

MY ONLY ROMANCE.

From Appleton's Journal.

I have often wondered whether the four walls of the sleepy, solemn old granite structure, towering far above all surrounding buildings, and facing the equally sleepy old square, have endeavored themselves to the other inmates as they have to me. Every stone in them from door-step to pinnacle, and every beam of wood, every pane of glass, every leaf of ivy, every breath of air that stirs the ivy leaves, clinging with an almost human devotion to the ancient gray sides and twining tenderly round the little Gothic windows, seems to murmur a fresh, sweet song to my ears.

that my visit to the woods had given pleasure to some one besides myself. Indeed, it must have been almost the only time within my recollection that I had ever given any satisfaction to anybody; for my life then was almost wholly isolated. As I divided my woodland treasures, the invalid raised his long, slender hand, and, offering it to me, said:—"I thank you very much, sir, for both my sister and myself. I am sure we shall enjoy them enough to repay you for the sacrifice of giving them away."

"It is the old story of parents dying penniless who are supposed to be wealthy, and of children left to the charity of rich relatives who could hardly have been less generous to their bitterest enemy."

ing my sentence with a sweet smile. "Eyes less jealous than mine might have discovered the truth long ago, Charles, had they been watching you as I have. But I will tell you why I spoke first about it. It would be the greatest satisfaction to me if you and she could be married before I say good-by to you both. I should be absolutely happy if I left her your wife. A few weeks at most in all of life that remains to me. Go out and meet Gervaise, tell her your love—I am sure she returns it—and my wish. Go, Charles, now."

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A certain dignity in the manner of the young lady, while it was extremely gracious, repelled the slightest deviation from the most formal courtesy, and prevented me from offering the leaves to her. I feared she would decline them, and I had taken an odd fancy that it would be very satisfactory to know

He continued:—"My heart echoed that, as I looked toward the table in the window where her books and pencils and little instruments lay, and thought how cheerfully and uncomplainingly she told there, hour after hour, and day after day, to provide for their small needs."

"Till after I am gone," said Herbert, finishing my sentence with a sweet smile.

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