to him; they have been engaged, I tell you, for months,"

At that moment the two young men entered the door of a house in State−Street. Although their story was, upon the whole, correct; yet, we happen to be still better informed on the subject, and shall proceed to account, in our own way, for Hazlehurst's solitary walk.

When Miss Adeline and her party had returned from sleighing, Harry went to Mrs. Graham's, and finding Jane alone, he immediately seized the moment to explain himself, beginning by a lover−like remonstrance upon her having joined the Taylors, instead of going with him as she had already promised to do. Jane was excessively embarrassed. As Harry proceeded, she became more and more agitated. Her manner was so confused, that it was some time before Hazlehurst could understand that she wished to refuse him. Had she not actually wept, and looked frightened and distressed, he might have given a very different interpretation to her embarrassment. At length, in answer to a decided question of his, she confessed her attachment to another person; and, never was lover more surprised by such an acknowledgement. Pained, and mortified, and astonished as Harry was, the name

of "Hubert de Vaux!" passed his lips before he was aware he had spoken.

"Oh, no; no;" said Jane. "I never cared at all for Mr. de Vaux."

Harry's astonishment increased. He could scarcely believe that he had heard her correctly. To whom could she possibly be attached?

"Oh, I wish I had some one here to advise me! Adeline may say what she pleases, I cannot conceal it any longer."

Harry listened in amazement.

"Is it possible," he said, at length, "that there is some difficulty, some embarrassment, that prevents your acting as you would wish? My dear Jane, confide in me. You cannot doubt that I love you, that I have long loved you;" and Harry then ran over a variation of his first declaration. But Jane's trouble seemed only to increase.

"Oh, stop, Harry; don't talk in that way," she said; "I ought to have told you before. I wished to tell you when you first came on to New York, but Adeline said we should risk everything by it."

"What can you possibly risk? What is it you wish to tell me?"

"I was very sorry when you broke with Elinor−−I never can have any other feeling for you than I have always had: I have been for some time, almost−−−−−engaged−−to−−to−−Mr. Taylor−−"

"You−−−−−engaged to Mr. Taylor!"

"No−−−−−not engaged−−−−−only I have not refused him−−We know father and mother dislike Mr. Taylor's family so much−−"

It was but natural that Harry should feel indignant at having been deceived by the under−current of plotting that had been going on; that he should feel mortified, ashamed of himself, and disappointed, at the same time; vexed with Jane, and almost furious against the meddling, officious Adeline, and her presuming brother. From a long acquaintance with Jane's character, it flashed upon his mind in a moment, that she must have been misguided, and gradually led on by others. But the mischief was done; it was evident that at present, at least, she cared no more for him than she had always done; while, on the contrary, young Taylor had insinuated himself into her affections. He could not endure to think, that while Jane was indifferent to himself, his successful rival should be one whom he so much disliked. Yet, such was the fact. It was infatuation on the part of Jane, no doubt; and yet how often these deceptions have all the bad effects of realities! He had been silent for some minutes, while the tears were streaming freely from Jane's beautiful eyes.

"Oh, if I had not been so afraid that father would never give his consent, I should not have waited so long. If I only knew what to do now?"

Harry came to a magnanimous resolution. "I forgive you, Jane," he said, "the pain you have caused, since I cannot but think that it is not the fruit of your own suggestions. You could not deliberately have trifled with me in this way; I owe it, no doubt, to the goodness of Miss Taylor," he added, bitterly. Jane made no answer, but continued to weep. Harry felt some compassion for her, in spite of her unjustifiable conduct towards himself. In the course of half an hour, she had fallen very much in his estimation; but he determined to return good for evil, by urging her to take the only step now in her power−−the only one proper under the circumstances. He begged her, as she valued her future peace, to reveal everything to her mother; and to be guided in future by Mrs. Graham. But Jane seemed terrified at the idea.

"Oh," said she, "father will be so angry! And we expect him every day: Mother, too, I know, will think I have behaved very badly to you."

