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Poetry.

For the Montrose Democrat.

A Leaf from the Book of Life.

BY ALTADA THE SOLITAIRE.

As Nature smiles on fairy queen of May;
Or sings the bird of morn to rising sun,
As whispering zephyr chaunts to op'ning flowers;
Or dew-drop gleams on primrose gay attire,
"So joyous youth began." All round thee then,
Like nymphs of storied lore, a countless train
From Pleasure's giddy throng were clustering,
And none could see thro' veil of future years
Aught but vernant Spring. Thy day-dreams then,
Tho' fleeting since as morning shadows o'er the
Dusky plain, when fair Aurora's golden flood
First rolls o'er earth and sea, not once retired
From ravished sight when waking hours thy sober
Senses knew. In thoughtless innocence and
Playful glee, thou wandered oft where lakelet's
Curling waters ceaseless roll, and murm'ring
Billow answers sister wave, there matched the
Snow-white lilly from its watery home, or
Twin'd of wild-flower's garland pearl'd by Natur's
Hand. Then straying to the tangled glen,
On granite rock, o'ergrown with mossy
Carpet soft, reclined where summer breezes
Blandly float thro' airy space; thou nipp'd
The violet dyed with ocean-blue, and look'd
The angel form of heavenly message [thy]
Sent. O, seek'ning, sad'ning Change! Whate'er
Name or business here, thy darkling shades
A sombre night have thrown round brightest hopes,
Nor left one fading gleam behind. The rapturous
Smile in glowing blushes wont, faint lingers
Now; thy tearful eye, the sigh that heaves thy
Troubled breast the language of too heart bespeak.
Some ruthless foe to mortal bliss, [illegible]
Thy peaceful hours and poisons all thy joy.
The cold, *cold* world has chilled thy inmost
Soul—*then cursed the misanthrope.* Untaint'd
Purity of heart was thine—the venom'd
Tongue of calumny thou hadst not felt but
Thought to find in others then, the semblance
Of thyself. Vain hope! and bend in bowed
Humility, and worship in common-god
Of self. Spirit eternal! to thee I
Fain address my votive strain. Secluded
Now from heartless world's insensate charms, I'll
Commune oft with Thee. Away to some
Romantic dell, by rustling rivulets
Silvery tide I'll hie me oft, and pensive
Court a solitude that's sweet. From opening
Day till ocean kissing sun lets down
Shadows tall, from Nature's vast [illegible]
Learn of Nature's God. And [illegible]
Sigh, one aching [illegible]
Cell, and dean[illegible]
O'er one, who hated not [illegible]
Were men—*but [illegible]*

Montrose, Dec. 1849.

[illegible]

From Godey's Lady's Book.

THE STEP-MOTHER.

BY GRACE [illegible] WOOD.

THE villagers of N—— well remember the sad morning when the bell tolled for the death of Emma, the once beautiful, lovely, and beloved wife of Judge Allston. Many a face was shadowed, many a heart was in mourning on that day; for she who had gone so early to her rest, had endeared herself to many by her goodness, gentleness and the beauty of her blameless life. She had been declining for a long time, and yet she seemed to have died suddenly at last, so difficult, so almost impossible it was for those who loved her to prepare their hearts for that fearful bereavement, that immeasurable loss.

Mrs Allston left four children—Isabel, the eldest, an intellectual, generous-hearted girl of seventeen, not beautiful, but thoroughly noble-looking; Frank, a fine boy of twelve; Emma, "the beauty," a child of seven, and Eddie, the baby, a delicate infant, only about a year old.

Judge Allston was a man of natural strong and quick feelings, but one who had acquired a remarkable control over expression, a calmness and reserve of manner often mistaken for hauteur and insensibility. He was alone with his wife when she died.—Isabel, wearied with long watching, had lain down for a little rest, and was sleeping with the children—and the mother, even in that hour, tenderly caring for them, would not that they should be waked. The last struggle was brief, but terrible; the spirit seemed torn painfully from its human tenement—the immortal rent its way forth from imprisoning mortality. Yet he, the husband and lover, preserved his calmness through all; and when the last painful breath had been panted out on the still air of midnight, he laid the dear head he had been supporting against his breast, gently down on the pillow—kissed the cold, damp forehead and still lips of the love of his youth, and then summoning an attendant, turned away and sought his room, where alone, and in darkness, he wrestled with an angel of sorrow—wept the swift tears of his anguish, and lacerated his heart with all the vain regrets and wild reproaches of bereaved affection. But with the coming of morning, came serenity and resignation; and then he led his children into the silent chamber where lay their mother, already clad in the garments of the grave. There too he was calm—holding the fainting Isabel in his arms, and gently hushing the passionate outcries of Emma and Frank. He was never seen to weep until the first earth fell upon the coffin, and then he covered up his face and sobbed aloud.

