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TERMS.

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The Garland.

"With sweetest flowers enrich'd,
From various gardens cull'd with care."
For the Herald & Expositor.

DEATH OF ABSALOM.

The King of Israel sat alone, communing with his God,
And on the palace's lofty walls the sentry slowly trod,
The day was waning fast, the night was coming on apace,
No voice of kindness lent its charm to that deserted place.
When victor's wreath had crown'd the lord,
That house with shouting rang, and shouts of praise
Its hills were fill'd with beauties bright—the minstrel's lute was rung,
The martial voice of joy reach'd to the high and fretted dome,
And through the brilliant throng the King, would oft with pleasure roam.
But touch'd by sorrow's hand, that place assum'd a sadder reign,
Sadness suppress'd the voice of joy, and pleasure fled from pain;
The palace now re-echoes with the sighs and sob of grief,
That burst from an afflicted heart, which seeks in vain relief,
"Comes there no news from Absalom, pursued by bitter foes?"
The father's friends are hostile to the son—but who are those,
That run withdrawt feet, across you wide ex-tended plain,
Do they bring peace, or must my heart be torn with torturing pain?"
"By all thy foes this day, O King, as thy rebel-ious son!
His deeds of wickedness are o'er, his wretched race is run."
Thus spoke the messenger; his words had left the King's heart,
That piercing gives the sorest wound to a fond father's heart.
He turn'd from all his chiefs, and sought seclusion in a tower,
Whose stillness even add'd to that dark and lone-ly hour.
Then from the noisy, crowded streets, the tribes in silence went,
And every man of Israel sought in heaviness, his tent.
From off that height the father gaz'd, in silence o'er the plain,
And thought of that loved one, whose form he lov'd to see again,
But who the anguish of that heart in language e'er can tell?
"Would I had died for thee, my son, my Absalom father!"
Dickinson College, Oct. 31, 1837.

Old Pennsylvania.

Old Pennsylvania, thou art proof,
That Freedom is a legacy upon
Thy cottage hearth and bower'd roof,
Thy mansion, temple, and altar,
Are all illum'd by its light.
Thy population breathe an air
Unstain'd with the accursed blight
Of slavery's sin—'tis here
Exalts a happy race of men
A nobler than the sons of Penna?
Look at our farmer's home. There stands
His large substantial barn—
The magazine of all his lands;
Survey his ample fields of corn,
Inspect his strong and glossy bays;
His noble cows with udders streaming—
And did you ever, in your days,
By land or sea—awake or dreaming,
Find such economy and grace?
For every straw is in its place,
For iron roads and grand canals,
For social parties, full of fun,
For frigate, court and bouncing gale,
For the key-stone of your days,
Are seeking for a wife—come here:
The daughter of our sturdy peasant,
Will make life's pilgrimage appear
A May-day journey; bright and pleasant,
She'll change the sorrows of the year,
And warm them through the winter nights.
The Moon expands her purple wings,
Above the Eastern mountain's height,
And Nature's boundless temple rings,
With notes of sweetness and delight,
Rise! travel! rise!—now quit the heath,
And stand on yon commanding peak,
And catch Aurora's balmy breath,
And print a kiss upon her cheek,
For as a phantom she'll retire,
When she hath introduced her sire.
Now softly—'tis this height a sire,
Scented roses upon the gentle breeze,
Yet there is whispering, all around,
"A still small voice" among the trees.
This sanctuary should be sought.
Each morning, and at night he trod
For here the heart's direction sought,
"To sweet communion with his God,
And filial awe and hope control
The wide domain of the soul."
The mista dispersion—the prospect fill'd!
And we can see, 'tis vision false,
The rocks upon a thousand hills,
The castle in a thousand valleys,
Look on the mountain's top below,
'Tis garden spreads on either hand,
White winding rivers seem to flow,
Like veins of silver through the land,
White like a towering citadel,
The glorious mountain circle all!
I see, I see that thou art won,
Reader! farewell, and joy attend,
Thy wanderings beneath the sun,
And peace be thine when they shall end.
As for myself, I cannot rest,
'Till I can call Rebecca mine,
And Oh! tonight upon her breast,
My envied head I shall recline.
And dream, while guarded by my charmer,
That 'tis a Pennsylvania farmer.
Printing Office, Nov. 12, 1837.

