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Erie Weekly Observer.

A. P. DURLIN & CO. PROPRIETORS.

B. F. SLOAN, Editor.

OFFICE, CORNER STATE ST. AND PUBLIC SQUARE, ERIE.

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WHOLESALE AND RETAIL dealers in Drugs, Medicines, Dye Stuffs, Groceries, &c. No. 5, Reed House, Erie.

Select Poetry.

THE WINE CUP.

BY MRS. CAROLINE M. SAWYER

Dash down that sparkling cup!—Its gleam,
Like the pale corpse-light o'er the tomb,
Is but a false, deceitful beam,
To lure thee onward to thy doom.
The sparkling gleam will fade away,
And round thy lost, bewildered feet,
'Mid darkness, terror and dismay,
The ghastly shapes of death will meet.

Dash down the cup!—a poison sleeps
In every drop thy lips would drain,
To make thy life-blood seethe and leap,
A fiery flood, through every vein—
A fiery flood that will efface,
By slow degrees, the god-like mind,
Till 'mid its ashes not a trace
Of reason shall be left behind.

Dash down the cup!—a serpent starts
Beneath the flowers that crown its brim,
Those deadly fangs will strike thy heart,
And make thy flashing eye grow dim:
Before whose hot and maddening breath—
More fatal than the simoon blast—
Thy manhood, in unhonored death,
Will sink, a worthless wreck at last.

Dash down the cup!—thy father stands,
And pleads in accents deep and low,
Thy anguished mother clasps her hands,
With quivering lips and wordless woe.
They who have borne thee on their breast,
And shielded thee through many a year;
Oh! wouldst thou make their bosoms blest,
Their life a joy—their pleading hear!

Dash down that cup!—thy young wife kneels;
Her eyes, whose tears have often gushed,
Are turned with mute and soft appeal,
Upon the babe, in slumber hushed.
Didst thou not woo her in thy youth
With many a fond and solemn vow?
Oh, turn again, and all her truth
And love shall be rewarded now!

Dash down that cup!—and on thy brow,
Though darkened o'er with many a stain,
Thy manhood's light, so feeble now,
Shall bright and steady burn again.
Thy strength shall, like the fabled bird,
From its own ashes upward spring,
And fountains in thy breast be stirred
Whose waters living joys shall bring.

Choice Miscellany.

From Sartain's Magazine.

THE ESTRANGED HEARTS.

A TALE OF MARRIED LIFE.

BY CLARA MORETON.

CHAPTER III.

In the weeks that followed, Margaret Dorrance had ample time to regret her obstinacy. The breach that separated her from her husband seemed daily to widen. He gave her no opportunity for explanations; but treated her with studied coldness whenever they met. *Her* apartment he had ceased to share, since that fatal night.

She felt now how much easier it would have been to have yielded to his wishes—even to have renounced all society—than to bear the penalty which her perverseness had brought upon her.

Often had she been upon the point of throwing herself at his feet, and begging for a return of his love; but then pride would hold her back with its iron grasp.

Oh, how truly has it been said that "pride is to be conquered as man would conquer an enemy." Few there are that realize how it plants the thistle and the thorn in the garden of the affections—how it turns the heart to a desert, and unseals the Marah, which with its surging flood sweeps away all holy affections.

Margaret felt but too truly that the difference which had separated her from her husband, had also removed her farther from her God. She could not call upon Him as before, when, looking upon her children and her husband, she had acknowledged *His* goodness and mercy to her, in giving her such blessings. Now, with the selfishness of an impenitent heart, she accused him of injustice: and recalling the gloomy doctrines which had been early impressed upon her memory by the pious mother who was now no more, she thought if she was fated to be an unloved wife, she would at least learn to bear it with stoicism.

Thus day after day, she wandered farther from the kingdom of Heaven; the thorns of earth wounding her, the bitter waters of her heart overwhelming her, and pride only strengthening her to endurance.

At length came an invitation to a party, given by one of her oldest and most intimate friends.

Margaret had neither inclination to go nor spirit to prepare herself; but Emily Walton would take no refusal. Tableaux were not then out of date, and she was preparing to have them on a large scale. No one but Margaret came up to her ideas of a Rebecca, and so she coaxed Mrs. Dorrance into yielding her reluctant consent.