Mrs. Allston was not laid in the village church-yard, but was buried, at her own request, within an arbor, at the end of the garden. She said it would not seem that she was thrust out from her home, if the light from her own window shone out toward her grave; and that she half-believed the beloved voice of her husband, and the singing of her daughter, and the laughter of her children would come to her, when she lay, with her favorite flowers about her, and the birds she had fed and protected building their nests above her in the vines.

When the stunning weight of sorrow, its first distraction and desolation had taken from the light and spirit of Isabel Allston, one clear and noble purpose took complete possession of her mind. She would fill the dear place of her mother in the household—she would console and care for her poor father—she would love yet more tenderly her young brother and sister, and bind up their bruised hearts, so early crushed by affliction—she would be a mother to the babe, who had almost *felt* the bosom which had been its first resting-place, grow cold against its little cheek, and hard and insensible to its "waxen touches;" now that the voice which had hushed it to its first slumbers had sunk low, faltered and grown still for ever, and, the kind eyes which first shone over its awaking—the stars of love's heaven—had suddenly darkened and gone out in death.

After this, it was, indeed, beautiful to see Isabel in her home. There she seemed to live many lives in one. She superintended all domestic affairs and household arrangements with admirable courage and judgment. Her father never missed any of his accustomed comforts, and her brother and sister were as ever neatly dressed, and well taught, and controlled. But on the baby she lavished most of her attention and loving care. She took him to her own bed—she dressed and bathed and fed him, and carried him with her in all her walks and rides. And she was soon richly rewarded by seeing little Eddie become from an exceedingly small, fragile infant, a well sized, [illegible] boy, not stout or remarkably vigorous indeed, but quite healthful and active. The child was passionately fond of his "mamma," as he was taught to call Isabel. Though rather imperious and rebellious toward others, he yielded to a word from her, at any time. At evening, she could summon him from the wildest play, to prepare him for his bath and bed, and afterward he would twine his little arms about her neck, and cover her cheeks, lips, and forehead with his good night kisses, then droop his sunny head on her shoulder, and fall asleep, often with one of her glossy ringlets twined about his small, rosy fingers. At the very break of day the little fellow would be awake—standing over poor Isabel as she [illegible] strove for one hour's brief delicious [illegible]—pulling at her long black eyelashes and [illegible] under the drowsy lids, or [illegible]

And Frank and Emma found ever in their sister [illegible] they were ever [illegible] the [illegible] and they were happy and affectionate in return for all that Isabel's good[ness] and faithfulness. Yet were they never taught to forget their mother, gone from them—rather to speak of her always with [illegible] Her name was often on [illegible] and her name kept green and glowing in their tender hearts. Her grave in the garden-arbor—what a dear familiar place! There sprang the first blue [illegible] of spring—there bloomed the last pale chrysanthemums of autumn—there sweet sabbath hymns and prayers were repeated by childish voices which struggled up thro' tears—there, morning after morning, were reverently laid bright fragrant wreaths, which kept quite fresh till far into the hot summer-day, and shaded mound—and there innumerable times was the beloved name kissed in sorrowful emotion by those warm lips, which half shrank as they touched the cold marble, so like *her* lips when they had last kissed them.

Thus passed two years over that bereaved family—over Judge Allston, grown a cheerful man, though one still marked by great reserve of manner—over his noble daughter, Isabel, happy in the performance of her whole duty—and over the children, the good and beautiful children, whom an angel-mother might have smiled upon from heaven.

It happened that this third summer of his widowhood, Judge Allston spent more time than ever before at the city of S——, the country-seat, and the place where lay most of his professional duties. But it was rumored that there was an unusual attraction in that town—one apart from, and quite independent of, the claims of business and the pursuits of ambition. It was said that the thoughtful and dignified judge had sometimes been seen walking and riding with a certain tall and slender woman, in deep mourning, probably a widow, but still young and beautiful.

