now she is dead—that is another thing. She says she would not stop in the room for worlds. She thought she saw her move yesterday, and she rushed away into the kitchen, and had an *attaque de nerfs* in consequence."

"But did she tell nobody—could it have been true?"

"Françoise told *him*, and they went in immediately, but it was all silent as before. I am glad I sleep up stairs; I should not like to be in the room over that one. It is underneath there where are *les petites*."

"She would do no one harm, now or when she was alive, poor thing," said Marker. "I should like to flay that man alive."

"That would be a pity, Mrs. Marker," said Henriette: "a fine young man like that! He liked her well enough, allez! She cried too much. It was her own fault that she was not happy."

"I would rather be her than him at this minute," said Marker. "Why, he scolded and sulked and sneered and complained of the bills when he was at home, and went away for days together without telling her where he was going. I know where he was: he was gambling, and spending her money on other people. I'd pickle him, I would!" said Marker; "and I don't care a snap for his looks; and her heart is as cold as his own now, poor little thing!"

"It's supper-time, isn't it?" yawned Henriette.

Then Dolly heard a little rustle, as they got up to go to their supper, and the light in the next room disappeared, and every thing seemed very silent. The night-light spluttered a little, the noises in the court-yard were hushed, the familiar chairs and tables looked queer and unknown in the darkness. Rhoda was fast asleep and breathing softly; Dolly was kicking about in her own bed, and thrilling with terror and excitement, and thinking of what she had heard of the poor pretty lady down stairs. She and Rhoda always used to rush to the window to see her drive off in her smart little carriage, wrapped in her furs, but all alone. Poor little lady! Her unkind husband never went with her, and used to leave her for weeks at a time. Her eyes used to shine through the veil that she always wore when they met her on the stairs; but Aunt Sarah would hurry past her, and never would talk about her. And now she was dead. Dolly looked at Rhoda lying so still on her white pillow. How would Rhoda look when she was dead? thought Dolly.

"Being asleep is being dead.....I dare say people would be more afraid of dying if they were not so used to go to sleep. When I am dying—I dare say I shall die about seventeen—I shall send for John Morgan, and George will come from Eton, and Aunt Sarah will be crying, and, perhaps, mamma and Captain Palmer will be there; and I shall hold all their hands in mine and say, 'Now be friends, for my sake.' And then I shall urge George to exert himself more, and go to church on week-days; and then to Aunt Sarah I shall turn with a sad smile, and say, 'Adieu! dear aunt, you never understood me—you fancied me a child when I had the feelings of a woman, and you sneered at me, and sent me to bed at eight o'clock. Do not crush George and Rhoda as you have crushed me: be gentle with them;' and then I shall cross my hands over my chest and—and what then?" And a sort of shock came over the girl as, perhaps for the first time in her life, she realized the awful awakening. "Suppose they bury me alive? It is very common, I know—oh! no, no, no; that would be too horrible! Suppose that poor young lady is not dead down stairs—suppose she is alive, and they bury her to-morrow, and she wakes up, and it is all dark, and she chokes and cries out, and nobody hears.....Surely they will take precautions—they will make sure?.....Who will, I wonder? Not that wicked husband—not that horrid maid. But the poor lady underneath, I wonder who is sitting up with her? That wicked man has gone to gamble, I dare say; and Julie is trying on her dresses, and perhaps her eyes are opening now, and nobody to see—nobody to come! Ah, this is dreadful! I must go to sleep and forget it."

Little Rhoda turned and whispered something in her dreams; Dorothy curled herself up in her nest and shut her eyes, and did go to sleep for a couple of hours, and then woke up again with a start, and thought it must be morning. Had not somebody called her by name? did not somebody whisper Dolly in her ear? so loud that it woke her out of a strange dream: a sort of dream in which strange clanging sounds rung round and round in the air; in which Dolly herself lay powerless, gasping and desperate, on her bed. Vainly she tried to move, to call, to utter; no one came.