The day preceding arrived, and all the morning Margaret had been oppressed with an unaccountable sadness. She went into the nursery to divert her mind with her children.

Ida was asleep, but Harry had just been brought in by his nurse from a walk, and his attention was engrossed by a new toy.

"Come hither, Harry," said Mrs. Dorrance; "come sit in mamma's lap."

"No, me unt, me done want to, me sit in me own lap."

"Oh, Harry's a naughty boy, to speak so to mamma! Well, never mind; when poor mamma dies, and is buried up in the cold ground, then little Harry will feel bad."

The tender-hearted fellow dropped his toy, and burst into a sob, the big tears rolled down his cheeks, his breast heaved, and he said reproachfully,

"Oo no do right to talk so to me; done oo see how bad oo make me feel?"

His mother was ready to clasp him to her heart, when suddenly his whole countenance changed. Resuming his former independent tone, and at the same time picking up his toy, he said,

"Well, me done care; me never mind; when oo die, me papa got me new mamma very quick."

Margaret was so vexed at this sudden turn that she felt like shaking the boy; but controlling herself, she left him to the nurse, who was mightily pleased at the spirit evinced by his answer.

And thus every little event of that day seemed to have a tendency to depress her more and more; and when the hour approached that Mrs. Walton had promised to send her husband for her, she stood shivering, although beside a glowing fire, feeling that she would be willing to die, could she but once more rest her head upon her own husband's breast.

She had ordered her own carriage that night, and, at the appointed hour, it was punctually at the door.

Mr. Walton had not come. Oh, the relief, if she should not be obliged to go!

Once more she went to her boudoir—the darling little room, where she had passed so many happy hours with her husband, he reading aloud to her their favorite books; while she, pillowed upon a lounge, listened, wondering if ever human voice had equalled his in its rich modulated tones.

Now, she stood there alone. Alone! and oh, so wretched! Whichever way she turned, the lofty mirrors reflected back a pale face, with eyes that tears had robbed of half their brilliancy.

How strange it seemed!

Her dress of amber satin, with its bertha of costly lace—the delicate-colored wreath of natural jessamine flowers that encircled her head as a coronet—the embroidered demi-skirt of lace, looped up with green sprays, and jessamine buds; so much taste evinced, so much luxury scattered around, and withal, such worlds of misery looking out from the depths of those hopeless eyes.

The door bell rang. The servant who answered it, ushered a gentleman into the drawing room.

Mrs. Dorrance, advancing, met Edward Graham.

"Mr. Graham! To what accident am I indebted for this unexpected call?"

"Mrs. Walton commissioned me last evening to call for you to-night, Mrs. Dorrance. Her husband, she said, would be unavoidably detained?"

Mrs. Dorrance lips smiled, but her eyes changed not from their dim sorrow, as she answered,

"As Emily has not kept her part of the compact, I am released from mine. I shall not go to-night, Mr. Graham, and am sorry to have given you all this trouble. I will not detain you one moment longer."

"But, Mrs. Dorrance, your friend made me promise that I would not return without you; indeed you must go; your absence would cast a damper over the whole party."

"I am not vain enough to believe *that*, Mr. Graham," she answered, with something of scorn in her manner.

"I did not say it with any intention of flattering you, Mrs. Dorrance: it will most assuredly be so, for Mrs. Walton is relying on you to personate several characters, and without you, the whole series must of course fall through."

"I cannot help it, Mr. Graham. As Emily did not send her husband for me, as she promised, I am released from attendance. You need not urge it, for even did I wish to go, you know my husband has objected to my receiving attentions from you."

"But, Mrs. Dorrance, your husband has taken off that interdict," interrupted Mr. Graham, eagerly, and as he spoke, he glanced through the suite of rooms, for they both remained standing in the centre of the drawing-room. His voice might have been a semi-tone lower, as he continued:

"I met him to-day, and asked his consent to wait upon you this evening; he replied promptly that he had no objections. I hope now you will not consider yourself justified in disappointing your friends."

Mrs. Dorrance could not account for the sudden suspicion which entered her mind that Mr. Graham had not spoken the truth. To be sure, she had ceased to regard him as a friend, since the night he had endeavored to persuade her to forgetfulness of her duties as a wife; and associating him with the first cause of her alienation from her husband, it was no wonder that she felt a fear of his trying to separate them still farther. She fixed her eyes earnestly upon him.