At length, an officious family friend came to Isabel, and informed her, without much delicacy or circumlocution, of the prevalent rumors; thus giving her the first inkling of a state of affairs, which must have a serious bearing on her own welfare and happiness—her first intimation that she might soon be called upon to resign her place to a stranger—*a step-mother!* This had been her secret fear; to guard against the necessity of this, manifold discouragements—had labored uncomplainingly, and prayed without ceasing for patience and strength.

Pale and still listened Isabel, while her zealous friend went on, warming momently with her subject: commenting severely on the heartless machination of "the widow," who, though only a poor music-teacher, had set herself, with her coquettish arts, to ensnare a man of the wealth and station and years of Judge Allston. Isabel was silent; but she writhed at the thought of her father, with intellect and knowledge of the world, becoming the dupe of a vain, designing woman. When her visitor had left, Isabel flew to her own room, flung herself into a chair, and covering her face with her hands, wept as she had not wept since the first dark days of her sorrow. Isabel had grown up with a deep, peculiar prejudice against step-mothers; probably from knowing that the childhood and girlhood of her own idolized mother had been cruelly darkened and saddened by the harshness and injustice of a step-mother; and now, there were bitterness and sharp pain in the thought that those dear children, for she cared little for herself, must be subjected to the "iron rule" of an unloving and alien heart.

But she soon resolutely calmed down the tumult of feeling, as she would fain keep her trouble from the children while there still remained a blessed uncertainty. Yet she slept little that night, but folded Eddie, her babe, closer and closer to her breast, and wept over him, till his light curls were heavy with her tears.

The next morning, which was Tuesday, while Isabel sat at breakfast with the children, a letter was brought in, directed to her. It was from father, at S——. Isabel trembled as she read, and at last grew pale and leaned her head on her hand. As she had feared, that letter contained a brief and dignified announcement of the approaching marriage of her father. There was no natural embarrassment exhibited; there was no appology made for this being the first intimation to his family of an event of so great moment to them; such things were not in his way—not in character.—He wrote: "Cecilia Weston, whom I have now known nearly two years, and of whom you may have heard me speak, is a noble woman, the only one I have ever seen whom I considered fully competent to fill your dear mother's place. * * * We are to have a strictly private wedding on Saturday morning next, and will be with you in the evening. To you, Isabel, my dear child I trust I need give no charges to show towards Mrs Allston from the first, if not the tenderness and affection of a daughter, the respect and consideration due the wife of your father. *This*, at least, I shall expect from all my children, if it be not, as I fervently hope it will be given willingly and gracefully."

When Isabel found strength and voice to read this letter of her father's aloud the unexpected intelligence which it contained was received with blank amazement and troubled silence. This was first broken by the passionate and impetuous little Emma, who exclaimed, with flashing eyes and gleaming teeth, "I won't have a new mother! I won't have any mother but Isabel. I hate that Cecilia Weston, and I'll tell her so, the very first thing! I won't kiss papa if he brings her here. Oh, sister, don't ask me to take off her things when she comes, and maybe she won't stay all night!"

"Hush, hush, darling!" said Isabel "I think papa'll be [illegible] will like her very much; I hear that she is a very beautiful woman."

"No, I won't like her! I don't believe she is pretty at all; but a cross, ugly old thing that will scold me and beat me, and make me wear frights of dresses, and maybe cut off my curls!"

This last moving picture was quite too much for "Beauty," and she burst into tears, covering her ringletted head all up with her inverted pinafore.

Frank, now a tall, noble-spirited boy of fourteen, was calm and manly under these trying circumstances, but expressed a stern resolve, which he clinched by an impressive classical oath, never, never to call the unwelcome stranger "*mother.*" "Mrs. Allston" would be polite; "Mrs. Allston" would be sufficiently respectful, and by *that* name, and that only would he call her. Isabel said nothing, but inwardly resolved thus herself to address the young wife of her father.

During this scene, little Eddie, who only understood enough to perceive that something was wrong, some trouble brewing, ran to his mamma, and, hiding his face in her lap, began to cry very bitterly and despairingly. But Isabel soon reconciled him to life, by administering saccharine consolation from the sugar-bowl before her.

