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## MISCELLANEOUS.

From the Columbia Magazine.

### VINCENT HERVEY; OR THE MAN OF IMPULSE.

By the Author of "A New Home," &c.

A few months after I left college, I quitted my native place with the intention of trying what could be bought with a large fortune which had become mine by the untimely death of a kind father and uncle. My guardians had given up their charge, and though I exulted in the thought of my own competency to take care of myself. I was not insensible of an occasional *folly*, such as a child may feel on first leaving off his go cart and leading-strings. With that listlessness which is sometimes the result of having plenty of money, I sought amusement which should not interfere with my love of reverie. I hated dissipation, and scorned many modes of killing time much in vogue among young men of my own class. They voted me an odd fellow, and left me to myself. My head was full of romance, and yet when one of my guardians advised me to fall in love, I determined that should be the very last thing I would do. A commonplace courtship and marriage, to set out in life with, would be putting the denouement of a novel on the first page. I resolved to see much of this fair world, and study most narrowly the fairest portion of its inhabitants, before I would hazard my liberty by a particular interest in any one of them.

I must remind the reader that I was not city bred, to account for the fact that I was a devout believer in friendship. Against this best solace of life I had prepared no shield; but rather sought an occasion when I might win some kindred soul to a brotherhood with which the ties of blood could bear no comparison. I felt ready to pour out my life for such a Pyrales, and I did not doubt I should find some one equally willing to be all in all to me. I did not consult my guardians on this subject, for I had an intuitive premonition that they would not agree with me; but I was none the less resolved to shape my course after my own views. I rather avoided than sought society, sure that I should never meet, in that unmeaning sound, the friend whose regard was to form the happiness of my life.

I was standing on the wharf one afternoon, just as the steambot was leaving for Albany. I enjoyed the animating bustle; I looked at the gay, busy, anxious passengers, and left something like envy of their happiness as I saw the boat in motion, and several of the crowd on shore waving hats and handkerchiefs in adieu. At this moment a young man of most prepossessing appearance came running along Greenwich street with a valise in his hand. When he reached the wharf he called anxiously for a barge to take him to the steamer, and throwing his valise into one which happened to be ready, he sprang in himself with an expression of satisfaction. I could not resist a moment longer the desire I felt to go too, and I was on the deck of the steamer before I recollected that I was wholly unprepared for a journey. This, however, was a matter of small moment, and I soon became interested in the busy scene around me, and above all in the gentleman whose countenance and manner had impressed me so favorably. He appeared two or three years older than myself, and the few words which escaped him as we flew along in the barge satisfied me that he was at least well bred. The rest I took for granted. I had one or two acquaintances on board, but they had never seen my hero before, and wondered at the interest which I expressed in him. I sat down on deck in musing mood, hoping that some accidental circumstance would serve to open some communication with the stranger, when he approached, and with some slight remark, seated himself near me. This mode of making an acquaintance would never, I believe, have occurred to my formal college train; but the ice once broken, I was more and more pleased with my new friend, who conversed with fluency, touching on a variety of subjects, and handling them well, taking care, however, to allow me my full share of the conversation with a polite deference which was not a little flattering to my vanity.

The tea bell disturbed us, but an hour later found us pacing the deck arm in arm, and until midnight we continued to enjoy the moonlight together. It was late when I awoke the next morning, and the steamer was nearing the wharf at Albany. I sought my new friend, whose name on the card he gave me was Henry Errington, and we agreed to take lodgings together.

We landed and were making our muddy way down Market street when a rough looking man called my companion aside. In another moment I saw him in the hands of a brace of constables, who expressed no small exultation at having secured him. I wondered; but my consternation was complete when I felt myself arrested also in the character of 'one of the gang.' In vain I protested the innocence of both—I introduced my companion as Mr. Errington, and handed my own card to the men of law; they laughed at all I could say, and insisted on our going with them quietly. One of them, by way of satisfying himself and the bystanders that he was not mistaken, took a dirty paper from his pocket, and read a description which he declared fitted me to a hair.