Julie, in white satin, was looking at herself in the glass; the wicked husband was standing in the door with a horrible scowl. Rhoda, somehow, was quietly asleep in her bed. Ah, no! she too was dead; she would never wake; she would not come and save her. And just then Dolly awoke, and started up in bed with wide-open childish eyes. What a still, quiet room! What a dim light from the lamp! Who had spoken? Was it a warning? was it a call? was this dream sent to her as a token, as the people in the Bible dreamed dreams and dared not disobey them? Was this what was going on in the room below? was it for her to go down and save the poor lady, who might be calling to her? Something within her said, "Go, go," and suddenly she found herself standing by the bedside, putting on her white dressing-gown, and then pattering out barefooted across the wooden floors, out into the dark dining-room, out into the anteroom, all dark and black, opening the front-door (the key was merely turned in the lock), walking down stairs with the dim lamps glimmering and the moonlight pouring in at the blindless window, and standing at the door of the apartment below. Her only thought was wonder at finding it so easy. Then she laid her hand softly on the key and turned it, and the door opened, and she found herself in an anteroom like their own, only carpeted and alight. The room was under her own; she knew her way well enough. Into the dark dining-room she passed with a beating heart, and so came to a door beneath which a ray of light was streaming. And then she stopped. Was this a dream? was this really herself? or was she asleep in bed up stairs? or was she, perhaps, dead in her coffin? A qualm of terror came over her—should she turn and go?—her knees were shaking, her heart was beating so that she could hardly breathe; but she would not turn back—that would be a thousand times too cowardly. Just then she thought she heard a footstep in the dining-room. With a shuddering effort she raised her hand, and in an instant she stood in the threshold of the chamber. What! was this a sacred chapel? Silence and light, many flowers, tall tapers burning. It seemed like an awful dream to the bewildered child: the coffin stood in the middle of the room; she smelled a faint odor of incense, of roses, of scented tapers; and then her heart stood still as she heard a sudden gasping sigh, and against the light an awful shrouded figure slowly rising and seeming to come toward her. It was more than she could bear; the room span round, once more the loud clanging sounded in her ears, and poor Dolly, with a shuddering scream, fell to the ground.

* * * * * *

A jumble of whispers, of vinegar, of water trickling down her back, and of an officious flapping wet handkerchief; of kind arms infolding her; of nurse saying, "Now she is coming to;" of Lady Sarah answering, "Poor little thing! she must have been walking in her sleep"—a strange new birth, new vitality pouring in at all her limbs, a dull identity coming flashing suddenly into life, and Dolly opened her eyes to find herself in the nurse's arms, with her aunt bending over her, in the warm drawing-room up stairs. Other people seemed standing about—Henriette, and a man whom she could scarcely see with her dim weary eyes, and Julie. Dolly hid her face on the nurse's shoulder.

"Oh, nurse, nurse! have you saved me?" was all she could say.

"What were you doing down stairs, you naughty child?" said Lady Sarah, in her brisk tones. "Marker heard a noise and luckily ran after you."

"Oh, Aunt Sarah, forgive me!" faltered Dolly. "I went to save the lady. I thought if she opened her eyes and there was no one there—and Julie trying on the dresses, and the wicked husband—I heard Henriette telling Marker— Oh, save me, save me!" and the poor little thing burst into tears and clung closer and closer.

"You are all safe, dear," said Marker, "and the young lady is at rest where nothing will frighten or disturb her. Hush! don't cry."

"Poor little thing!" said the man, taking her hand; "do not be afraid; she is a saint in heaven. The nuns must have frightened you; and yet they are good women, and will pray and watch all through the night. You must go to sleep. Good-night." And he raised the child's hand to his lips and kissed it, and then seemed to go away.

"I'm ashamed of myself, my lady," said Marker, "for having talked as I did with the chance of the children being awake to hear me. It was downright wicked, and I should like to bite my tongue out. Go to bed, Henriette. Be off, Mamzelle July, if you please."

"We are all going to bed; but Henriette will get Miss Dolly a cup of chocolate first and a little bit of galette out of the cupboard," said Lady Sarah.