Select Tale.

THE GROOMS MAN.

A Tale founded upon incidents in Real Life.

BY H. M. MOORE, AUTHOR OF "MARY MORRIS."

(Concluded.)

CHAPTER VI.

Mr. West, when he married Julia Graham, loved her, not according to the general acceptance of the word, but with a fervor approaching idolatry. His feelings towards were of the most exalted kind; her delicate and tender in their nature; pure as a stream of crystal waters, & as sweet as the tones of an Arabian harp. Over the strings of the harp, the summer breeze trembles, with its dying cadence and its rich deep tones—melting musical; so it was with Theodore's love! all gentleness—devotion—fondness. To him a wife seemed something more than an earthly being; something pure; something holier! Besides, he was in a great measure the creature of impulse, and born with sensibilities naturally superior to those ordinarily characteristic of the human species, why he became so easily the dupe of misrepresentation, is a conclusion not at all difficult for us to arrive at. His fault, in the present case, was the error of hasty judgment, acted upon by the lightning-like feelings of a warm and youthful heart—youth is necessarily without experience. But this only serves in some degree to palliate the circumstance, not to excuse it. Had he paused, as he should have done, for reflection, he would not have been obliged to leave him as she did; nor would he have experienced those conflicting tortures of the mind, beneath the lash of which he was hourly withering.

By the side of his dying child he watch'd, unremittingly, till it breathed its last, and when finally convinced that the spark of life was extinct, his grief was excessive, vehement, and even blasphemous. To this succeeded despondency. After the storm of passion, the gloom of despair—in its repose more awful than in the violence of commotion. Upon the bed beside the corpse he sat, with his eyes fixed upon the inanimate form, nor could any entreaties prevail on him to leave the room. He was finally taken out, not exactly by force, but with the utmost reluctance. During this scene, Clark was standing in the chamber, a little apart from the group, smiling with malicious satisfaction, as he witnessed the grief his master displayed—the whole reminded of a scene in Shakspeare's Othello; and of Ferriat and Booth in their masterly delineations of the Moor and Iago.

Monday, the third day after the child's decease, was fixed upon for the burial. The hearse, with its dark hangings and mute driver, stood before the door. Friend after friend gathered around the mansion from the city in carriages, and from the neighborhood on foot. Mr. West refused to attend the funeral—'excused, nor would he assign any reason; they persuaded; but no, he would not, and the train was consequently obliged to proceed without him. Previous to its starting, Clark whispered in private to his fellow servants, the expediency of some one remaining with him in the absence of the rest. "In his present disordered state of mind," he said, "it will not be prudent to leave him alone. He may possibly be tempted to suicide." Once before he attempted to force, but with the utmost reluctance to remain. It was accordingly agreed that Clark should stay. As the funeral left, the parent of the child about to be buried, stood under the piazza, watching the slow and solemn train till it disappeared from his sight. Turning into the house, he was followed by Clark, and giving way to his despair, called for the cup of intoxication. "Wine!" he exclaimed. "Give me the glass—these miseries are more than I can bear!" As he spoke, he pressed his hand convulsively against his forehead, and his heavy breathings betokened the weight of sorrow under which he labored. "My child! my child!" he bitterly exclaimed, and continued to repeat her name, with words of affection and regret. "I have lost her! lost her! were his words deep and passionate; the accents of his grief. "Mother and child both gone—both from my sight, and I am left a wreck amidst the barren waste of life!" For a moment he paused, subdued by the intensity of his sorrow, and bursting into tears wept like a child. A smile spread over the countenance of Clark—the triumphant one of successful villainy! His victim again called for wine. Glass after glass of it he continued to swallow—his senses forsok him—he staggered, reeled, and in hysterical convulsions fell prostrate upon the floor.

"Now—now I triumph," cried the malignant Clark, who had been careful to supply his victim with the intoxicating draughts, expecting the present result. "Alas! Aurora's prostrate body, I stand—like Zanga, too, I must awake my victim into horrors! What, ho! arise!" jerking the other by the coat-collar, and endeavoring to rouse him from his stupor.