It is probable she might not have had the courage to follow his advice, had not Mrs. Graham accidentally entered the room at the moment. Her attention was immediately attracted to the unusual expression of Harry's face, and the tearful, woe−begone look of her daughter, which she could in no way account for. Harry, merely answering her inquiries by a bow, arose and left the room, leaving the mother and daughter together.

Poor Mrs. Graham was little aware of what awaited her. She could not be called a woman of very high principles, but she had more feeling, and, of course, more experience than Jane. When she discovered the true state of things, she was very much shocked. She had never had the least idea of what had been going on around her; far from it, indeed, she had never for a moment doubted that, before long, her daughter would become the wife of young Hazlehurst.

Little by little she gathered the whole truth from the weeping Jane. It appeared that the two or three meetings which had taken place between Jane and young Taylor, just before he sailed, had been sufficient for him to fancy

himself in love with her. He made a confidante of his sister Adeline, who, as one of the older class in her boarding−school, considered all love−affairs as belonging to her prerogative. Her friend, Miss Hunter, was a regular graduate of the Court of Love, according to the code−−not of Toulouse−−but of a certain class of school−girls in New−York. This young lady had gone through the proper training from her cradle, having been teased and plagued about beaux and lovers, before she could walk alone. She had had several love−affairs of her own before she was fifteen. "All for love," was her motto; and it was a love which included general flirtation as the spice of unmarried life, and matrimony with any individual whatever, possessing a three−story house in Broadway, as the one great object of existence. Adeline had, of course, profited by such companionship; and, at the time her brother confessed himself in love with Miss Graham, after having met once on board a steamboat, and once at an evening party, she was fully equal to take the management of the whole affair into her own hands. It is true, young Taylor had entered into a boyish engagement at college; but that was thought no obstacle whatever. She delighted in passing her brother's compliments over to Jane; in reporting to him her friend's blushes and smiles. With this state of things, young Taylor sailed for Europe; but Adeline gloried too much in her capacity of confidante, to allow the matter to drop: not a letter was written but contained some allusion to the important subject. In the course of the year she had talked Jane into quite a favourable state of feeling towards her brother; he would probably himself have forgotten the affair, had not Miss Graham arrived in Paris at the moment she did.

They saw each other, of course, and the feelings which Adeline had been encouraging during the last year, and which otherwise would have amounted to nothing at all, now took a serious turn. Young Taylor was very handsome, and astonishingly improved in appearance and manners. Jane, herself, was in the height of her beauty, and the young man had soon fallen really in love with her. Unfortunately, just at the moment that he became attentive to her, Mrs. Robert Hazlehurst, who was confined to the house that winter, had confided Jane to the care of Mrs. Howard, the lady who had brought her from America. Young Taylor soon found out that he was rather disliked by Mr. and Mrs. Hazlehurst, and preferred securing Jane's favour, if possible, without attracting the attention of her friends. Adeline, on her part, had discovered that her own family were no favourites with Mr. and Mrs. Graham; of course she recommended the proper degree of mystery, under the name of prudence. Young Taylor left Paris for England, about the time that Harry returned from his eastern journey; but before parting from Jane, he explained himself; and if he had not been accepted, he had certainly not been refused. Thus matters stood when the whole party returned home. Mr. Graham was known to be a violent, passionate man, and as he had taken no pains to conceal his dislike to Tallman Taylor's father, the young people had every reason to believe that he would refuse his consent. The idea of a clandestine marriage had once occurred to Adeline, but never with any serious intention of proposing it. Had she done so, she would not have been listened to. Jane had not lived so much with Miss Wyllys and Elinor, without deriving some good from such association; besides, she did not think the step necessary. She believed that Mr. Graham would give his consent after a while; and young Taylor was obliged to submit for the present. As for his college engagement, he had paid it no more attention than if it had never taken place; it had been long since forgotten, on his part.

Little by little, Mrs. Graham gathered most of these facts from her daughter, whose weeping eyes and pale face would have delighted Adeline, as being just what was proper in a heroine of romance, on such an important occasion. But Adeline could not enjoy the sight of all the misery which was the fruit of her two years' labours, for Mrs. Graham insisted that Jane should see none of the family until her father had arrived; and knew the state of things.