It was, finally, with saddened and anxious spirits the little affectionate family circle broke up that morning.

With the bustle and hurry of necessary preparations the week passed rapidly and brought Saturday evening, when the Allstons, with a few family friends, were awaiting the arrival of the Judge and his fair bride.

There were not many marks of festivity in the handsome drawing-room; there was somewhat more light, perhaps, and a few more flowers than usual. Isabel, who had never laid off mourning for her mother, wore to night a plain black silk, with a rich lace cape, and white rose-buds in her hair; Emma was dressed in a light-blue barege, with her pet curls floating about her waist.

At length, rather late in the evening, a carriage was heard coming up the avenue, and soon after Judge Allston entered the drawing-room, with a tall and slender lady leaning on his arm. Shrinking from the glare of light, and with her head modestly bowed, Mrs. Allston entered more as a timed and ill-assured guest, than as the newly appointed mistress of that elegant mansion. Isabel advanced immediately to be presented, offered her hand alone, but that cordially; made some polite inquiries concerning the journey, and then proceeded to assist the bride in removing her bonnet and shawl. She then called Emma, who had advanced shyly, eying the enemy askance. She extended her hand, in a half-diffident, manner; but Mrs. Allston, clasping it in both of hers, bent down and kissed her, smiling, as she did so, on the loveliness of that face. The blood shot up to the very brow of the child, as she turned quickly and walked to a distant window-seat, where she sat, and looked out upon the garden. It was a moonlight night, and she could see the arbor and the gleaming of the white tombstone within, and she wondered sadly if her mother, lying there in her grave, knew about *this woman*, and was troubled for her children's sake.

Frank was presented by his father, with much apparent pride, to his young step-mother, who looked searchingly, though kindly into his handsome, yet serious face.

It was some time before Isabel found the opportunity closely to observe the person and manner of her father's bride. Mrs Allston was, as I have said, tall, but would not have been observably so, perhaps, except for the extreme delicacy of her figure. She was graceful and gentle in her movements—not absolutely beautiful in face, but very lovely, with a most winning smile, and a sort of earnest sadness in the expression of her soft, hazel eyes, which Isabel recognized at once as a spell of deep power—the spell which had enthralled the heart of her thoughtful and unsusceptible father. She looked about twenty-five, and did not look unsuited to Judge Allston, who, with the glow of happiness lighting up his face, and sparkling from his fine dark eyes, appeared to all far younger and handsomer than usual.

Isabel *felt* that her father was not entirely satisfied with the reception which his wife had met from his children; but he did not express any dissatisfaction that night, or ever after.

It was a happy circumstance for Isabel, in her embarrassed position, that the next day was the Sabbath; as going to church and attending to her household duties absorbed her time and attention; thus preventing any awkward *tete-a-tetes* with one whose very title of step-mother had arrayed her heart against her in suspicion and determined, though unconscious, antagonism.

On Sunday afternoon, about the sunset hour, Judge Allston had been wont to go with his children to visit the grave of their mother; but this Sabbath evening I need hardly say, he was not with them there.

"How cool and shadowy looks that arbor at the end of the garden, where Miss Allston and the children are! Let us join them, dear Charles," said Mrs. Allston to her husband, as they two sat at the pleasant south window of their chamber. Judge Allston hesitated a moment and then said, in a low tone, "That arbor, dear Cecilia, is the place where my Emma lies buried."—The young wife looked startled and somewhat troubled, but said nothing.

On Monday, Isabel, after showing her step-mother over the house, resigned into her hands the housekeeper's keys, with all the privileges and dignities of domestic authority.

Day after day went by and Isabel preserved the same cold, guarded manner toward her step-mother, though she oft met those soft, hazel eyes fixed upon her, with a half-pleading and half-reproachful look, which she found it difficult to resist. Frank and Emma still remained shy and distant, and "the baby," constitutionally timid, would scarcely look at the stranger lady, who sought in an anxious, ill-assured way, to win its love and confidence. As little Eddie shrank from those delicate inviting hands, and clung about Isabel, she would clasp him yet closer to her breast, and kiss his bright head with passionate fondness.

On Friday afternoon, Mrs Allston's piano arrived. This was a great event in the family, for Isabel did not play, though she sang very sweetly, and Frank and Emma had both a decided taste for music. Mrs Allston was gifted with a delicious voice, which she had faithfully cultivated and she played with both skill and feeling.