Dolly was very fond of chocolate and galette; and this little impromptu supper by the drawing-room fire did more to quiet and reassure her than any thing else. But she was hardly herself as yet, and could only cling to Marker's arm and hide her face away from them all. Her aunt kissed her once more, saying, "Well, I won't scold you to-night; indeed, I am not sure but that you were quite right to go," and disappeared into her own room. Then Henriette carried the candle, and Marker carried great big Dolly and laid her down by Rhoda in her bed; and the wearied and tired little girl fell asleep at last, holding Rhoda's hand, and watching the faithful nurse as she sat sewing at the marble table.

CHAPTER VII.

CLOUD-CAPPED TOWERS AND GORGEOUS PALACES.

When Dolly awoke next morning Rhoda was dressed and her bed was empty. The window had been opened, but the light was carefully shaded by the old brown curtains. Dolly lay quite still; she felt strangely tired, and as if she had been for a very long journey, toiling along a weary road. And so she had, in truth; she had traveled along a road that no one ever retraces; she had

learned a secret that no one ever forgets. Henceforth in many places and hours the vision that haunts each one of us was revealed to her; that solemn ghost of Death stood before her with its changing face, at once sad and tender and pitiless. Who shall speak of it? With our own looks, with the familiar eyes of others, it watches us through life, the good angel and comforter of the stricken and desolate, the strength of the weak, the pitiless enemy of home and peaceful love and tranquil days. But perhaps to some of us the hour may come when we fall into the mighty arms, feeling that within them is the home and the love and the peace that they have torn from us.

Dolly was still lying quite quiet and waiting for something to happen, when the door opened, and her aunt's maid came in carrying a nice little tray with breakfast upon it. There was a roll, and some French butter in a white scroll-like saucer, and Dolly's favorite cup.

"My lady is gone out, Miss Dolly," said Marker, "but she left word you was not to be disturbed. It is eleven o'clock, and she is going to take you and Miss Rhoda for a treat when she gets back."

"A treat!" said Dolly, languidly; "that will be nice. Marker, I have to push my arms to make them go."

But when Dolly had had her bath and eaten her breakfast her arms began to go of themselves. Once, indeed, she turned a little sick and giddy, for, happening to look out of window into the court-yard below, she saw that they were carrying away black cloths and silver-spangled draperies, which somehow brought up the terror of the night before; but her nurse kissed her, and made her kneel down and say her prayers, and told her in her homely way that she must not be afraid; that life and death were made by the same Hand, and ruled over by the same Love. "The poor young lady was buried this morning, my dear," said Marker, "before you were awake. Your aunt went with the poor young man."

Marker was a short, stout, smiling old woman. Lady Sarah was tall and thin, and silent, and scant in dress, with a brown face and gray hair; she came in, in her black gown, from the funeral, with her shaggy kind eyes red with tears.

"You won't forget, my lady, that you promised the young ladies a treat," said Marker, who was anxious that Dolly should have something fresh to think of.

"I have not forgotten," said Dolly's aunt, smiling, as she looked at the two children. "Rhoda must get a remembrance to take back to school, mustn't she, Dolly? I have ordered a carriage at two."

There is a royal palace familiar to many of us of which the courts are shining and busy, and crowded with people. Flowers are growing among fountains and foliage, and children are at play; there is a sight of high gabled roofs overhead inclosing it; so do the long lines of the ancient arcades. Some music is playing, to which the children are dancing. In this strange little world the children seem to grow up to music in beautiful ready-made little frocks and pinafores; the grown-up people seem to live on grapes and ices and bonbons, and on the enormous pears displayed in the windows of the cafés. Every thing is more or less gilt and twinkling—china flowers bloom delicate and scentless; it would seem as if the business of life consisted in wandering here and there, and sipping and resting to the sound of music in the shade of the orange-trees, and gazing at the many wonders displayed; at the gimcracks and trinkets and strings of beads, the precious stones, and the silver and gold, and the fanciful jewels. Are these things all dust and ashes? Here are others, again, of imitation dross and dust, shining and dazzling too; and again, imitations of imitations for the poorest and most credulous, heaped up in harmless glitter and array. Here are opera-glasses to detect the deceptions, and the deceptions to deceive the glasses—bubbles of pomp, thinnest gilding of vanity and good humor.