'Six feet high,' said he, glancing up at me, for he was a little, stunted figure of a man, 'rather slightly made; hair dark brown, very handsome teeth, and piercing black eyes; white slender hands, and every appearance of a gentleman. He folded up the paper and looked about him with an air of complacency, saying, 'I think I'm about right—go it, my fine fellows! we'll have the rest pretty soon!'

My situation was awkward enough. My own acquaintances had all left the steamer before us, and there was no one present who could identify me. I requested that Mr. E., naming one of the first men in the city, might be sent for.

'A clear fetch,' said my tormentor, 'but it won't do, Mr. Smoothtongue. If you want to see Mr. E. he may come after we get you safe under lock and key, so come along!'

I began myself to think this the wisest course, for a crowd was gathering, and our situation was becoming more conspicuous every moment. I walked on quietly, therefore, and, as we turned a corner, looked my companion in the face for the first time since this unpleasant scene commenced. Our eyes met, and his were instantly cast on the ground. My heart still yearned toward him, and I was disposed to believe him as innocent as myself, when we met Mr. E. and another friend of my father's. They were passing me without a recognition, but I stretched out my hand and arrested their progress.

'Ah! Hervey! how are you? then looking at my companions, and noticing my agitated countenance—'How in the name of common sense came you here, and in such company?'

In spite of myself, tears of bitter mortification sprang to my eyes, and my throat seemed to swell almost to bursting, as I explained the circumstances of my situation. And when I found myself at liberty, and quietly walking home with Mr. E. the recollection that I had been taken in close companionship with the notorious sharper S—, humbled me beyond measure. 'At least,' said I, in my inmost soul, 'there is one lesson which will never be repeated!'

I remained in Albany only long enough to procure clothes and money from New York, and then set out for Niagara, hoping to be able to leave my mortified pride behind me. The charming aspect of the country at the most delightful of all seasons, and the many amusing incidents of a stage journey, (for at that distant day railroads had not as yet winged our flight to the Falls,) gradually dissipated the vividness of my recollections, and I had regained something of my natural cheerfulness when we arrived at Buffalo.

I was waiting for the carriage which was to convey me to the Falls, when I saw alighting from another, which had just driven up, a lady and gentleman. The lady was, as I decided at once, young probably, from her form; beautiful, certainly, from the thickness of her veil; as certainly *come it* from the delicacy of her foot and ankle and the faultless *chassure*. The gentleman was forty, perhaps; possibly her father—more probably her uncle—this was quite settled in my mind before they were fairly seated in the private parlor to which they were ushered with obsequious civility by the lacqueys of the establishment. I longed for a peep at the face, merely for curiosity's sake, to see if my sagacious prognosis had been correct; but I watched in vain. My carriage drove up, and my baggage was strapped behind it, when the lady and her companion came out as if for a walk through the town. 'Take off the trunks,' said I to the servant; 'I have changed my mind. I shall not go to Niagara to-night.'

'Very well, sir!' said the man, trying to look as if it was all very natural, though, automaton as he was, that seemed difficult.

'Go in the morning, sir?'

'Yes—no—I don't know,'—I said, following with my eyes the retreating forms of the objects of my new mania. The waiter's eyes followed mine.

'They're going back, sir; they've been to the Falls a whole week. Queer to stop—and he disappeared, leaving me to walk up the street after the lady and gentleman.'

I had not walked far when I met them returning. The veil was now thrown back, and I saw a countenance beautiful even beyond any romantic imaginings. As they passed I heard the sweet tones which should ever belong to such a face saying—

'We must travel very diligently to reach N. York before the sailing of the packet. This is the third, and we ought to be in town a day or two before we sail.'

'That I heard all this in the legitimate way, that one catches a word or two in the street, I dare not affirm. I believe my pace must have been slackened as I passed those blue eyes, at least as much as politeness warranted.'

But what will the reader think of the idea that planted itself in my own brain on hearing these few words? I believe my Albany resolutions must have slipped my memory at the moment, for I hesitated not an instant to resolve upon a voyage to England.