Harry Hazlehurst, although not quite as well informed as the reader, knew essentially how matters stood. He knew at least, that Jane and young Taylor were all but pledged to each other; he knew what had been Adeline's conduct−−what had been his own treatment; and as he walked slowly from one end of the Battery to the other, his reflections were anything but flattering to himself, or to any of the parties concerned. He blamed Mrs. Graham for her want of maternal caution and foresight; he blamed his brother, and sister−in−law, for their blindness in Paris; Jane, for her weakness, and want of sincerity to himself; Adeline, for such unjustifiable management and manoeuvring; and young Taylor, for what he called his "presumption and puppyism." And to think that he, Harry Hazlehurst, who prided himself upon being clear−sighted, had been so completely deceived by others, and what was worse, by himself! He was obliged to remember how sure he had felt himself of Jane; it was humiliating to think what a silly part he had been playing. Then came a twinge or two, from the consciousness that he had deserved it all, from his conduct to Elinor. He tried to persuade himself that regret that Jane should fall into hands

he fancied so unworthy of her−−that she should be sacrificed to a mere second−rate sort of dandy, like young Taylor, was his strongest feeling at the time. But he was mistaken: there was a good deal of the lover in his recollection of Jane's transcendant {sic} beauty. He hoped that she would yet be saved from the worst−−from becoming the wife of Tallman Taylor. He felt convinced that Mr. Graham would refuse his consent to the marriage.

The next day, Harry returned to Philadelphia. The astonishment of all those interested in himself and Jane, at this rupture, was very great. If Mrs. Stanley had been grieved at Harry's difficulties, Mrs. Robert Hazlehurst was made quite unhappy by her sister's conduct. She reproached herself severely for her blindness; for not having taken as much care of Jane as she ought to have done under the circumstances. Like all her family, she disliked young Taylor; who, in fact, had nothing to recommend him but his handsome face, and his father's money. Miss Wyllys, too, was much pained by the conduct of one who had been so often under her care−−one, in whose welfare she was so warmly interested. She received the news in a note from Mrs. Hazlehurst, who preferred giving it in that form; and as Miss Wyllys was alone with Elinor, she immediately handed the billet to her niece.

It must be confessed that Elinor's heart gave one bound at this unexpected news. She was more moved by it than any one; more astonished that Jane should have refused Harry; that she should have preferred to him that silly Tallman Taylor; more shocked at the double−dealing that had been going on; and more pained that Jane, who had been to her as a sister, should have been so easily misled. Another thought intruded, too−−Harry would be free again! But the idea had hardly suggested itself, before she repelled it. She soon felt convinced that Mr. Graham would break off the engagement between his daughter and Mr. Taylor, and that after a while her cousin's eyes would he opened to Harry's merits, which were numberless in her eyes. Miss Agnes strongly encouraged this opinion; and Elinor fully determined that her aunt's counsels, her mother's letter, and her own experience, should not be thrown away; she would watch more carefully than ever against every fancy that would be likely to endanger anew the tranquillity she had in some measure regained.

CHAPTER XXIII.

"The bridegroom's doors are opened wide,
And I am next of kin;
The guests are met, the feast is set,
May'st hear the merry din."
COLERIDGE.

{Samuel Taylor Coleridge (English poet, 1772−1834), "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" (I) lines 5−8}