All the evening sat Judge Allston, gazing proudly and tenderly upon the performer, and listening with all his soul. Isabel was charmed in spite of her fears and prejudices, and the children were half beside themselves with delight.

The next morning, as she came in from her walk, hearing music in the parlor, Isabel, entered, and found her step-mother playing and singing the "May Queen," with Emma close at her side, and Frank turning over the leaves of the music. The touching words of the song had already brought tears, and when it was finished, Mrs. Allston suddenly dashed off in a merry waltz, and presently Frank was whirling his pretty sister round and round the room, to those wild, exhilarating notes. When the playing ceased, "Oh, thank you, *mother!*" said Emma, going up to Mrs Allston. In a moment the step-mother's arms were about the waist, and her lips pressed against the lips of the child. That name, and the glad embrace which followed, struck the foreboding heart of Isabel. Her eyes involuntarily sought the face of Frank, and she was not displeased to remark the lowering of his brow and the slight curl of his lip.

But the evening of the very next day, Isabel on entering the parlor, found Frank alone with his beautiful step-mother, sitting on a low ottoman, at her side as she half reclined on a sofa, and leaning his head against her knee, while her soft white fingers were threading his wavy, luxuriant hair. Isabel, giving one startled glance at the two, who were chatting pleasantly and familiarly together, crossed the room, seated herself at a table, and took up a book. Presently, Frank rose, and came and stood by her side. She looked up and murmured, with a slightly re-proachful smile, "*Et tu Brute.*" The boy colored, and soon after left the room.

Thus the days wore on; Isabel feeling her treasures wrested one after another from the fond and jealous hold of her heart; sorrowing in secret over her loss, and still pressing her mother's holiest legacy, her child, dear little Eddie, close, and closer to her breast.

One afternoon, when the hour came for their daily ride, she missed the child from her room. After looking through parlor, kitchen and hall, and calling through the garden, she sought Mrs. Allston's chamber, from whence, as she knocked at the door, she heard the sound of singing and laughter. "Come in!" said a light, musical voice. She opened the door hastily, and there sat little traitorous Eddie, in his step-mother's lap, playing with her long auburn ringlets, while she sung him merry songs and nursery-rhymes. "Eddie!" exclaimed Isabel, somewhat sharply, "you must come with mamma, and be dressed for a ride."—

"No, no, cried the perverse child, "I don't want to ride—I'd rather stay with my pretty new mamma, and hear her sing about "Little Boo-peep."

"No, my dear, you must go with your sister," said Mrs. Allston, striving to set the little fellow down. Isabel advanced to take him, but he buried his face in his step-mother's lap, and screamed, "Go away; I love this mamma best—I won't go to ride with you!"

Pale as death, Isabel turned hurriedly and passed from the room. She almost flew through the house and garden, to the arbor, to the grave of her mother. There she flung herself upon the turf, and clasped the mound, and pressed her poor, wounded heart against it, and wept aloud.

"They have all left me!" she cried; I am robbed of all love, all comfort; I am lonely and desolate. Oh, mother, mother!"

While thus she lay, sorrowing with all the bitterness of a new bereavement, she was startled by a deep sigh, and looking up, beheld Mrs Allston standing at her side. Instantly she sprang to her feet, exclaiming, "Have I then no refuge? Is not even *this* spot sacred from officious and unwelcome intrusion?"

"Oh, forbear, I entreat!" exclaimed Mrs Allston, with a sudden gush of tears. "Pray do not speak thus to me!—you do not know me. I seek to love you, to be loved by you—this is all my sin."

Isabel was softened by those tears, and murmured some half-articulate apology for the passionate feeling which she had exhibited.

"Dear Isabel," said her step-mother, "will you hear my little history, and then judge whether I have erred in assuming the relation which I now bear towards you?"

Isabel bowed her head in assent, and Mrs Allston seated herself in the arbor, but Isabel remained standing, with a firm set lip and her arms folded.

"I fear," began Cecilia, "that your father has not been as communicative and confidential with you as he should have been. I heard from him this morning, with much surprise, that he had told you very little concerning me and our first acquaintance. He said that you never seemed to wish his confidence, and he could not thrust it upon you. I know that you must wonder greatly how he could choose a woman like me—poor and without station or high connections."