Now as I could not conveniently cross the ocean

without some slight preparation, my resolution was no sooner taken than I prepared to set out on my return to the city. A stage going eastward was at the door of the hotel when I returned, and without waiting for another look at the fair face which had so stricken me, I caused my luggage to be put on, and placed myself on the only vacant seat. As we were about to start, the face came to a window almost level with that of the stage.

'A good looking girl, that!' said a pursy old fellow at my side, as he was putting a great woollen shawl about his neck.

I looked at him witheringly, and before I could turn my head again we were off.

I scarcely spoke during the journey to Albany; and, while waiting there for the departure of the steamer, I carefully avoided the sight of my friends whose questions and remarks I dreaded. I had reasoned myself into a full conviction that there could be no imprudence in my present course. I was old enough to travel: I had nothing to prevent me; why should I not go in the next packet as well as any other? Yet I did not quite like the idea of discussing the matter with those prudent old gentlemen who felt an interest in me for my father's sake.

As to the lady, I did not mean to seek her acquaintance without first ascertaining who she was, and I was quite sure that I could accomplish this before the sailing of the packet. All this I had said over to myself a thousand times during my silent transit between Buffalo and Albany, though I cannot deny that I had some doubts as to my prudence being as evident to other people as I tried to make it to myself.

My first night on board the steamer was not a very tranquil one. The hurry of my spirits kept me walking the deck until very late, and before daylight I was awakened by the noise and tramping upon deck occasioned by the boat's having grounded in a part of the river which was then more subject to such casualties than at present. We were near Hudson, and most of the passengers were put on shore, anxious to reach the city and soon filling every conveyance then procurable.

I had, through some accident, been among the last to quit the steamer, and when I came on shore, it was only to find that there was no carriage of any description to be had, so that I was obliged to return to the water and wait till fate should stir my vessel or send us another.

This occasioned a delay of some hours, during which my impatient soul threatened to make its escape from my body, so much did I fear this untoward accident might hinder my departure in the packet. At length another boat took us off, and I trod the deck with a feeling of happiness which is worth something in this dull world, delighted with having found a speedy conveyance to the city.

But how was this feeling heightened when I saw, standing at the door of the ladies cabin the very people who were uppermost in my thoughts. I could scarcely restrain my feet from springing toward them, and the start of surprise which I could not repress would scarcely have passed unnoticed anywhere but in that crowd.

The next moment the bright vision disappeared, and neither the lady or her father came out to tea. One of the maids came out for a cup of tea, and I watched for the name which she might mention to the captain, but it escaped me. I asked the captain as soon as I could find an opportunity.

'Tea?' said he, 'I forgot—oh! it was Mrs. Pottinger, an old lady that I—but I did not listen any longer.'

Sleep was banished from my eyes that night, and the next morning, when I had seen the lady and her attendant get into a plain private carriage, I proceeded to my guardian's, he was struck with the paleness of my countenance.

'You seem really ill, Vincent,' said he, you must take something good to bed at once.'

His surprise, when I expressed my intention of sailing for England in the next packet, was indescribable. He tried to argue me into waiting a fortnight or so, but finding this in vain, he made no serious objection, but quietly and kindly sat about expediting my preparations. With all the aid I could find, however, it proved somewhat of an undertaking, and I had not a moment to spare when I drove to the steamer which was to take the packet's passengers down the bay. Once on her deck, I awaited with unspeakable anxiety the arrival of my fair incognita. She came not, and I began to feel that if she should not come at all my faith in the wisdom of my course would be considerably diminished. But at the last moment a carriage drove furiously down the street, and from it alighted the objects of my solicitude. They were accompanied by a lady and gentleman whom I knew very well, but alas! they took leave of their friends on the wharf, so that there was no opportunity for the introduction I so ardently desired. This was soon forgotten, however; in a packet one gets along without these formalities. Our run down the bay was delightful, and I felt supremely happy. Smile not, reader, if I confess that for a few delicious hours I felt as if an introduction—a chance—was all that was necessary. After all my misgivings to be so completely secure of the society of this lovely being for weeks—to be, as it were, domesticated with her—it was intoxicating! I felt as if she were already all my own.