It is painful to speak of Mr. West in the situation he is here before the reader. But disagreeable as it is, it is unavoidable.

bly necessary. The thread of the narrative exacts it. Intoxicated and insensible as he was, such was the vehemence of Clark's language, that "startled" him, and half opening his eyes, he encountered the other's demoralizing gaze.

"Your child died by poison!"

"Poison?"

"Ay, sir—poison!—and I administered the fatal drug."

"You!"

"Yes—me! Behold me!" he cried, tearing off his whiskers and false hair, displaying the light-colored ringlets he naturally possessed, instead of the jet black curls of a wig; and revealing to the astonishment of his hearer—

"Byard!"

"Yes, Byard—your wife's cousin, and your own eternal enemy! 'Twas I that poisoned your child—'twas I that murdered it."

"You?"

"For revenge!" said he, thundering out his words, and forcing a laugh of fiendish exultation, whilst his mouth foamed with the excitement of his passions—"for revenge! revenge!" Here a momentary pause ensued, during which they intensely and earnestly gazed at each other—the one tremulous with awe, the other scowling with the dark and vindictive spirit of wicked determination. Mr. West, to his feet, and was for leaving the room, but Byard intercepted him, placing himself against the door, and imperatively bidding the other to remain where he was. "Hear me!" he said, "rather vengeful. You married my cousin, Julia Graham. I loved her, and when her preference was fixed upon you, I felt the demon-rankle in my bosom—the demon that activates me now. However I managed to smother my feelings at the time, and even officiated as your groom, my happiness I could not bear to witness, and she departed for Europe. There I planned the scheme I have since executed. After the absence of a year, I returned to the United States—intent upon one thing—the destruction of your felicity. In the first place, to arouse your suspicions, I loitered about these premises, night after night, with a flute and guitar, playing, and times accompanying the instrument with my voice. In your Spanish servant, Manuel Garcia, I found a ready abettor for the gold I supplied him with; and at my desire he whispered in your ears the lying tale, so easily readily your breast with jealousy.

"At this bare-faced confession, it may fairly be supposed Mr. W. was thunder-struck. He was so: and with speechless amazement and impatience, a waited, while Byard continued as follows:

"Worn out, as it were, by your harsh treatment, her affection for you seemed to be suspended, and to leave you the most prevailing desire of your wife's bosom. Manuel discovered it—disclosed to me the secret, and at my bidding proffered his assistance, which she unhesitatingly accepted of—A plan for her escape was agreed upon, and a night not far distant appointed to put it into effect. She was to be rowed across the river, there to take a carriage, which was to be in waiting. The night settled upon us. I had a schooner hired, ready at anchor in the stream, a mile below; and dressed in the garb of a sailor, I waited with a boat at the designated spot. She came down—with Manuel, entered the boat, and was entrapped on board of the vessel. We got under weigh, sailed immediately from the river, and as soon as we were out at sea, I attempted—

"Impossible!"

"Yes, I did, but own that I found her virtue impregnable. My endeavors she resisted; it enraged me, and rather than she should ever get again to your arms, I determined to—say!—and now she sleeps beneath a watery grave!"

"Lead?"

"She is—she is!—murdered!"

At the announcement of this, an exclamation of horror escaped from the lips of Theodore, and his uplifted hands were clenched in the energy of despair. His wife's innocence was now declared beyond a doubt; and as he thought over the wrongs he had received; of the sorrows he had himself been the cause of, he groined with remorse! Remorse! remorse! and his groans were music to the exciting fury of Byard. But at this crisis, in the very midst of his triumph, the door of the room was burst open, and Garcia, with several police officers, entered. "Then he is—seize him!"

"Ha! traitor!" cried Byard. Drawing a loaded pistol from his breast pocket, he levelled it at Garcia and fired, and instantly fell upon the floor, drenched in blood! The officers secured the perpetrator of the deed, who made no resistance, as he knew well enough it would be fruitless to do so.

"Hear me!" gasped the dying Spaniard, faintly, at the moment recovering sufficient strength to raise himself on one hand. "I am the murderer of the tavern-keeper—killed—Baltimore—year—1825! uttering which he sunk back and expired.