THE events of the next two months surprised Jane's friends in Philadelphia, almost as much as her rejection of Harry had done. Mrs. Hazlehurst, of course, knew what was going on in her father's house, and from time to time informed Miss Wyllys and Elinor of what passed. Elinor had written to Jane, but it was a long time before she received an answer; her cousin appeared engrossed by her own affairs; as this was common with Jane at all times, it was but natural that she should be so, at a moment which was of so much importance to herself. Mr. Graham arrived at the time appointed; and, of course, he was very much displeased by the news which awaited him. He would not hear of Jane's marrying young Taylor, whose advances he received as coldly as possible, and even forbade his daughter's seeing any of the Taylor family. Jane was very much distressed, and very much frightened. As for Miss Taylor, her indignation was so great, that she determined to pay no respect to Mr. Graham's hostility; she wrote to Jane a long letter, much in her usual style, giving very pathetic accounts of Tallman's despair. This letter Jane had not the moral courage to show to either of her parents; she soon received another, with a note from young Taylor himself. As she was reading them one morning, her father unexpectedly entered the room, and was thrown into a great passion by the discovery. His temper was violent, and he was subject to fits of passion which terrified his children; although, in other respects, by no means an unkind parent. Upon this occasion, Jane was frightened into hysterics, and afterwards, owing to the agitation which had been preying on her mind for some months, she was thrown into a low nervous fever. During the four or five weeks that she was ill, every morning Miss Taylor called to inquire after her friend, although she was not admitted. By this conduct, Mrs. Graham's heart, which was of no stern material, was much softened. At length she went to the drawing−room to see Miss Taylor, for a moment. Adeline improved the time so well, that she placed herself and her brother better with Mrs. Graham than they had ever yet been. Jane's illness increased; her parents became seriously alarmed, and Mr. Graham expressed something like regret that he had been so hasty. His wife often remembered his words during her daughter's tedious convalescence, which was interrupted by a relapse. In short, matters began to look less discouraging for young Taylor's suit. There could be no doubt, at least, that he was very much in love with Jane: Hazlehurst was quite mistaken in supposing that the perfection of her profile, the beautiful shape of her head, the delicacy of her complexion, or other numberless beauties, could only be appreciated by one whose taste was as refined as his own: they had produced quite as deep an effect on young Taylor. During Jane's illness, he had shown the proper degree of distress and anxiety, all of which was reported in the most pathetic manner to Mrs. Graham, and whispered to Jane by Adeline, who, having once been received again into the house, kept her footing there and managed an occasional interview with her friend. In short, as we all know, tyrannical parents are very rare in America; the fault in family discipline lies in the opposite direction.

His daughter's pale face, his wife's weakness, and Adeline's good management, and improvement of every concession, at length worked a change in Mr. Graham. At the proper moment, Tallman Taylor renewed his offer in the warmest and most flattering terms; supported by his father, and his father's hundreds of thousands, he this time received a more favourable answer. Mr. Graham was one of those men, who have no very high opinion of women; he did not wish to make his daughter miserable for life; and he thought she had too little character to

conquer the fancy that had filled her mind, and made her ill. Then, young Taylor was rich, and she could throw away money on those knick−knacks and frippery, to which, according to Mr. Graham, women attach such exorbitant value. If she did not marry him, she would fancy herself a victim, and miserable; if she did marry him, she would fancy herself happy: that seemed to him the amount of the matter, and with these views he at length gave a reluctant consent. Mrs. Graham had already given hers; Tallman Taylor was certainly not the son−in−law she would have chosen; but she was farther from being dissatisfied, than many of her friends thought she would be under the circumstances. Neither the story of his college engagement, nor the unpleasant rumours respecting his Paris career, had reached Mr. or Mrs. Graham; the first was known only to Adeline and Jane, the last to a few male intimates. The news, very naturally, caused a good deal of sensation among Jane's friends in Philadelphia; it was really distressing to Mrs. Robert Hazlehurst, who looked upon her sister as thrown away, and reproached herself more than ever for having allowed Jane to go out so often in Paris with their thoughtless friends, the Howards. She could not endure to think of young Taylor, as actually her brother−in−law, the husband of her beautiful sister. She had not supposed that the matter would be settled in this way; she had believed her father's opposition too strong to be overcome.