When we reached the vessel, amid all the bustle and confusion—shaking hands and promising to write—counting trunks and scolding porters—I alone was calm and unmoved. One idea was enough for me. I stood with folded arms looking

over the vessel's side, leaving the care of everything to a servant whom I had engaged the day before.

We were under way—we sat down to dinner, and my heart was beating a not very comfortable tattoo as the passengers, singly or in parties appeared and took their seats. By and by the gentleman appeared but not the lady. As the seats for the whole voyage were then drawn for, one was reserved next her protector. I listened for the name, but the distance and confusion were too much even for my quickened hearing. I swallowed some gin-and-went to my berth, needing repose as much as ever man did. Nature took her revenge and I awoke not until near breakfast time next morning.

Nearly all the passengers were seated at the table, when the pale, sickly looking companion of the blue eyed beauty made his appearance. I was passing near the captain when I heard him say to this gentleman 'Will not Mrs. Russell breakfast with us sir?'

If an avalanche had descended upon me I could scarcely have been more completely crushed. I recollect distinctly the first shock—the instant the conviction that the object of my mad pursuit was a wife—and the effort on my part to step forward to my seat at the table—but that's all. The exhaustion consequent upon the excitement of the last few days made me powerless under the blow, and I fell on the floor senseless.

When I recovered I was on deck—all were gathered around me, and the hand of my beautiful destroyer held the vinaigrette which had been the means of recalling my senses. At sight of her the blood rushed to my face. 'Ah he revives!' said the sweet voice which had once and only once before met my ear.

I was carried to my berth, where I suffered from the violence of contending feelings more than can possibly be conceived by those whose feelings are under reasonable control. In addition to all came sea sickness—alike intolerable to the fool and philosopher. I wished for death a thousand times, but death would not come; and after a week or ten days I was able to walk on deck again, although still very weak.

I was thrown continually into the society of Mr. and Mrs. Russell, and every day felt my danger more and more forcibly. I, with my principles in love with a married woman! the thought filled me with horror. Yet the delirium had gone too far to be lightly cured.

Oh! how bitterly did I then regret my wild precipitancy! yet my principles had not forsaken me. I had the fortitude to shun the civility of the innocent creature and her unsuspecting husband. I declined many kindly meant invitations from them, prompted no doubt by their pity for the invalid, to a game of chess or a walk on the deck. They treated me as a sick man, and that I had really become. My spirits and appetite were gone—the violence of unshooled feeling were destroying me. My most constant wish was that I might fly from associations so fatal to my peace.

Mr. Russell had been constantly unwell, and seemed declining. One day in coming up stairs rather too quickly, he was seized with a violent fit of coughing which ended in the breaking of a blood-vessel. At the alarm which was instantly given, Mrs. Russell flew to the spot; and at the sight of her husband covered with blood, she fainted, and would have fallen if I had not received her to my arms. For one moment I held her there, the very next I placed her in those of the person who stood next me, and rushed down into the solitary cabin, where I endeavored to subdue the strange agitation of my mind. Mr. Russell was brought down and laid on a mattress, the surgeon insisting upon absolute silence, and leading away the weeping wife lest the sight of her distress should agitate the sufferer. In a short time she returned, and seating herself by the side of her husband's couch watched him with immovable eyes and a calmness which was evidently the effect of the most determined self-command. I felt that I could have exchanged places with the dying Russell to appropriate that gaze!

A few days relieved our apprehensions of present danger, but it was evident to all that Russell could never recover. He wasted day by day, and constant watchfulness and anxiety produced a scarcely less obvious change in his wife's appearance. She was pale and feeble; her once clear voice, tremulous, and her eyes sad and sunken, retained scarce a trace of their natural lustre. When we landed at Liverpool where I ascertained that the Russell's were entire strangers, I began to persuade my conscience that it would be inhuman to leave them without a friend who cannot buy. But I could not allow the sophistry of love to vanquish my better judgment. Whatever aid they might require ought to be rendered by any one rather than myself; and this conviction was so strong upon me that as soon as I had seen them established in comfortable quarters I tore myself away.