Byard was conveyed to prison. The coroner was sent for, and a verdict given over the corpse of Manuel, which was then taken to the city for burial.

CHAPTER VII.

Owing to the shock he received at the certainty of his wife's death, and confusion of crowded incidents treated of in the preceding chapter, Mr. West was taken sick. Before three days he was very low

indeed; so much so that the skillful physician, whom we have previously had occasion to notice in the course of our narrative, had actually fears for his safety. He recognized no one—not even his most intimate acquaintances. While in slumber his breathings were long-drawn, and apparently painful. Thus he lay for months—four months—upon the verge of the grave as it were, but fortunately, and much to the joy of those around him, all at once began to get better. He had lain in a dream, comparatively speaking, from which his sickness he was mentally insensible; and his recollections of what had occurred, even after his convalescence, were at first imperfect; but, as the renewal of his health continued, the facts gradually unfolded themselves—the flight of his wife—his daughter's death—Byard's revenge—and Garcia's fate; these, and the circumstances connected with them.

Amidst it all, too, he remembered seeing, at intervals, when his sight was open, but his reason yet clouded, the form of a female moving noiselessly and with care around his bedside. He remembered her as a vision—seen—but indistinct. Where was she next?

He was yet confined to bed, and it was requisite that some one should be constantly at his side. "Eliza," said he, addressing a servant girl in attendance.

"Sir—"

"Who has been nursing me during my sickness?"

"The seamstress, sir," was the reply to his question; an answer unexpected indeed; and Mr. West was unable to comprehend it. "Thinking he might possibly have been misunderstood, he repeated the interrogatory, to which, however, the same response was returned.

"The mistress? Who is she?"

"Indeed, sir, I cannot say. Your wife's relatives recommended her here, but ever since she entered the house, instead of pursuing her occupation, she has faithfully devoted her attention to you."

"How long has she been here?"

"She came two or three days after you were first taken sick, and has remained since then."

Here there was a pause of silence and of thought on the part of Mr. West for a minute or two, then broken by him with another inquiry. "A seamstress—you say she is?"

"Yes, sir."

At this moment, as it will often happen, the door was opened and the person they were speaking of entered the apartment—Eliza left the room. The seamstress, as she encountered the agent gaze of Mr. West, trembled,—a crimson flush spread over her pale-white cheeks, and she paused in confusion. Recollecting herself, she falteringly advanced to the bedside of the invalid, and with a tremulous accent inquired after his health?

"I am better, much better, I thank you; and to your kind notice during the hours of suffering am I indebted for the restoration and relief. It must have been wearisome to watch so long by the couch of a patient's sickness; and for sake of administering to my comfort, how much of personal inconvenience you must necessarily have overlooked."

To those remarks of his she unhesitatingly returned a negative answer. The performance of the duties, for which he thus without flattery commended her, were not felt as a trouble—no; but were the delightful promptings of humanity, which a tender solicitude will always suggest to an affectionate heart. Mr. West admired! Upon the intellectual countenance of the seamstress his eyes were riveted, and it seemed as if the lineaments were not unfamiliar. There was sadness pictured in those expressive brows; sorrow and resignation blende like the colors, and the slight shades of a finished painting. He noticed that she was dressed in mourning, too, and asked if she lamented a near relation?

"Yes," was the faltering reply—"my child!"

"Your child?"

"Yes—my only child!" Tears streamed over her cheeks, and she asked to be excused as she left the chamber, to conceal the rising emotions of her bosom, to weep in secret. Mr. West was of course sorry that he had so abruptly broached the subject, and was upon the point of calling her back to apologize—but was at a loss for her name—he had forgotten to ask it. The servant girl again entered the room, and he appealed to her.

"What's the name of the seamstress, Eliza?"

"Mrs. Bennett," was the answer.

"You know anything about her child—how long has it been dead?"

"No, sir."

"Is her husband alive?"

"Indeed, sir, I cannot answer you positively;—but I believe she is a widow."

"You have heard so?"

"No, sir, I have not. I judge from incidental impressions altogether. I may be mistaken—she may have a husband."