As for Harry, he, of course, soon heard the news from his brother. How much of love and of mortification were still lingering in his mind, we cannot precisely affirm. His feelings for Jane had certainly altered very much since the discovery of the double−dealing that had been going on; but weak as she had proved herself, she was still much too lovely, much too well−bred, at least, to be bestowed upon one whom he disliked as much as Tallman Taylor. There seemed to be something of the dog in the manger, connected with his regret for Jane's fate, since he had already decided that if she were ever free again, he would not repeat his offer; she had shown herself to have so little character, that he would not allow himself to be again influenced by her beauty, surpassing as it was. In fact, Harry had determined to give up all idea of love and matrimony, for the present, at least. He went into society less than of old, and gave himself up very much to his profession, or other literary pursuits in which he had become engaged. He had been admitted to the bar, and had entered into a partnership with his travelling companion, Mr. Ellsworth; much of his time was now passed at his brother's house, or at that of his friend. He liked his sister−in−law, and he found Ellsworth's sister, Mrs. Creighton, who was at the head of her brother's establishment, a very agreeable woman; she was very pretty, too, and very clever. The Wyllyses were already in the country, when the news of Jane's engagement reached them; the winter had broken up early, and, as usual, at the first signs of spring they had returned to Wyllys−Roof. Of course, they regretted Jane's partiality for Tallman Taylor; to Elinor it appeared almost as unaccountable as her insensibility to Harry's merits. Mrs. George Wyllys was loud in her declamations against it; next to the Hubbards, she looked upon the Taylors as the most disagreeable family of her acquaintance. She had a great deal to say about the dull, prosy mother, the insufferable father, the dandy son, and the rattling, bellish daughter. Miss Patsey, also, had her moments of wonder; but she wondered in silence; she did not appear to have any higher opinion of the son, than she had formerly entertained of the father. With these exceptions, the community of Longbridge in general, who had known Jane from her childhood, approved highly of the connexion; both parties were young, handsome, and they would be rich, all which looked very well at a distance.

Three months of courtship passed over; Jane recovered entirely, and was as blooming and lovely as ever; young Taylor was all devotion. The satisfaction of his family at this connexion with the Grahams was very great; it gratified Mr. Taylor's wishes in every way. It is true, Miss Graham would not have much fortune herself, but Tallman had enough to begin life handsomely. He hoped the marriage would take place soon, as he wished his son, whom he had made his partner, to take more interest in the business than he had yet done. In every respect but money, Jane was just what he would have wished for a daughter−in−law; she was fashionable, she was beautiful, and the position of her family gratified his vanity. As for the plain, good−hearted Mrs. Taylor, she already loved Jane as a daughter; and to her it appeared the most natural thing in the world, that Tallman should marry his sister's friend. Adeline, herself, was of course enchanted.

The wedding took place in June. Thanks to Miss Taylor's influence with the bride, it proved quite a brilliant affair. The ceremony was performed in the evening, and immediately afterwards the newly−married couple received the compliments and congratulations of their friends. Jane was attended, on the occasion, by six of her young companions; and as many young men, with white favours in their button−holes, were very busy all the evening, playing masters of ceremonies, escorting all the ladies as they arrived, from the door to the spot where

the bride was stationed. Jane looked surpassingly beautiful; it was the general remark, that she had never appeared more lovely: the ladies pronounced her dress perfect, and the gentlemen admired her face quite as much. All agreed that a handsomer couple had not been seen for some time. It was, indeed, a pretty sight−−the beautiful bride, the centre of a circle of her young friends, all, like herself, in white, and in full dress; pretty creatures themselves, wearing pretty ornaments of flowers and lace, pearls and embroidery. We say they were pretty; there was one exception, however, for Elinor was there, and many remarks were made on her appearance.

"What a pity that Miss Wyllys should be so plain," observed Mrs. Creighton, whose husband had been a connexion of the Grahams. "It is the first time I have seen her for several years, and really I had forgotten how very plain she is."

"Plain, why she is downright ugly!" exclaimed the youth to whom she was talking. "It is a sin to be as ugly as that. No wonder Hazlehurst was frightened out of the engagement; I am only surprised he ever got into the scrape!"

"But Miss Wyllys is very clever and agreeable, I understand."

