say, "at fourteen shillin' a week, breakfast, boots, and firing included—candles extra; but as he only burnt a dip, there was little to be said about lights. I soon found that his appetite was really ferocious, and that he ate more at one breakfast than I did at six. It did not matter the nature of the provisions, he had no fancies, and I do believe he could have eaten tenpenny nails, like the pelican of the wilderness I saw in Wombwell's menagerie. So I told him I couldn't do it at the money, and after a deal of haggling I got him to fifteen and six; and at that price he's been stationary here six years." Mrs. Drury always spoke of this gentleman as "my parlors," but his name was Mr. David Thomas.

On the evening when the Ramsays were in their great perplexity Mr. Thomas had returned home to his tea, which, not being in the contract with Mrs. Drury, was usually weak—in fact, watery. He had just settled down to reading the newspaper, borrowed from the neighboring public-house, when he was startled by hearing the voices of women in mirgled tones of supplication and anger. He rose and opened the door.

"For mercy sake, forgive me! Do not ex-ose me! Do not ruin me!" It was Martha Ramsay who was speaking.

"You ungrateful, you deceitful thing!"

-and in a louder voice, "You, ma'am, to
whom I have done no end of kindness without

charging you a penny, to be robbed in this way! I'll send for the police!"
"Oh, pray do not! We are starving! Do not ruin us!" cried the Ramsays, speaking

What's the matter ?" asked Mr. Thomas. "What's the matter, sir?" replied Mrs. Drury, descending the stairs, and carrying a bundle. "A pair of sheets and I don't know what besides. I shall find the room stripped, I dare say, when I have spirit to examine it."

"No, no, ma'am, nothing else, on my word of honor!" said Martha, convulsed with grief. "Your word of honor!" replied Mrs. Drury; and then turning to Mr. Thomas, she added, Sir, we are all disgraced by those two women up stairs. For this fortnight past we have noticed that this young deceitful hussey left the house at dusk—a thing she never did before—always contriving to avoid me, until at last I made up my mind to watch her. Two evenings ago I saw her go into the pawn-broker's in the next street. Oho, my lady ! I thought, that's your game, is it? And so I resolved to keep my eye on her; and to night, as she was sneaking down stairs, I popped upon her, and found to my horror—though I half suspected it—she was walking off with my property. There it is, Mr. Parlors-I mean Mr. Thomas-and now I'm off for the

Martha uttered a faint shriek, and fell, rather than sought a seat, upon the stairs. Her mother stood on the stair above her. "Mrs. Drury, mind I am the guilty person,

not Martha, said Mrs. Ramsay; "it was I who commanded her to take your property." "No, no!" cried Martha; "my mother is not -no, I was the thief, as you saw, Mrs. Drury

-I own it-No, not my mether !"

"Well, that's for the police to find out," said Mrs. Drury; "that's their business."
"Stop a moment, my dear madam," said Mr. Thomas. "A police case is a troublesome affair, and ruinous to one party. Perhaps

things are not so bad as you fear. My poor girl," continued Mr. Thomas, "tell me the girl," continued Mr. Thomas, "tell me truth. Is this indeed your first offense?" "Indeed, yes. We have had no food for two days but bread—a little bread," answered Mrs. Ramsay.
"Nothing more," murmured Martha, "noth-

ing more. But that's no reason why my sheets-"

"Hush, please, "interposed Mr. Thomas."My dear Mrs. Drury, had you not better satisfy youself that you have not been injured further than we see? Had you not better examine their rooms ?" "Well, yes, perhaps I had," answered Mrs.

"if those creatures will come off my stairs and let me go up "

"Come into my room," said Mr. Thomas,

raising up Martha, and the weeping women Whilst Mrs. Drury was making her search,

having to her annoyance had to come down for a candle, as there was none burning in the Ramsays' room, Mr. Thomas heard from the mother the extremity at which they had arrived, and that, stimulated by the gleam of hope contained in the letter they had received that succor was at hand, she had foolishly, wickedly urged her daughter to the commission of an act which she had succeeded in persuading herself was venial under the circumstances. Mrs. Drury reported that she "missed

nothing-that is, nothing at present," hardly liking to acknowledge that she had not been robbed.

"Then let me intercede for these poor women," said Mr. Thomas. "I will be responsible for their rent-say for a-a-fortnight-or-or-three weeks, and we will see what else can be done for them. Yes, until your sister Charlotte can be found. Yes, and perhaps, Mrs. Drury, a mutton chopwell, say two mutton chops-cooked in your best manner, Mrs. Drury, eh? might not be amiss; and a little beer, say a pint; and, as I said, I'll be their banker in a small way-a very small way, beginning with-with two shiftings. You will not refuse your old ledger, I know, Mrs. Drury?"

And Mrs. Drury, after wagging her head, and smoothing down her black silk apron,

"Weil, she didn't want to hurt nobody, especially the Ramsays; but it wasn't in human nature to see your sheets dragged from* under you, and-why didn't the foolish women tell her how badly they was off," et cetera, et cetera.