"Mr. Graham, is that strictly true?"

"Upon my honor it is. What reason have you to doubt my word, Mrs. Dorrance?"

"I thought it possible," she replied, "that this might be one of the occasions for falsehood, for which fashionable life grants free and full absolution; but if it is as you say, I will not disappoint Emily; it would not be right, I suppose, for me to do so."

She prepared herself to go out to the carriage.

"You are not deceiving me?" she said.

"Mr. Graham opened the door. As he followed Mrs. Dorrance into the hall, his quick eye caught a glimpse of her husband just coming out of the library. He answered in a *raised tone*,

"I told you, Mrs. Dorrance, exactly what your husband said."

They were gone. Margaret had not seen the one imploring, despairing look that was cast after her. She had not a dream of the tempest of agony with which a "full grown heart," freighted with love for her, was battling throughout that weary night.

Could she but have divined it, how joyously would she have retraced her steps! with what explanations of, and concessions for, the past—with what promises for the future, would she have dispelled that momentarily increasing *storm*.

"False-hearted, crafty, subtle, as I believe him to be, yet has he told her all, and she has chosen to go. Now, as I said, so shall it be though it breaks my heart-strings."

These were the only words that escaped his lips.

And what had he said?

It was true that Edward Graham had met him, and asked his consent to wait upon his wife; but he had told him that it was to a theatrical exhibition. It was true that Mr. Dorrance had answered he should make no objection, but he had also added, "*If she consents to go* with you to-night, she shall return to my house no more."

The party was over. In all her characters Margaret has seemed to excel herself. As Corinne, the whole company looked upon her with breathless astonishment, wondering to see such depth of expression, where before they had noted only mere regularity of features and brilliancy of complexion. Whispered words of admiration followed her everywhere when the tableaux ceased; but heartsick and weary of all—the yearning for her husband's presence creeping into her breast more and more, to the utter extinction of all other emotions, she welcomed with eager joy the announcement that her carriage was in waiting.

Mr. Graham was of course her escort. He was very much animated, and profuse in praise of the parts she had so well sustained. She answered him only in monosyllables. Indeed, her mind was so preoccupied with thoughts of her husband, resolving that she would that night confess all her wretchedness to him, that she did not even observe the direction which the carriage was taking.

At length they stopped. The footman, flinging open the door, said, "Shall I ring the bell, sir?"

Margaret glanced up to the house. It was her father's dwelling.

"What does this mean?" she said quickly, "drive back to my own residence—what are you thinking of, Richard?"

"Of my master's orders, madam; he directed us to leave you here."

There was an insolent tone in he footman's voice which was very galling; but collecting herself, Mrs. Dorrance replied with dignity,

"You know my father is in Europe, Richard—there is no one here but his housekeeper—I am sure there is some misunderstanding. Tell William to drive back, and then if your master still insists, I will make no objections."

"We can't do it, indeed we can't, Mrs. Dorrance," answered Richard, with more gentleness. "Mr. Dorrance told both Bill and me, that he would turn us out of his service if we failed to obey him."

Mrs. Dorrance threw herself back in the carriage.

"My God! what is there left for me to do? my heart is broken!"

Mr. Graham bent his head, and whispered a few words in her ear.

She sprang from his side as if he had been a serpent, and rushing up the lofty marble steps, rang the bell, peal after peal, with her own delicately-gloved hands.

The shutters were closed all the way up, but now one in the second story opened, and a voice called out,

"What in goodness' name is wanting at this time of night?"

"It is I! I! do you not know me?—Margaret! Margaret Dorrance. I beseech you, Mrs. Brown, let me in quickly; I shall die if you do not."

The moments that elapsed before the door was opened, seemed to her an age, as she stood there with her opera cloak fluttering out in the wind, and the cold night air striking full upon her unprotected arms and breast.

Edward Graham had followed her, and now he humbly said,

"Before we part, Mrs. Dorrance, say that you forgive me."

She stamped her foot in frenzy, as she answered,

"Go ask forgiveness of God—you need it; he may forgive you, but I never will."

The door opened and closed after her as she went in. The carriage rattled off, and Edward Graham turned from the steps—his hypocritical, remorseless heart too utterly lost to all good emotions to feel other than disappointment at the thwarting of his designs.