"No," replied Isabel, coldly; "on the contrary, I wonder most that you, so young and richly endowed by nature, could prefer a man of the years and character of my father. I know not what there is in him for a beautiful woman to fancy."

"Ah, Isabel," said Mrs. Allston, looking up reproachfully, "I never *fancied* your father. It is with a worthier, [illegible] feeling that I regard him."

Isabel sat down on the rustic seat near her step-mother, who continued, in a fervent tone,

"Yes, Isabel; I *love* your father, dearly love him; he is the only man I have ever loved."

"What!" exclaimed Isabel; "were you not then a widow when you married him!"

"Why no, dear. Why did you suppose it?"

"I heard so—at least, I heard that you were in deep mourning."

"That was for my mother," replied Mrs Allston, with a quivering lip; "yet, until now, I have not been out of mourning for many, many years. I have seen much sorrow, Isabel."

The warm-hearted girl drew nearer to her step-mother, who, after a brief pause, continued—

"My father, who was a lawyer of S—— died while I was quite young—a school-girl away from home, already pursuing with ardor the study of music. He left my mother very little besides the house in which she lived. My only brother, Alfred, a noble boy, in whom our best hopes were centered, had entered college only the year before father died. Then it was that my mother, with the courage of a true heroine and the devotion of a martyr, resolved to remove neither of her children from their studies, but, by her own unassisted labor, to keep me at my school and Alfred in college.

"She opened a large boarding house in S——, principally for gentlemen of the bar, and, almost from the first, was successful. I remained two years longer at school, when a lucrative situation was offered me, as a teacher of music, in the family of a wealthy southern Senator. I parted from my mother, from dear Alfred, and went with the Ashtons to Georgia. There I remained, year after year, ever toiling cheerfully in the blessed hope of returning North, with the means of restoring my beloved mother to her former social position, and of freeing her from toil and care for the remainder of her days. This was the one constant desire of my heart—the one great purpose of my life. I thought not of pleasure—I cared not for distinction, or admiration, or love. I thought only of her; my patient, self-sacrificing mother."

Here Isabel drew near, and laid her hand in that of her step-mother, who pressed it gently as she continued—

"Brother Alfred, immediately on leaving college, commenced the study of the law. I shall ever fear that he confined himself too closely and studied too intensely. His constitution was delicate, like his father's; and, after a year or two, his health, never vigorous, began to fail. Mother finally wrote to me that she was anxious about him; though she added, perhaps her affection for the beloved one made her needlessly fearful. Yet I was alarmed, and hastened home some months before my engagement had expired. I had then been absent five years; but I had seen mother and Alfred once in that time, when they met me on the sea-shore.

It was a sultry afternoon in August when I reached S——. I shall never forget how wretchedly long and weary seemed the last few miles, and how eagerly I sprang down the carriage-steps at last. I left my baggage at the hotel and ran over to my mother's house alone. I entered without knocking, and went directly to our mother's little private parlor—the room of the household. I opened the door very gently, so as to surprise them. At the first glance, I thought the room was empty; but on looking again I saw some one extended on the familiar, chintz-covered sofa. It was Alfred asleep there. I went softly up and looked down upon his face. Oh, my God, what a change! It was thin and white, save a small red spot in either cheek. One hand lay half-buried in his dark, chestnut curls, which alone preserved their old beauty, and that hand—how slender and delicate it had grown, and how distinct was every blue vein, even the smallest! As I stood there, heart-wrung with sudden grief, my tears fell so fast upon his face that he awoke, and half-raised himself, looking up with a bewildered expression. Just then, dear mother came in, and we all embraced one another, and thanked God out of the overflowing fullness of our hearts. As I looked at Alfred then, his eye was so bright and his smile so glad—so like the *old smile*—I took courage again; but he suddenly turned away and coughed slightly—but *such* a cough! It smote upon my heart like a knell.

"When I descended from my chamber that evening, after laying aside my travelling dress, I found a gentleman, a stranger, sitting by Alfred's side reading to him, in a low, pleasant voice. That stranger, Isabel, was your father—Alfred's best, most beloved friend.

"I will not pain your heart by dwelling on our great sorrow, as we watched that precious life, the treasury of many hopes and much love, passing away. With the fading and falling of the leaf, with the dying of the flowers he died!"