Mrs. Russell's marriage with a man so much older than herself was one of those things which naturally excite some remark, and it was not long after our parting at Liverpool that it happened to be the subject of conversation in a company of Americans whom I met in London. There I learned that disparity in age was not so great as it appeared, Mr. Russell having become prematurely old through ill health. He had been the guardian of Florence Ainslie, and although while he had charge of her fortune he had lost his own by the dishonesty of a partner, he not only preserved hers, but managed to increase it materially. His noble character and great kindness to herself so won upon her gratitude, that when she perceived his health to be sinking under the influence of disappointment and vexation, she offered herself and her fortune at his acceptance. Mr. Russell refused to avail himself of

her generosity until after a year spent by Florence in society suited to her youth and her fortune. At the end of that time they were married; and it was on their wedding tour that I had first seen them.—I remained but a few days in London, for the feeling that I was waiting to hear of the death of poor Russell, a man whom I highly esteemed, weighed heavily upon my sense of right, and I feared that from waiting I should ere long fall into wishing.—So I set out for the continent, resolved to fly, if possible, from my former unguarded self, and hope from time the wisdom which I had as yet failed to gather from experience. My tour of Europe was a mere ramble. Forsaking the beaten track, I sojourned wherever a wayward fancy could find a momentary interest. I roamed through Syrian forests, peeped at the seraglio, danced with a Russian belle at an imperial ball at St. Petersburg, spent a whole summer among the hills of Sweden, and, at the end of all, found myself once more in Paris, the centre of the travelling world. Here having no intention of mingling in gay society, I took private lodgings in the family of an English lady of reduced fortune, who was obliged to eke out a slender income by the only means in her power.

In the course of a quiet winter which I spent here I had frequent opportunities to befriend my hostess Mrs. Enfield in matters connected with her pecuniary affairs; and this naturally excited a feeling of mutual interest. This lady had one daughter, a young girl who was at a convent in Paris for her education. While I remained at Mrs. Enfield's the daughter came home thoroughly accomplished in all that Paris thinks necessary for a young lady, and endowed besides with a handsome face, and such grace of manner as is sure to be found attractive to most men whose hearts are not pre-occupied as mine was. Upon this girl, her sole pride and hope, Mrs. Enfield had lavished every thing she could command, and far more than she could afford; and from the extreme attention and expense bestowed upon Miss Adelaide's dress it was evidently intended that she should make her fortune by marriage. Those things are well understood in Paris and London whatever may be the case nearer home.

It was not long before Miss Enfield began to be surrounded by admirers, and among them I observed very frequently a person whom I had met at the German baths—a man who had made the worst possible impression upon me, and between whom and myself there had seemed from the first to be a natural repulsion. He was handsome and fashionable, and had moved in the society of people of rank; but there are black-lets even among princes, and he was among the nobility (I) of this character that I had seen Baron Von Kohl. He became very earnest in his pursuit of Miss Enfield, and she seemed so much flattered by his attentions that I began seriously to fear for her welfare. I felt thoroughly convinced of the unworthiness of the man, and yet when I began to search my recollections, for specific facts, I found myself utterly at a loss for any thing which I could properly bring forward in order to put Mrs. Enfield on her guard. There was a French woman too who professed great friendship for the family, who was evidently in Von Kohl's interest; so that I felt obliged to proceed very cautiously, although determined not to see the poor girl sacrificed without at least an effort to save her.

I had an acquaintance at Baden who was one of the know-everybody-that-is-an-ambrosy sort of people, and to him I resolved to apply for some insight into the history of our Baron—asking first about all the rest of the world, and bringing Monsieur le Baron in with an *apropos* at the close. In reply to this epistle I received after some two or three weeks delay, a weighty haquet giving a year's title-tack of Baden, and a full length portrait of the Baron, drawn in darker colors than even my prejudices had employed. 'He has at least three wives,' concluded my informant, 'but his baronesses gave him no sort of trouble, since he understands the matter too well ever to endow one of them with a legal hold on him.'