CHAPTER IV.

Morning found Howard Dorrance still in his library—his haggard face and bloodshot eyes too well attesting the strength of the storm that had spent its fury upon him, throughout those long night watches.

He had kept his word, but in so doing he had wrenched his heart until every beat was but a throb of pain.

The conviction, which in his morbid reveries had fastened itself upon him, that in his wife's unfaithfulness, he was to receive the punishment of his broken vows to Helen Graham, seemed to have crowded from his mind all thoughts of a possibility of his having in any way misjudged her.

Even had his conscience accused him of too great severity, could he not find occasion to justify himself in her coldness?—in the marks of favor which she had given to his hated rival?—in the choice which she had made but the night before, in defiance of him?

As the morning hours wore on, a letter was brought him: a servant in the hall awaited an answer.

He broke the seal. It was from his wife.

Upon its pages he traced such protestations of innocence, such burning words of changeless love for him, such adjurations for mercy, that his heart melted into forgiveness for the errors she confessed. He wrote hastily his answer promising to be with her immediately; he folded the sheet; he looked in vain amidst his own papers for an envelope, and rising, went to the drawer of his wife's writing desk. The first thing his eyes fell upon was the enclosed lock of hair. He could see what it was through the thin paper, and seizing it, he opened it with the fond hope that he might find it his own, so earnestly had she assured him that to him alone had her heart's love been given. He read, "Edward—midnight. *Amor et constantia.*"

Staggering back, his face grew pallid, and his teeth ground fiercely together.

He threw the note he had written in reply, upon the coals; he took an envelope from his wife's drawer, and enclosing in it the letter she had written to him, directed and sent it back to her by the servant.

He was weak no longer, his heart was troubled with no more vain yearnings. The woman who could call upon God to witness her innocence of any other love save that she bore her husband, while her breast was filled with a guilty passion for another, she who could thus mingle treachery and deceit, could no longer hold any claim upon his heart. He would have spurned her from him as if she had been a worm, had she thrown herself in his way. Yes, he thanked God that he was strong now—that his weakness was all over. *He had done with* picking flowers by the wayside, he had now to make himself a path through thorns and briars, and manfully would he toil on over them. If they lacerated him, none should know it; if he grew weary and faint, he would heed it not. On, on, pausing not even to look back into the past, until toil-worn he should welcome the only *refuge* from ceaseless sorrow which the world can give—the grave.

Such were his thoughts. The very day he wrote a letter to his aunt Egerton, the only relative which death had spared him, begging her to leave Woodlawn, her place upon the Hudson, and come to his city home to take charge of his children, while he should travel in Europe.

She had not visited him since his marriage, nor had he taken his young wife to her home; for a coldness had sprung up between his aunt and himself, on account of his treatment of Helen Graham, who was her devoted friend. It was at her place that he had first met her. But now he wrote so humbly, acknowledging his sin, and telling her of the severe punishment that had been visited upon him for it, that Mrs. Egerton could not refuse his request.

There was nothing to keep her at her own home, except her attachment to the beautiful spot; for she had no family, having been left a widow but a few months after her marriage.

She immediately made her arrangements to leave Woodlawn, until the summer weather should come on, at which time she proposed returning with the children and *their nurse*.

Two weeks more, and she took from Howard Dorrance the charge of his mansion, while he continued his preparations *for traveling*.

CHAPTER V.

Margaret Dorrance moved about her father's house, like an automaton. Since the day her letter had been returned to her, without one word of answer, she had shed no tears: she seemed petrified with grief.

Her face became pale and wan, her eyes seemed hourly to grow more cold and dim, her voice lost its sweet tone, and her form its roundness.

The return of her father was all now that she apparently desired. A faint hope dwelt in her heart that he might be able to effect the reconciliation, which she had despaired of seeing accomplished in any other way.

At length came the horrible news that he had died in the steamer upon his return home, when they had been out but two days. His body had been buried at sea.

The kind clergyman who had called to break this distressing news to her, was surprised to see, with what apathy it was received.