"Is she?"−−was the careless reply. "I see Hazlehurst is here this evening."

"Yes, he came on with his sister−in−law, Mrs. Robert Hazlehurst, and myself."

"Well, he has a fine opportunity of comparing his two lady−loves together. Upon my word, I never saw a greater contrast. I wish Miss Wyllys had not accepted the invitation, though; she is enough to frighten one away from the whole set−−and the rest are very pretty girls, the whole of them."

"Can you point out Mr. Taylor?−−Not the groom; I have seen him, of course; but his father."

"Don't you know the boss? It is that tall, stiff−looking man, talking to Mrs. Stanley. You see he is trying to look very amiable."

"Yes−−that is he, is it? Much the sort of man I should have supposed him. And now, which is Mrs. Taylor?"

"Mrs. Taylor−−let me see; there she is, in grey satin and diamonds. I never saw her but once before in my life. She is a very quiet sort of a body, and keeps out of sight most of the time."

"Very different from her daughter then, for Miss Taylor always put herself en evidence, I believe. If one don't see her, they are sure to hear her."

"To be sure, Miss Taylor is all life and spirits. She is the most lively, animated girl I ever knew. By−the−bye, I think it an odd fancy in Hazlehurst to show himself here to−night; for there was a great fuss last winter, at the blowup−−all the town was talking about it."

"He is a very near connexion, you know; I suppose his absence would have been more remarked than his being here. Besides, if he was in love once, he has had time to get over it, in the last six months. He does not look much as if he wore the willow still."

{"wore the willow" = grieved for the loss of a loved one}

"Hazlehurst is very clever, I am told; I don't know him much, myself."

"Oh, yes−−very clever. But I am not a fair judge, perhaps; he is my brother's friend, and I may be prejudiced in his favour. How very warm it is! can't we find a seat near a window?"

The gentleman offered his arm with alacrity, and the speakers moved away.

The seats they had left were taken by Mrs. de Vaux and Colonel Stryker: the lady, a middle−aged woman, fashionably dressed; the gentleman, rather more than middle−aged in his appearance, and decidedly less so in his dress and manners.

"Young Taylor is a handsome fellow, and looks the bride−groom very well!" exclaimed Mr. Stryker. "How these Taylors have pushed upwards; I never heard of them before I went to Europe this last time, five or six years ago."

"That is just about the moment they first burst upon the horizon. Mr. Taylor seems determined to make up for lost time. He is very disagreeable to us ladies; but the gentlemen like him on account of his cleverness; they say he is a genius in all business matters."

"To judge by his expression, the man seems ambitious of 'les succes de salon,' also. Where did he import his manners from, I wonder?−−they have a sort of bright, new look, as if he had not yet worn the gloss off."

{"les succes de salon" = drawing−room victories (French)}

"Don't laugh at him;−−he gives excellent dinners."

"Does he? Can't you introduce me, immediately? 'Ici l'ont fait noces et festins.' I seem to smell the

turtle−soup, already."

{"Ici l'ont...." = wedding feasts and banquets given here (French)}

"I doubt whether you taste it, nevertheless, until next autumn. Everybody is going out of town; they say that is the only drawback to the satisfaction of the Taylors at this wedding."

"What is the drawback, pray?"

"They cannot have as many grand parties as they are entitled to, on account of the season."

"That must be distressing, indeed, to the brides−maids. By−the−bye, I see Miss Wyllys is one of them. She is going to turn out a fortune, I hear;−−do you know her?"

"From a child. Last year no one dreamed of her being a fortune; but within the last few months, Mr. de Vaux tells me, she has inherited a very handsome property from one of her mother's family; and, in addition to it, some new rail−road, or something of that kind, has raised the value of what she owned before."

"What is the amount, do you know?"

"Upwards of two hundred thousand, Mr. de Vaux thinks."

"Miss Wyllys is certainly no beauty; but, do you know, I think there is something decidedly distinguished in her appearance and manner! I was only introduced the other day; I did not happen to know the Wyllyses."