With this authority in my hand I went to Mrs. Enfield, and with as much delicacy and caution as possible, gave her what I had gathered respecting a person who was evidently in determined pursuit of her daughter. If I had expected gratitude for my interference, I should have been sadly disappointed. She received my communication with a sort of forced politeness, and in reply to my protestations of friendship (and the truth of which she had received some substantial testimonials) she coolly insisted that I had young gentlemen sometimes thought themselves very disinterested, when in fact they were far otherwise. The truth was, the good lady's pride, a prominent or rather leading trait in her character, had been gratified with the eulog of the Baron's attentions; and she had such an unbounded opinion of her daughter's attractions that she could not believe it possible they could be viewed with indifference.

The Baron visited Miss Enfield as before, but I saw that I had made enemies of not only the scoundrel himself, but of Madame Lauvergue, *l'amie de la maison*, and even of the fair Adelaide, who had been taught to look upon me as a sort of dog in the manger, bent upon keeping off suitors, though not inclined to add myself to their number. Feeling my situation unpleasant, I had resolved upon changing my quarters, when some symptoms of the thickening of the plot induced me to wait a little, in the hope that the poor widowed mother, whose blind ambition was about to be rewarded by the utter ruin of her only child.

Things were in this state when I was awakened at three o'clock in the morning by a noise in the passage. There was no longer beside myself, and the house was usually very quiet. Madame Lauvergue had spent the evening before with Miss Enfield, and I had observed that they retired for the night together, instead of Madame returning to her lodgings as usual. I had been convinced that something was in contemplation, and the moment I was awakened by the sound near my chamber door, I arose, and dressing myself as speedily as possible, issued forth with a determination to ascertain whether common robbers only were concerned, or that far more cruel wretch whose movements I had been watching for some time.

There were whispers on the stairs above me—a consultation, probably, as to the very slight sound made in opening my door; but the debate seemed satisfactory, for in a few moments two men, bearing a heavy trunk, and with them the noble Baron holding a lantern, appeared at the turning of the stairs. The moment the light flashed upon my face, the Baron, with a deep curse, fired his ready pistol.—The ball missed me, and in another instant I was at the window which opened on the street and had given the alarm. It was scarcely five minutes from that time when I had the satisfaction of seeing not only the inferior agents, but the Baron himself in the charge of the police.

To describe the home scene, however, is beyond my power. At the sound of the pistol, the unfortunate Adelaide, dressed as for a journey, had flown to the spot, and although the whole incident occurred with such suddenness that it seemed, a moment after, as if nothing had happened, the effect was dreadful. While Adelaide lay on the floor in stony hysterics, a loud scream from the attendant in her mother's room announced that Mrs. Enfield had been seized with a fit. Medical attendance was procured instantly, and Miss Enfield was recalled to herself by the shock of her mother's danger; but it soon became evident that to Mrs. Enfield the event was about to prove fatal. She recovered only far enough to make the most agonizing attempt to speak, and before noon the next day breathed her last, leaving her unhappy daughter as desolate a creature as the sun ever shone upon.

Throughout this whole scene Madame Lauvergue had taken a very active part, and poor Adelaide appeared to be completely under her influence.—In spite of my conviction that I had done the best that circumstances permitted, my position was a very painful one, and Madame Lauvergue took care to heighten the impression by various hints and regrets as to my unfortunate interference.—She said that the Baron would have been very soon at liberty to acknowledge the marriage, and that he had reason to depend on gaining Mrs. Enfield's forgiveness for the step he was about to take. There all, however, resolved to leave nothing undone which kindness could demand; and after the funeral of Mrs. Enfield I attended to the settlement of her affairs as if she had been my own mother. In the course of this I discovered that after all debts were paid, Adelaide would be without a sou, and also that she had not a relative in the world to whom to look for aid or countenance.