"When in conversation, have you ever known her revert to the child?"

"Never, sir—when she first came I merely understood that she was in black for a daughter she had recently lost."

"Daughter! the child she lost was a daughter then it seems?"

"So I understood, sir. As to knowing anything about her, she associates so little with us, that we've not the opportunity to discover for ourselves. With the old housekeeper, Margaret, she is intimate, but with none of us."

"Tell Margaret I wish to speak with her."

The girl accordingly left the room, to obey the order, and her master, leaning back upon the pillow, was immediately involved in a labyrinthian train of thought—the face and the tones of the voice were. A seamstress! She had been recommended by his wife's relations in that capacity,—so said the girl, but since her entry into the establishment had devoted her time entirely to the care of himself—There was surely kindness in that—that was there not affection? Being a seamstress, she was consequently dependent upon her own labors for a livelihood. But what of that? Life is full of changes, and to be poor reflects no disgrace. Louis Philippe, a king, and the wealthiest of men, was once obliged to teach in a humble school in the wilds of America for a hireling. Reverses in life are daily occurring; and those that are now rollings along in the luxury of a carriage, may soon be begging for bread: Such most likely was the case of Mrs. Bennett—she had experienced a reverse. Her manner and conversation avouched it. The outline of her face, the high forehead and the soft blue eye, resembled his late wife's, but there the likeness ended. Mrs. Bennett's smooth dark hair, so modestly retiring beneath the snowy whiteness of her cap, corresponded not with Julia's auburn curls—nor the almost spiritual paleness of her cheeks with Julia's mantling bloom. Besides, she looked older than Mrs. West.

His thoughts were here interrupted by the entrance of the housekeeper, Margaret, whom he had sent for—an old woman who had been in the service of his father before Theodore was born, and who was considered more as a relative than a hireling. At the period of Mr. and Mrs. W.'s domestic differences, she was the only one of the household that sympathized with the latter. When her master finally insisted upon having separate sleeping apartments, she took the liberty of remonstrating against it, and even went so far as to upbraid him with injustice. After the departure of Mrs. West, as a confirmation throw it up to Margaret, she could not bear to it, and on all occasions defended the character of her former mistress. When asked by any one her reasons for thus insisting on the innocence of his master's wife, her exclamation would be—"Guilty! she guilty!—not—she is too good—too amiable!"

"Well, Margaret," said Mr. West, as she entered the room, asking her some trifling question as a matter of form, and desirous of humoring her old age before he ventured upon the subject for which he expressly wanted her. "Acquaintance was by no means a quality of hers, and who could be generally staided stiff and formal? precise in every thing they do or say, and at the age of fifty and upwards, with as many wrinkles in the face, as there are crimplies in the Elizabeth-like collars round their veiny necks. Margaret was an exception—there are exceptions in all things. She was hale, happy, and bustling. Her younger days had been tainted with the breath of calumny, but her latter years were unimpeachable.

"I am well, I thank you," was the reply she gave to the question he asked. "As long as I keep upon my feet, I've no fears, but when an elderly person once becomes bedridden, life's not good for much. It's then more of a torment than a pleasure. I was forty odd when I first came to live with your father. I've outlived him and my mother these fifteen years, and if I survive them till next fall, I shall be sixty-four."

"You may outlive me, too," said the invalid, smiling.

"I hope not," replied she seriously. "Your sweet I followed to the grave—your present little daughter, too; and your wife is now—Ah, sir, you have lost a treasure in her that you can never replace. She loved you, and she has—"

"Died for me! She has, Margaret, she has! I know it. The truth of what you say I am aware of, and till the last moment of my existence shall I repent in the bitterness of heart."

"I always told you that she was innocent."

"You did, but I did not believe it; and now alas, it is too late to repair the injury done! She sleeps not in these arms as once she did; but in the sleep of death—the long cold silence of an ocean grave, to wake on earth no more! After giving utterance to these words, he lay back upon his pillow for several moments without speaking, and Margaret, under the impression that he was desirous of repose, advanced to the door, and was about leaving the room; but Mr. West motioned her to remain, and after a second intermission of silence, asked if there was not a strong resemblance between the seamstress, Mrs. Bennett, and his late-lamented wife.