"I have known them all my life, and like them all very much. I rather wonder, though, at Miss Elinor's being here as bride's−maid. But it is a reconciliation, I suppose. Perhaps she and young Hazlehurst will make up again, and we may be invited to another wedding, before long."

"Perhaps so. How long does it take a young lady to resent an infidelity? A calendar month, I suppose; or, in extreme cases, a year and a day. By−the−bye, the pretty widow, Mrs. Creighton, has thrown off her weeds, I see."

"Yes, she has come out again, armed for conquest, I suppose. What a flirt she is! And as artful as she is pretty, Mr. Stryker. But perhaps you are one of her admirers," continued the lady, laughing.

"Of course, it is impossible not to admire her; but I am afraid of her," said Mr. Stryker, shrugging his shoulders. "I am horribly afraid of all pretty widows."

"Mr. Hazlehurst does not seem afraid of her."

"Not a bit−−he is there half his time; but then he is young and venturesome. We old campaigners are more wary."

"He is an old friend of her brother's, I believe; is Mr. Ellsworth here?"

"Yes, there he is, talking to Miss Wyllys. Perhaps he may interfere with your prediction about her and my friend Hazlehurst."

"Possibly; but a−propos of weddings; why don't you marry, yourself, Mr. Stryker? You have been a delightful beau now, for how many years?" asked the lady, mischievously.

"Oh, these five lustres, I suppose; for I began early," replied Mr. Stryker, who had too much worldly wisdom, not to make a merit of frankness, where he could not help it.

{"lustre" = a period of five years}

"Six, you mean," said Mrs. de Vaux, laughing.

"No, five, honestly counted. I don't know exactly how old I may be; but the other day I heard a fellow say, 'Stryker can't be more than five−and−forty;' and I dare say be was right."

"Well, allowing you are only five−and−forty, don't you mean to marry, one of these days?"

"Certainly."

"Don't you think it time to look about you?"

"High time; but who will have me?" continued Mr. Stryker, with great complacency of manner.

"Oh, half the young ladies in the room, I dare say; excepting, of course, those who have refused you already," said Mrs. de Vaux, mischievously; for it was suspected that Mr. Stryker had met with several rebuffs. This lady and gentleman in spite of their smiling countenances and friendly manners, owed each other a grudge, of old standing. Who does not know that where the spirit of littleness and vanity is all−powerful, these petty trials and triumphs are too often the chief spring of action; as was the case with Mr. Stryker and Mrs. de Vaux. Happy they, who have good principle and good feeling enough, to cast off folly on so small a scale!

"Tell me what is your taste, and I will look out for you," continued Mrs. de Vaux.

"How kind you are!−−you don't include Miss de Vaux, of course; for she can't endure me. Like all modest men, I require only nine hundred and ninety−nine perfections in my wife. But then I insist chiefly on two

essentials: she must have money, and she must not have brothers and sisters; I have an invincible antipathy to collaterals, whether of blood or connexion."

"Miss Wyllys is the very person for you. Quite a fortune now, they say; and an orphan, without brother or sister; all you require. Then, you like her appearance, you say; though she is plain, she is clever, too, and amiable."

"Of course; all young ladies are amiable, are they not?"

"I only know of one objection−−she is too good for you."

"Goodness is not to be despised in a wife. I shall require it from the future Mrs. Stryker; though not very particular about the rest of the world. I am much obliged to you, Mrs. de Vaux, for the suggestion; I'll think of it," said Mr. Stryker, deliberately crossing one leg over the other, to make himself comfortable.

"You, who know everybody, Mr. Stryker," said the lady, "pray, tell me, who is that bright−faced young man, or rather, boy, standing near Mr. Wyllys and Mrs. Stanley?"

"You wish to mortify me−−I never saw the lad before."

"I can answer your question, Mrs. de Vaux," observed Harry, who had just approached, and made his bow; "that is my friend, Charlie Hubbard, the artist. Don't you remember the fine view of Lake Ontario, that was so much admired at the Exhibition, this spring?"