Mr. David Thomas was soon relieved from the responsibilities he had so kindly taken upon himself, as Sister Charlotte proved no exception to long-lost relatives (at least in Christmas stories), and had brought home, if not a great fortune, a modest independence for a person in her position of life.

Had Aunt Grace ever heard this episode in the life of her old admirer, she might have—well, thought better of him than I fancy she

CHAPTER V.

It was Boxing Night in London-the second night after the Christmas Eve that old Thomas had appeared so unexpectedly at Bedford Square. Boxing Night is the great saturnalis of the London roughs, and courts and alleys and filthy streets are disturbed by the rude revelry of their indwellers. Not that all the poor wretches hidden away in these human styes make merry on Boxing Night— God bless them! No; many sit in hunger and cold, and listen, sometimes with auger, sometimes with envy, at the roaring sot pro-claiming how the Christian largess had been

wasted in horrible excess. I said just now that it is well, at this festive season, to be reminded of the misery which is around us, that our charity may be quickened; and I must now lead you into a house that might be Poverty's Palace. In every room which we shall pass as we ascend the filthy stairs are kalf-famished men, women, and children, who someway hold on to lifefor some inserurable reason. Some of them have had "the Gospel preached unto them" -years ago-but the bitter misery of their lives

I has made them forgetful of its promises. | Many, many more are as ignorant of all that concerns their immertality as the dogs in the street. Think of that, dear ladies and gentlemen, who thrust your little missionary boxes under your neighbours' nose, and plead for our black brothers, far, far away in Timbuctoo. Good and true Christian men have deveted themselves to the missionary's perilous work, I know, and gladly laid down their lives for its sake. Doubtless they will have their

reward. But should not blood be thicker than water Should not our own pariahs be our first care Should not the State drag into the light the wretched beings whose faces, if cleaned, would be as white as our own? whose confused collocation of words is surely our own language? who are subject to the same laws as ourselves except that they know them only as punishments? Why are these English freemen and freewomen ever to be a curse and scandal to their country? Why is the baby of the thief to be so utterly uncared for that it must become a thief as soon almost as it can run

To face this hydra requires a Christian's courage. To conquer it will need an unselfish endurance, which springs only from a sense of duty to God and man. We all admit the existence of the evil. How few of us have the courage and the self-denial to attempt to sub-

There are, however, good men and women moving about in the midst of this wretchedness, teaching some the value of order and cleanliness, and how to make their rags less apparent, until the Book, which it is their mission to sell, becomes a desire. These missionaries are called Bible Men and Bible

It is the Bible woman, Martha, who is talking so gently to a ragged woman on the landing of the filthy house to which I have introduced you.

The little basket Martha Ramsay carries contains medicine and some other comfort for a sick man who lives in one of the attics. He has lived there two years or more. Quite alone; no living thing with him, neither bird nor cat. He rarely stirred abroad, except at the dusk of the evening, and then seeming youly to purchase food. He does such cleaning of his room as he permits himself, never quitting it without locking the door, and the lock is one which he bought when he first came to lodge in the Rookery. He has made no friends, not even with his landlady, but pays his rent without scarcely exchanging "the time of day, or saying a word on the weather." He is always wretchedly clad, but heat or cold seems alike to him.

It was on the preceding day-Christmas Day—that Martha, going about her duty, found this wretched man seated on the stairs of the second floor, apparently in great pain-

or, he might have been drinking.

"What ails you, my poor man?" asked Martha, gently; "are you ill?"

"Yes, very ill. Are you strong enough to help me to my room?"

"I'll try," replied Martha, cheerfully; "I'm not a very strong woman; but there—which is your room?"

your room ?" "Up higher-the attic on the left," said the

man; and then step by step, aided by Martha, he reached the door of his room. "Thanks, my good woman," said the man; "I can manage now." "Not you," said Martha;" "I must see you

safely settled." "No-I won't have it. I allow no one to enter my room," exclaimed the man; but a paroxysm of pain made him cling to the door-

post and drop the key. Martha did not hesitate a moment, but unlocking the door, led the now unresisting man to his miserable pallet, and laid him

When the pain ceased the man looked towards Martha, and the expression of thankfulness which came into his face seemed to quicken her memory, and she started as she looked at him.

"Surely I must be deceived ? and yet I-do speak to Mr. Thomas ?" she asked. The man turned quickly to her and said, Who are you that -- !- I never saw you before to-day."