He could not read in those cold, stone-like eyes, of the heart that his words had plunged down, down into the depths of despair, to that lowest deep where the star-rays of hope never penetrate. He could not divine that that strange-toned voice was the echoing of a spirit wailing its own dirge. He could not know how, when the door had closed upon him, she had dropped like a stone to the floor. In the death-like swoon that followed, she had been unconscious, for a brief period of the griefs which were feeding upon her.

When she revived, there was still no alteration in her demeanor; through all the bustle that followed of preparing her mourning dresses, she was the same; her sharpened features seemed to have hardened into marble.

Mrs. Brown, with tears in her eyes, looked upon her as she moved from room to room, appearing so much taller from her thinness and her sombre garments, and she would mutter to herself, "Lord love the child, if her father had come back and found her thus he never would have known her."

Margaret had heard through her dressmaker of the gossiping which had followed her separation from her husband.

As usual, in such instances, the censure rested upon the wife, the husband being only blamed for having too long borne her imprudent conduct. His spirit was commended in having at length sent her home to her father's, thus refusing to countenance longer her extravagancies. This was the commonly received explanation; but as always, there were two sides to the story; and Mrs. Dorrance had many devoted friends, who warmly defended her, until at length chilled by her repeated refusals to see them, they too shook their heads mysteriously, and gave ear to the rumors that were afloat.

From the same source, she had heard that Mr. Dorrance was going to Europe, and that his aunt was to have the charge of the children.

And now every day she looked through the morning papers, to see if her husband's name were among the list of passengers, in the different steamers, that was given from time to time.

One morning her eyes fell upon his name; something of a wild light of old flashed from them as she read, "Last night, the youngest child of Howard Dorrance, Esq., was apparently suddenly seized with convulsions. Dr. Abernethy Jones was immediately summoned, who suspected, from peculiar symptoms, that the child was under the influence of some powerful narcotic. He extorted from the nurse a confession, that the child, having been restless and fretful for several nights, she had given it laudanum, being unaware of its great power. He promptly applied the usual means for the counteracting of its effects, and the child was relieved before the family physician arrived. The nurse who had been but a few days in the family, was immediately discharged. Dr. Abernethy Jones is a promising young physician, who has been very successful in his practice. He resides at No. 141 Black Street."

Margaret dashed the paper upon the floor.

"My child! my child!" she screamed, as clasping her hands, she raised her eyes to heaven.—"My baby! oh God! have mercy upon me and lead me to her!"

The thought that darted through her brain that moment was it answer to her prayer?—"More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of."

She flew to her room, she habited herself in her coarsest materials; a dress of black cashmere, and a heavy shawl of the same color. As Mrs. Brown had adopted a mourning dress for Mrs. Dorrance's father, in whose service she had been for years, Margaret hastened to her, and disclosed her plans, borrowed her coarse black straw bonnet, and thick serge veil.

How her heart palpitated as she threaded street after street, until she came to one in the suburbs of the city, where she remembered having heard that there was a large hair-dressing establishment kept only by females. She found the place easily, and to the woman in waiting, she communicated her desire of disguising herself, at the same time pressing upon her a bank note of considerable value to insure secrecy.

Margaret was taken into a private room. She sat down, and directed her long exuberant tresses to be shorn close to her head. The woman, with more forethought, suggested that she should spare as much of it as possible by drawing it off from her forehead and up from the back of her head, and fastening it there, contrive to cover it with the false hair she should select, and plain muslin morning caps.

Margaret entrusted everything to her. The woman only cut off about half the hair; the rest she managed to hide with a cap of brown Holland, which she was some time in making, and to which she fastened the perruque of flaxen hair that Mrs. Dorrance selected.

Commissioned by Margaret, she then went into an adjoining store, and purchased half a dozen plain breakfast caps, suitable for mourning.

They were made of thick lawn, and after trying one upon Mrs. Dorrance's head, there was nothing left which could possibly lead to a suspicion of the metamorphosis.

Margaret was satisfied that no one could detect her, as she saw what a change the light hair produced; but now arose another difficulty in the attainment of her purpose. Without references or recommendation, it was impossible that she could obtain the situation for which she had resolved to apply.

She was well-nigh discouraged, when the thought struck her that Helen Graham, who had always been ready to advise her for her good, might still be willing to befriend her, if she should confess to her her whole history; and over her husband, no one would probably have more influence than Miss Graham.

Resolving that she would immediately apply to her, she bent her steps to her dwelling.