"Why, yes, there's a likeness," said Margaret; "I had not observed it before; but now that you speak of it, I think she does look something like the portrait in the drawing-room. But Mrs. Bennett has got dark hair, and she's very pale, too. My mistress, you know, had light hair, and always a light color."

"Yes;—but still the resemblance is great; so much so, that I am on the tip-toe of curiosity, as it were, and anxious to know more about her. She seems far above her present situation in life, and from what I have already seen of her, I am satisfied she has hitherto moved in a higher sphere than the humble orbit in which she now revolves. What do you know of her?"

"Me!" exclaimed Margaret. "Why—what should I know of her? There was

some linen to be made up, and she was recommended here as a seamstress—I know that."

To this followed successive questions and answers. Were the replications returned by Margaret, equivocal or not?—Mr. W. gave it no thought, and of course did not suspect they were, but merely considered it her usual odd way, which it was indeed very similar to. Finding he was not likely to gain any further information, he dropped the subject, and Margaret afterwards left the apartment. Still Mr. West's curiosity, or rather his impatient desire to be acquainted with the past history of the seamstress, was not abated, but sharpened by the obstacles it incurred. She came into his room the next day, so fitly inquired how he felt, and taking a seat at his bedside, composedly joined in a conversation with the recovering invalid. This continued for several forenoons, and the afterpart of the day was consequently dull and tedious to him for the want of her presence. The more he saw of her, the more he liked her; and one morning as she was about leaving him, he asked if she would not come in the afternoon and read a few pages for him in a volume he mentioned. She answered that she would with pleasure, and did so. This was repeated, and she was subsequently at his side for the most part of the day. It was not long before Mr. West was able to walk about his room, and shortly afterwards to be out of doors, leaning upon her arm as they promenade round the piazza, or leisurely strolled down the gravel-walk. How often would their eyes meet—hers bent on him with looks of apparently the sincerest affection, and his on her with a gaze of admiration—admiration mingled with respect & reserve—reserve, however, which gradually wore off; and they eventually became more intimate, but still not enough so to warrant his making the inquiries he wished concerning her former life and present connections. Frequently was he upon the point of addressing to the subject, but the point of addressing to the subject, and his heart would invariably fall him. The next meeting he would certainly speak of it, but the same hesitancy would then occur. He would postpone it till the next, and so the time slipped by. Alas! the human heart—how susceptible!—for it can no longer be concealed that his affections were hourly cementing themselves with the form, the thoughts and the beauty of the seamstress, who was indeed a person every way meritorious—a person whose pure sentiments were mingled with a generous regard for the opinions of another, and whose able deportment at all times commanded admiration and esteem.

CHAPTER VIII.

Still the time slipped by—and still the seamstress remained at the mansion, the same accomplished and amiable being, the courteous companion of Mr. West, and the delight of the household. Each day she put forth a budding virtue, and each day did Theodore discover something new in the traits of her character—to admire—"The domesticities of the establishment began to consider her, not as one of their own number, but as the mistress of the place, and consulted her on many occasions as if she actually was—none of them but old Margaret having served under its former mistresses. As has been before stated, when she first came she was remarkably pale, and to the domestics very retired and even distant in her manner. A change in both had taken place. The fulness of youth appeared to develop itself, and her cheeks began to tinge with a flush, whilst her movements to and fro were distinguished by an observable increase of activity, and to the servants, who voluntarily rendered their difference—she was compliant and kind. In the eyes of Theodore she seemed to grow younger, and more and more to resemble his lost wife. We all have our peculiarities—Mr. West had hers, and her husband fancied that in the seamstress he detected a similarity of predilections, taste and preference. There was the same small white hand, the same pretty little foot, and—but for the dark hair—would often have concluded that it was really Julia—standing before him.