"Yes, yes! I am sure I am not mistaken. You were my benefactor years ago; but I am not mistaken—I am Martha Ramsey, the poor creature-"

"Is it so?" cried the man, "is it so?" and then his head fell upon his pillow. The almost fleshless hand with which he covered his eyes seemed to tell of long privation-hunger, cruel

Martha was greatly moved. As soon as she could speak freely she reminded David Thomas of his former goodness. She told him that her means were very small, but it would be her duty, her happiness, to help him who had rescued her when her life was at its worst. At first he rejected her kindly offers of help, but after a time he seemed to yield. Martha had some skill in housewife pharmacy, and succeeded in allaying the pain which returned at intervals, for the next hour or so. "And now," she said, "I can leave you: but

I shall some back very shortly with a doctor." "No, no! I'll have no doctor! D—extor-tionate scoundrels! Half fools—half knaves!" "But not the one I should bring," said Martha, gently, "I won't see any one-any one but you!"

replied Thomas, sharply, adding, "that is, if you like to come on your own account. I know what's the matter with me; I had some brandy-and-water-too much-on Christmas Eve-and sat down on a doorstep and went to sleep. Of course I eaught cold."
"No doubt you are right," said Martha; "so

I shall come by-and-by and bring you some "No charity stuff!" cried Thomas, "I won't

'No, it shall be my own; and you won't refuse that, my dear friend and benefactor?" said Martha, coaxingly.

Mr. Thomas only gave a grant.
"Why, bless me!" said Martha, "you have "I hate fire-I can't breathe if the room's

hot. If you're cold you had better stay away," replied Mr. Thomas. Martha only smiled, and threw over her patient the old Scotch roquelaire which had left our respectable abode to find itself in such queer lodgings. Mr. Thomas seemed to resent this considerate conduct, but he was really endeavoring to get up to lock the door. He

was too weak. "What's the matter with me?" he muttered; "I am not paralyzed, am I? Why can't I get up?"

Martha begged of him to be quiet; that she would only be away for a short time. "Well, then, lock me in," said Mr. Thomas. "It's double lock-turn the key twice." Martha said yes, and then rapidly left the

When Martha returned with such small comforts as she could collect in the neighborhood, she saw such a change in her patient that she became alarmed for him, and instantly, without saying a word, went for a doctor. In less than a quarter of an hour she returned, bringing with her a medical friend, requesting him, however, to wait out-side the door until she had prepared her patient.

Notwithstanding the care with which Martha tried to introduce the doctor, Mr. Thomas

was as resistant as his prostration permitted

"My dear friend," said Martha, firmly but softly, "we are forbidden to do self-murder; and by refusing to use the means within our reach to preserve the life which has been lent to us, we do commit self-murder." "But I am not likely to die!" interrupted Mr. Thomas.

"I believe otherwise, and I dare not be silent. You are in great danger!" Mr. Thomas by a sudden effort raised himself on his arms, and stared fixedly at Martha. "I have brought a gentleman with me who will confirm or contradict my fears," Martha, "Dear friend, you must see him."

The fear of death seemed to be a new terror to David Thomas, and he lay silent, his chest heaving quickly. The examination of the doctor was conclusive. Inflammation of some vital part-I shan't talk shop-had set in, and the case was hopeless. It would be out of place to repeat now the words in which this was conveyed to David Thomas by Martha Ramsay, or by which he was urged to loose his hold upon the world. He clung closely to his idol!

Martha watched and prayed beside him throughout the night. When the doctor came again (which he did very early in the morning), he pronounced his worst fears con-firmed, and that death was rapidly approaching. David Thomas tried to beat back the shadow which advanced slowly-slowly, but at last it came, too defined not to be known that it was Death.

"I have much to say-much to do-and the time you tell me is so short. Send some one to Mrs. Gregory, in Bedford equare. Tell her to come instantly-say I am dying."

My mother was greatly terrified when this message reached her, but my father urged her to go at once, and volunteered to accompany her.

In a great state of alarm my mother stood by the bedside of her old acquaintance. "Mrs. Gregory," he said with difficulty, "you wonder, I dare say, to see me in this miserable plight."

My mother made a grimace, by which she meant to say she did. "Do you guess what brought me to it? No.

you can't, I know. It was love!"
"Oh! Mr. Thomas!" "Yes, love of money. I began to love money when I was a boy; to save money I lived sparingly and lonely; I grew fonder and fonder of putting by, until I became frightened at myself. I tried every now and then to break from my master. I thought if I could have married Mrs. Maxwell-I thought of her money too-I might have been brought to spend, and not have been always afraid to lose or to waste. But it was not to be. When the - Bank broke I lost two thousand pounds. nearly killed me. I got together all I possessed-I could trust no one with it. Good securities-Ah! what pain is this that almost blinds me? For old time's sake, you and this woman, Martha Ramsay, take what is beneath my pillow-what I have lived and died for. Yes, for I have starved-Again that pain! Darkness-darkness!"

After one deep sigh, his head fell upon his bosom, and David Thomas was dead. And now, said the doctor, comes the strange part of this rambling story; and had it not been within my own knowledge, I would not have mentioned it.

The reference which David Thomas had made to his pillow was not forgotten, and on search being made, no less a sum than twelve thousand pounds was found wrapped up in all sorts of coverings. The doctor's opinion was that the owner's death was accelerated by starvation. Neither my mother nor Martha Ramsay derived any advantages from what had evidently been intended as a deed of gift from David Thomas, as he died intestate, and his next of kin came into possession of all the

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