CHAPTER VI.

Helen Graham was in her thirtieth year. She was not beautiful; but her thoughtful, pensive cast of countenance never failed to interest. Few could tell in what her charms consisted, for her features were quite ordinary. Some there were who acknowledged the spell of mind upon mind; and they attributed to the right cause the sway which she exercised over all who came within her sphere.

She was not one of those of whom Keble has beautifully said,

"There are who sigh that no fond heart is theirs,
None loves them; but, oh vain and selfish sight!
Out of the bosom of His love He spares,
The Father spares His Son for them to die."

No, for upon that bosom had she leaned for strength, when the earthly temple, in which she had garnered too many hopes, was shattered before her eyes. She forgave freely the hand that wrought its destruction; she learned to look calmly upon the ruin; ay, more than that, she grew to thank God that in the crucifying of her earthly affections, she had been drawn nearer and nearer unto Him.

Little knew she in her resigned and placid life of the revenge which her brother had vowed, of the recompense which he had resolved upon working out. It was a sin of which she could never have dreamed—too terrible for her belief would have been the thought of his usurping the power of Him who had said, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay."

When she heard the rumors of Howard Dorrance's and his wife's unhappiness, and afterwards of their separation, she said to herself, "There has been blame upon both sides;" and earnestly she wished that she might be a mediator between them. She called upon Mrs. Dorrance, but receiving the unvarying answer, "Mrs. Dorrance sees no one." So week followed week, and no opportunity occurred.

One afternoon she was summoned into the parlor, to a person who was awaiting her there. Upon entering she was struck with the singularity of the face of the newcomer. She noticed the anomaly of exceedingly light hair and jet black eye-brows and lashes. There was something also in that thin face (of a deadly whiteness from the contrast of the black bonnet.) that riveted her gaze upon it; while she taxed her memory to recall why it should so haunt her with the feeling that she had seen it before.

The young woman seemed embarrassed by the scrutinizing look which Miss Graham had fixed upon her, as she approached.

"You know me, Miss Graham," she said as one would assert a thing, not question.

"No—I—do—not," Helen answered, slowly.

"Thank God! then *he* will not discover me."

"Mrs. Dorrance! is it possible that this is you so changed? how you tremble! poor thing, what has induced you to assume this disguise?"

Briefly, Margaret told her history, only reserving that portion of it, which would be painful to Helen, as involving her brother; and now, Miss Graham learned for the first time of the jealousy from which the young wife had suffered. Her heart ached as she saw the wretchedness which Margaret had brought upon herself, though she did not scruple to condemn Mr. Dorrance for his severity and his haste.

Through Miss Graham's sincerity, Margaret was led to see that the esteem which her husband had manifested for Helen, bore no comparison with the deep, all-absorbing love which he had lavished upon her in her early married days.

Helen Graham appreciated the thorough change which had been wrought in the thoughtless woman of the world, to inspire in her such self-devotion as she now proposed to carry out: choosing to perform the menial offices of a servant, rather than to endure a longer separation from her children.

Willingly she wrote a note to Mrs. Egerton, commending her in the highest terms—spoke of her as a gentlewoman who had known better and happier days; and suggested that she should be employed rather as a nursery-governess, having the entire charge of the children, and the control of the servants who should be needed to wait upon them. She begged of her to engage her at once, as in so doing, she should perform an act of charity, which she promised to explain to her at some future day.

Mrs. Dorrance was to bear the name of Ann Hastings. She left with the note immediately, her heart full of gratitude to Miss Graham for her prompt assistance.

It was near twilight when she reached ——— Place. Inquiring for Mrs. Egerton, she was shown into the sitting-room. She waited what seemed a long, a very long time to her. Then the door opened, and her husband stood before her. Her heart beat violently.

"Mrs. Egerton is engaged," he said, "perhaps I shall answer as well."

She handed him the note without speaking.

As he turned towards the light, to read it, she ventured to let her eyes rest upon him. She saw that the traces of suffering were as evident in his countenance as upon her own.

He finished the perusal of the note.

"I regret to say that Mrs. Egerton has engaged a young woman; but my child is very ill, and we may need other assistance. I will mention this to her, and you might call again—say at 2 o'clock to-morrow."