"Certainly. Is that the young man?−−He looks like a genius."

"Rather as a genius should look; your great lions are often very tame−looking animals," observed Mr. Stryker.

"Hubbard's face only does him justice, however; he is full of talent," said Harry.

"I Some of his pictures are certainly very fine," observed Mrs. de Vaux.

"I never saw water like his," continued Hazlehurst; "such variety, and always true to nature. He almost persuades one to believe all he says about water: he maintains that it has more variety of expression than any other inanimate object, and has, withal, an independent character of its own; he says it is second only to the human countenance."

"He seems quite an enthusiast," said Mrs. de Vaux.

"Won't he take it all out in talk?" asked Mr. Stryker, drily.

"Look at his view of Hell−Gate on a cloudy evening, and say so if you can!" exclaimed Harry, warmly.

{"Hell−Gate" = a narrow channel in New York City's East River}

"Well, after all, he says no more for water, than has been said by the poets of all nature, from the time of the first pastoral; they tell us that the sun will make a bare old mountain smile, and the wind will throw the finest forest into a fuss."

"I defy you to prove any fuss upon Charlie's works!"

"Perhaps not−−Where is his study? I should like to see what he has done. Is his pencil always amphibious?"

"Yes; I believe he has never yet painted a landscape, without its portion of water. If you wish to see his study, you must go soon; he sails for Italy next month."

"If his partiality for water is really honest, it may help him on in his profession. Has he a good execution?−−that is all−important."

"Decidedly good; and he improves every day. Execution is really all−important to Hubbard; for there can be no doubt that he possesses all an artist's conception."

"I suspect though, his notion about expressive water is not original. It appears to me, some German or other calls water, 'the eyes of a landscape.'"

"Very possibly; but Charlie Hubbard is not the man to steal other people's ideas, and pass them off for his own."

"You make a point of always believing the worst of everybody, Mr. Stryker," said Mrs. de Vaux.

"I wish I could help it." said the gentleman, raising his eyebrows.

"Suppose, Mr. Hazlehurst, you take him to Mr. Hubbard's studio, and force him to admire that fine picture of Lake Ontario. I should like to see it again, myself; and Mr. de Vaux has been talking of carrying us all to Mr. Hubbard's, some time."

Harry professed himself quite at Mrs. de Vaux's service. Mrs. Stanley, he said, was going to see his friend's pictures the very next day. A party was soon arranged, the hour fixed, and everything settled, before supper was announced. As Mrs. de Vaux and Mr. Stryker moved towards the door, they were followed by Mrs. Creighton and

Harry.

"Who was the young man you were talking with at supper, Josephine?" asked Mr. Ellsworth, as he stepped into the carriage after Mrs. Creighton and Harry, in driving away from the wedding.

"Which do you mean?"

"A mere boy−−one of the groomsmen, by the white favours in his button−hole."

"Oh, that was the groom's brother, Mr. Pompey Taylor, the younger, a very simple, and rather an awkward young gentleman. I had the honour of making the acquaintance of all the family, in the course of the evening. I was quite amused with Mr. Taylor, the father; he really seems to have as great a relish for the vanities of life, as any young girl of fifteen."

"Because they are quite as new to him," said Hazlehurst.

"That is difficult to believe of a clever, calculating man of fifty," observed Mr. Ellsworth.

"All clever men of fifty are not quite free from nonsense, take my word for it," said the lady.

"I appeal to Mr. Hazlehurst, who knows Mr. Taylor; as for myself, I am convinced by the man's manner this evening."

"You are certainly correct in your opinion, Mrs. Creighton. Mr. Taylor is, no doubt, a clever man; and yet he takes delight in every piece of finery about his house. He is more possessed with the spirit of sheer ostentation, than any man I ever met with."

"Ah, you want to save the credit of your sex, by setting him down as an exception!−−that is not fair, Mr. Hazlehurst."

It was a pity that the pretty smile which the lady bestowed on her brother's friend was entirely thrown away; but the lamp−light happened to be little more than darkness visible.