There was mystery around her!—Was she a widow or not? She did not say she was, nor to the contrary. To have asked her the question, would not have incurred a breach of politeness, or would it have been anything more than an ordinary interrogation. But so it was, as it often will occur, notwithstanding his desire to know, he could not summon sufficient confidence to make the inquiry;—something always transpired to deter him—a trivial thought perhaps, or a yet more trifling incident. He was himself conscious of this inconsistency, nor did he at all suppose Mrs. Bennett would be offended if he asked her the question, but—and thus the time was wasted in delay. The mere interrogatory would imply nothing,—it would by no means reveal his motives for asking; but so delicate were his own feelings on the subject, that the cause which actuated him could be seen through; he considered as inevitable.

"But why do I entertain these

thoughts," he would say. "Of what importance is it to me, whether she is a widow or not? I've no intentions of asking her hand: have I? have I really such intentions? No!—no second marriage shall destroy the hallowed charms that breathe around the early remembrance of the first. But what is this—this warmth within my heart for her is it love,—or is it gratitude?"

Daily and almost hourly within each other's society they were; and consequently every possible opportunity to study the disposition and the character of one another. "That she has been the direct means of restoring me to health, I am convinced," said Theodore, "and am I not in duty bound to make her a recompense? But what recompense? She is here residing under the same roof with me, and I have become so much attached to her, that I am only contented when in her society. If she is a widow,—as I believe she is,—under the present circumstances, is it not imperatively my duty to offer my hand?"

Thus it continued till September, 1832—Mrs. Bennett had been nearly a year at the mansion; and by this time Theodore had prevailed upon himself that it positively was his duty to make the offer of his hand,—provided there existed no obstacle to the union—

"Could I bear to part with her? no! then why not make her my wife?" he would ask himself. "Besides, the world is censorious, and if I defer it longer the tongue of scandal will perhaps be at work."

Accordingly he finally resolved to avail himself of the first opportunity, make the necessary inquiries, and, in case there was no hindrance to a marriage, to offer himself if she acknowledged a reciprocity of feeling.

"Margaret,—do you think he loves me?" said the seamstress, speaking with an air of playfulness to the housekeeper.

"Yes, I do," was the plain good humored answer.

"But as well as he loved his wife when he first married her! do you think that?"

"Why, indeed, ma'am, that's a difficult question for me to answer,—but I see no reason why he should not love you as well as her. If it was not for your dark hair, you look so much alike that were you both standing together, I could not tell which was which."

"She had light hair, had she not?"

"Yes,—beautiful. She never wore caps as you do, and but for the color of your hair and cap, you are as much like she was as two could possibly be."

"But should Theodore make a profession of marriage, would you advise me to accept it?"

"Certainly,—you have been married once so has he,—and if you can make matters suit, marry him. There he is now, out on the piazza—go to him, and if he should take it into his head to make you a proposal, don't refuse."

So saying, the old woman laughingly retired from the room, and Mrs. Bennett went out to meet the person spoken of.

At this period Mr. West was in his twenty-eighth year—still handsome, but pale compared with what he once was. His sorrows had not altered him materially—he was not as vigorous as formerly; but returning health and regular exercise it was expected would restore him to his original strength. He was seated when Mrs. Bennett approached, and as she sat down beside him he took her hand in his own, at the same time calling her attention to the beauty of the sky and the setting sun. Scarcely a breath of air stirred the foliage of the trees, and the scene seemed as calm, as quiet, as holy, and as pure; as an infant sleeping. As the radiance of the sunlight fell upon the countenance of Mr. West, it seemed to impart an unusual beauty to its expression, and absorbed with her thoughts and feelings, the seamstress gazed on him with a look he could not but understand. "Yes that gaze—that one long look, revealed it all—she loved him!"

"How much like her—how like the wife that I have lost!" he exclaimed: "My wife and child—both dead—both lost! A child—that I idolized—a wife that I adored!"

"Adored!"

"Yes,—though I injured her, I loved that woman—as a man has seldom loved! Had I loved her less,—better, better, would I it have been for us! There was one who secretly envied our happiness—she poured into my ears the poison of jealousy, to which I listened with ready hearing,—believed the falsehoods that she uttered, and treated her as cruelly, that she was forced to leave me—forced to it! This suited the villain's scheme—on board of a vessel she was ensnared, and out at sea he tried—yes—but she rebuffed his hellish purposes—when he, rather than she should ever