Margaret arose, and staggered rather that walked to the door. He advanced to open it for her. Their eyes met. She felt faint and sick, almost guilty, such a searching gaze did he fix upon her. His eyes glanced to her hair, and his countenance then settled back into the same sad gloomy expression it had worn before.

As she went out into the open air, her heart leaped with joy that she had not been recognised.

The next day she returned at two o'clock, and was engaged by Mrs. Egerton.

CHAPTER VII.

The mild, odorous breath of spring stole through the open casement into the lofty apartment where Margaret, known only as Mrs. Hastings, sat bending over her charge.

Ida, when awake, would not suffer Mrs. Hastings to leave her sight; if she was obliged to absent herself, the little sufferer would mean for her until her return. Mrs. Egerton has often said that she was sure the child would never have recovered, had she a less patient and devoted nurse. The physician said so also. Mr. Dorrance said nothing. He suffered steamer after steamer to depart without him, watching whole days and long evening hours by the bedside of his beloved child.

Harry was the only one who seemed to have taken a dislike to Mrs. Hastings. She would often coax him to come to her, but he would only edge himself farther off until he reached a corner of the room, where, with frowning eyebrows, he would look up from under his long lashes, and make mouths at her, in his roguish, independant way.

This pleasant spring day Mrs. Egerton had availed herself of the warm atmosphere to take Harry out upon a drive. She had not seen Miss Graham yet, to thank her for procuring so competent a nurse; and of course she had not a suspicion of who Mrs. Hastings was, never having known her nephew's wife.

In the mean time Ida slept, and her mother bent over her her, heart full of thankfulness to the kind Heavenly Father who had spared her child to her.

During her weeks of continued watching, the religious instruction of her early youth had come up before her with renewed freshness. The noble sentiments and devoted affections of her heart, which had seemed to be extinguished by vanity and the love of pleasure, had been *re-kindled*, and *they now shed their holy light through* her soul. All her interest in life had revived, now that she had taken part in its duties. She only needed a return of her husband's love, to fill the cup of her earthly happiness—a happiness deeper and more rational than life had ever before yielded.

And now while she watched the slumber of her innocent babe, she recalled, as she had done many times before, the errors for which her punishment had been so severe. Her vanity, her pride, her obstinacy, she saw in such a glaring light, that involuntarily she passed one hand over her eyes as though she could thus shut it out.

A footstep fell upon her ear, and glancing up she saw Mr. Dorrance looking at her. The expression of his eyes changed suddenly; she thought she detected in them a shade of sympathy at first. He said,

"Mrs. Hastings, has my aunt told you that we shall go into the country in another month?—to her place on the Hudson?"

"No, sir," she answered, her eyes dropping under his steady gaze,

"I suppose you would prefer remaining with your city friends to going so far with us?" he continued.

"No, no, not for a moment—I have no friends—that is—I mean that I love your child so well, sir, I would follow her to the ends of the earth," she answered very much embarrassed.

There was a long silence.

"Mrs. Hastings, have you heard my history?"

"I have, sir,"

Another silence, during which she walked to the window to conceal the burning glow upon her cheeks.

"I wish you would sit down, Mrs. Hastings, and listen to it from my own lips. I would like to know if it is as you have heard it."

"Indeed, sir, I know the whole. It must be a painful subject to you, I would not recall it," she said, as she resumed her seat.

"No need have I to *recall* it! It is ever present with me. Will you tell it to me as you have heard it?—it is a relief to me to talk about it to you."

Her heart beat fast; she summoned all her courage.

"Your wife, sir, as I understand, was young, giddy, and vain; she did not study your happiness as she ought; you grew cold towards her; she thought that she discovered that you did not love her as fondly as you did another—" Mr. Dorrance gave a start of surprise. Mrs. Hastings continued, "she grew proud, and very wretched; she would have acknowledged all her errors, and begged for a return of her love, if she had not felt that you had deceived her; and so things grew worse and worse, until they terminated in a separation."

"You have not told all; will you let me finish the story."

"Certainly."

"I worshipped my wife! My affection for Helen Graham was calm as a brother's love; but when year after year passed, and my wife grew more and more regardless of my wishes, I did recall the calmer emotions I had felt for Helen with something like regret. One night,

[CONCLUDED ON THE FOURTH PAGE.]