Here Mrs Allston paused, and covered her face with her hands, while the tears slid slowly through her fingers. And she wept not alone. At length she continued:

"I have since felt that with poor Alfred's last, dying kiss, the chill of death entered into dear mother's heart, for she never was well after that night. Though she sorrowed bitterly for that only son, so good and so beautiful, she said she wished to live for my sake. Yet vain was that meek wish—vain were my love and care—vain the constant, agonized pleading of my soul with the Giver of life. She failed and drooped daily, and within a year, she was laid beside father, and very near to Alfred. She died, and left me alone—alone in the wide world! Oh, how often, dear Isabel, have I, like you, cried out with that exceeding bitter cry of the orphan, 'Oh, mother, mother!'"

Here Isabel flung her arms around her step-mother, and pressed her lips against her cheek.

"In all this time," pursued Cecilia, "my chief adviser and consoler was the early friend of my mother, the generous patron of my brother—your father, Isabel. And when the first fearful days of my sorrow had gone by, and he came to me in the loneliness and desolation of my life, and strove to give me comfort and courage—telling me at last that he needed my love, even the love of my poor, crushed heart—then I felt that in loving him and his, I might hope for happiness ever more. But oh! if in loving him—in becoming his wife, I have brought unhappiness to those near to him, and darkened the light of their home, I am, indeed, miserable!"

"Oh, do not say so—do not say so!" exclaimed Isabel. "You have won all our hearts. Have you not seen how the children are drawn toward you—even little Eddie, *my babe?* I have not yet called you by *her* name—nor do I know that I can so call you *here*, but I can and will love you, and we shall be very happy; and, by God's help, 'kindly affectioned' one to another!"

"Ah, my dear girl," replied Mrs Allston, with a sweet smile, "I do not ask you to call me by a name of so much sacredness and dignity;—only love me and confide in me—lean upon my heart, and let me be to you as an elder sister.

* * * * * *

The evening had come, and Mrs. Allston, Isabel, and the children were assembled in the pleasant family-parlor, awaiting the return of Judge Allston from his office. Isabel was holding little Eddie on her knee. The child had already repeatedly begged pardon for his naughtiness, and was as full as ever of his loving demonstrations. Cecilia was, as usual, seated at the piano, playing half-unconsciously, every now and then glancing impatiently out of the window into the gathering darkness. Isabel sat down the baby-boy, and going up to her said—

"Will you play the '*Old Arm-chair*' for me?"

"If you will sing with me," replied Cecilia, with a smile.

The two began with voices somewhat tremulous, but they sang on till they came to the passage—

"I've sat and watched her, day by day,
While her eye grew dim"—

here they both broke down.

Cecilia rose and wound her arm about Isabel's waist, and Isabel leaned her head on Cecilia's shoulder, and they wept together. At that moment Judge Allston entered, and after a brief pause of bewilderment, advanced with a smile, and clasped them both in one embrace. He said not a word then; but afterward, when he bade Isabel good-night, at the foot of the stairway, he kissed her more tenderly than usual, saying, as he did so, "God bless you, my daughter!"

A fond couple who got divorced in Brooklyn the other day—the husband having become a base inebriate—grew almost distracted at their separation. He reformed and courting his wife over again, they were *re-married* last Sunday in New York.

Deferred Articles.

GOVERNORS OF PENNSYLVANIA.—From the time when the State Constitution was formed, in 1790, down to the present time, the list of executives is as follows, which may serve as an item of political intelligence to our young men:

THOMAS MIFFLIN, Democrat—elected 1790, and left office 1799.

THOMAS MCKEAN, Democrat—elected 1799, and left office 1808.

SYMON SNYDER, Democrat—elected 1808, and left office 1817.

WILLIAM FINDLAY, Democrat, elected 1817, and left office 1820.

JOSEPH HEISTER, elected by Democratic votes 1820, and left office 1823.

JOHN ANDREW SHULTZE,—elected 1823 and left office in 1829.

GEORGE WOLF, Democrat—elected 1829, and left office in 1835.

JOSEPH RITNER, Whig—elected in 1835, owing to a serious division in the Democratic party, and left office in 1839.

DAVID R. PORTER, Democrat, elected in 1838 and left office in 1845.