I shall not dwell upon this part of my history.—The issue of the affair was my offering marriage to Adelaide Enfield though on looking back I could scarcely tell how even the finess of Madame Lauvergue brought this about. I must do poor Adelaide the justice to say, however, that she was not easily persuaded to accept me. She became fully convinced of the unworthiness of Von Kohl, but she did not conceal that the utter loneliness of her situation and the helpless delicacy which had been the result of her education, influenced her in receiving my proposals. So that my marriage was arranged with a rational coolness which was the very last thing to have been anticipated for the romantic and passionate being who had crossed the ocean in a love-dream only two years before.

It was my wish to return at once to America, and to this my wife did not object; but she made it a point that Madame Lauvergue should be invited to accompany her. To this, in an evil hour I consented, moved by pity for the sadness which seemed fixed upon the once gay Adelaide. This woman, all smiles and smoothness, proved an absolute thorn in my side. Her ascendancy over my wife increased every day; her voice decided every question, and if I ventured to demur, a hint from Madame Lauvergue that it would be necessary for her to return to France was always sufficient to throw Adelaide into the depths of depression for days together. My wife was a thorough Parisian, and she clung to Madame Lauvergue as the only relic left to her of Paradise.

This was a sort of bondage that I could not bear any longer. Though willing to go to the last extreme measure, I was not disposed to submit to absolute imprisonment, and I resolved, at the risk of a scene, even a succession of scenes, to take an early opportunity of signifying to Madame Lauvergue that I was prepared to find an escort for her in the next Havana packet.

I had not long to wait. It was but a few days after the formation of my resolution that Madame Lauvergue undertook the office of arguing with me, very patently, on the cruelty of having given Adelaide by omitting something which Madame Lauvergue had decided to be necessary. I avoided getting angry by having made up my mind beforehand; but the decision with which I insisted upon Madame Lauvergue's departure seemed to give a new view of my character to both my wife and her friend. Adelaide, awed by my determined firmness, submitted almost without resistance; and this tameness on her part was highly resented by Madame Lauvergue, who expired on the occasion of her dismissal, and the manner of her intriguing character. The steamer which conveyed her to the ship brought me back a letter, in which Madame Lauvergue assured me that my wife had never ceased to love Von Kohl, and concluded with an insinuation that the infant to whose birth I was looking forward with so much interest would probably have a claim only upon my charity.

This unenvied scrawl I determined to treat with the contempt which I was convinced it merited, and full of this idea I put it at once into my wife's hands, in order to show her how utterly despicable I considered it. But I was doomed, as I would seem, to be misunderstood, for poor Adelaide had no sooner glanced her eye over it than she burst into mourning and lamentation of her wretched fate; insisted that I suspected her, and so agitated and distressed herself that she was taken down in a few hours, and in spite of all that could be done by human skill and attention she lived only a week after the departure of the ill-fated Madame Lauvergue.

I passed a time of almost unimagined wretchedness after this loss. In reviewing the past, the consciousness of right intentions could not wipe away the feelings of self-reproach. I perceived that many things might have been better done; I charged myself with omissions, with mistakes, but above all, with my old besetting sin of impulsive precipitancy. I saw that I had been wrong at the very outset; asking only gratification when I should have sought out duty. A sadder man I certainly was, and I hope a wiser and better one, for the trials and disappointments. The world no longer seemed to me like a garden laid out for my amusement, but as a scene of serious effort, of self-discipline, of self-sacrifice, through which duty alone opened a path to happiness.

It was long after this dark season that I once more met with Mrs. Russell. She was living quietly with the aunt under whose care her early years had been passed; and although she was no longer mourning as a widow, she had retained the subdued and thoughtful character which best befits one who has met with the greatest of all losses. To me, with my changed views, this was a charm which more than compensated for the absence of the dazzling bloom that first caught my boyish fancy; and I congratulated myself that the lessons of life had in some measure fitted me to appreciate the excellence which had formerly been thrown into the shade by mere outward grace. I need not say that I sought and won the hand of Florence Russell, for all novel readers know full well that I should never have thought my story worth the telling if I had not been able to give it the crowning grace of a supremely happy marriage.