FRANCIS R. SHUNK, Democrat, elected in 1844, and died in 1848.

WM. F. JOHNSTON, whig, governor by virtue of his office as speaker of the Senate, and elected in 1848 by a small majority.

JEALOUSY.—The *Baltimore Clipper* states that a gentleman of that city left home on Wednesday, informing his wife that business would probably keep him away until the next day. The wife being of a timid nature, after her husband had gone, sent for her sister to come and stay with her during the night. She did so, and occupied the husband's place in the bed. It so happened that the husband was jealous of his better half, and having completed his business sooner than anticipated, went home shortly after midnight. Going into his chamber, he undressed himself without disturbing either of the occupants of the bed; but just as he was going to get in, he discovered—what his imagination and jealousy instantly conjured into a man! Quick as thought, he seized his boot jack, and commenced belaboring the supposed usurper of his rights, about the head, in the most desperate manner. The screams of his victim and wife, however, soon showed him the mistake he had made; and without taking report for authority, we don't doubt but that he feels foolish and ashamed of his precipitancy. His wife's sister had both her eyes very much blackened and bruised, and the side of her face so badly cut, that a physician was necessarily called in to dress her injuries. We advise him hereafter to follow the advice of Davy Crockett—"be sure you're right, then go ahead."

SENDING THE UMBRELLA BY TELEGRAPH.—Among the very gentlemanly conductors on the Erie railroad, none is better known for his politeness and humor than Mr. Ayres. Not long since, an old lady, from the neighborhood of Binghamton on the upward train of cars, when they had passed Cochecton, and were upward of a hundred miles from Piermont, suddenly missed her umbrella. "There!" she exclaimed dolorously, in a voice that attracted the attention of all in the cars, "There! I do declare I've left my umbrel aboard the steamboat down to Piermont," and continued bewailing her great loss till Ayres entered. "[illegible] you, madam," said he, "is that all? We can put you all right in a minute. Send for it by telegraph, ma'am;" and so saying he reached up his hand to the bell rope that passed through all the cars, and jerked it once or twice and then went to another car, where by a wise management all articles picked up on the boat are carried along the train. He returned a moment afterwards with the umbrella. "Lord amassy!" exclaimed the old lady in a fever of delight and astonishment, "I knowed they sent letters and papers by telegraph, but it's the first time I ever heard of sending an umbrel."—*Journal of Com.*

THE SANDWICH ISLANDS.—So rapidly is the native population diminishing, that the probability is, that by the end of the next ten or fifteen years, scarcely a native will be found on the Islands. Indeed, one of the oldest resident physicians there, has expressed the opinion that this result will be realized within the next five years.—Four-fifths of the population have disappeared since the visit of Capt. Cook, a period of seventy years, and about one-fifth of the remnant have died within the last year. The missionaries estimate the number of deaths during the past year at ten thousand, or more than one-tenth of the whole population. A majority of the infants born were among the victims. The present population of the Islands is about eighty thousand.

MICHIGAN.—The growth of this youthful member of the confederacy has been wonderfully rapid. In 1830 her settlement had hardly commenced; now her population is not less than 400,000. Her soil bears every species of grain which thrives in the State of New York. In 1840, she exported over one million of barrels of flour, an amount ten times greater than all the wheat and flour that passed through the Erie Canal from West of Buffalo in 1832. Her total tonnage in 1847 was over 35,000, and its value is estimated at $1,757,250. The aggregate commerce for the same year was over thirteen millions. Her fisheries yield $200,000 a year; her wool product is over $100,000. Iron, copper, salt and plaster are indigenous and abundant.

George Washington was a man of sense, and his opinions, on any subject, are deserving of respect. He said: "The foolish and wicked practice of cursing and swearing, is a vice so mean and low, that every person of sense and character detests and despises it." We hope, if any profane persons read this article, they will consider how decidedly vulgar it is to swear, how little it benefits them, and act accordingly. Nothing would create an unfavorable impression in regard to a stranger, so quick as to hear him utter an oath. It stamps him at once as a low-bred person.

THE CHOLERA.—The Cholera has again made its appearance in the West. Two boats arriving at St. Louis had cases on board—one had 30 cases, of which 17 terminated fatally. The epidemic had broken out above Vicksburg. We trust it is but a transient re-appearance.