Some twenty years ago Dorothea Vanborough and a great many ladies and gentlemen her contemporaries were not the respectable middle-aged people they are now, but very young folks standing on tiptoe to look at life, which they gazed at with respectful eyes, believing all things, hoping all things, and interested in all things beyond words or the power of words to describe. My heroine was a blooming little girl, with her thick wavy hair plaited into two long tails. She wore a great flapping hat and frilled trowsers, according to the barbarous fashion of the time. Little Rhoda was shorter and slighter, with great dark eyes and a wistful pale face; she was all shabbily dressed, and had no frills like Dolly, or flowers in her hat. The two stood gazing at the portrait of a smiling little prince with a blue ribbon, surmounted by a wreath of flowers, glazed and inclosed in a gilt locket. I suppose the little girls of the present* bear the same sort of allegiance to the Prince Imperial that Dolly felt for the little smiling Count of Paris of those days. For the king his grandfather, for the dukes and princes his uncles, hers was a very vague devotion; but when the old yellow royal coaches used to come by rumbling and shaking along the Champs Elysées, Dolly for one, followed by her protesting attend-

* Written before recent events in France.

ant, would set off running as hard as she could, and stand at the very edge of the pavement in the hopes of seeing her little smiling prince peep out of the carriage window. He was also to be seen in effigy on cups, on pin-boxes, and bonbons, and, above all, to be worn by the little girls in the ornamental fashion I have described. He smiled impartially from their various tuckers; and, indeed, many of the youthful possessors of those little gilt lockets are true to this day to their early impressions.

So both Dolly and Rhoda came to tell Lady Sarah that they had made up their minds what they most admired.

The widow had been sitting upon one of the benches in the garden, feeling not unlike the skeleton at a feast—a scanty figure in the sunshine, with a heart scarcely attuned to the bustle and chatter around her; but she began to tell herself that there must be some use even in the pomps and vanities of life, when she saw how happy the little girls looked, how the light had come into Dolly's eyes; and then she gave them each a solid silver piece out of a purse which, contrary to the custom of skeletons, she held ready in her hand.

"Oh, thank you," says Dolly; "now I can get no end of things. There's George and Robert and—"

"It is much better to buy *one* nice thing to take care of than a great many little ones," said Rhoda, philosophically. "Dolly, you don't manage well. I don't want to get every thing I see. I shall buy that pretty locket. None of the girls in my class have got one as pretty."

"Come along quick, then," said Dolly, "for fear they should have sold it."

They left the Palais Royal at last and drove homeward with their treasures. Dolly never forgot that evening. The carriage drove along through the May-lit city, by teeming streets, by shady avenues, to the sounds of life and pleasure-making. Carriages were rolling along with them; long lines of trees, of people, of pavements, led to a great triumphal archway, over which the little pink clouds were floating, while an intense sweet thrill of spring rung in the air and in the spirits of the people. Henriette opened the door to them when they got home.

"The poor gentleman from below," she said, "is waiting for you in the drawing-room. I told him you would not be long."

The gentleman was waiting in the drawing-room as Lady Sarah came in, with the two little girls shyly following. She would have sent them away, but a sort of shyness habitual to her made her shrink from a scene or an explanation. It may have been some feeling of the same sort which had induced the widower to go away to the farthest window of the room, where he stood leaning out with his back turned for an instant after they had come in.

Coming in out of the dazzle of the streets, the old yellow drawing-room looked dark and dingy; the lights reflected from the great amphitheatre without struck on the paneled doors and fusty hangings. All these furnished houses have a family likeness: chairs with Napoleon backs and brass-bound legs; tables that cry *vive l'empire* as plain as tables can utter; old-fashioned secretaries standing demure with their backs against the wall, keeping their counsel and their secrets (if there *are* such things as secrets). The laurel-crowned clocks tick beneath their wreaths and memorials of by-gone victories; the looking-glasses placidly relate the faces, the passing figures, the varying lights and changes as they pass before them. To-night a dusky golden light was streaming into the room from behind the hills, that were heaving, so Dolly thought, and dimming the solemn glow of the sky: she saw it all in an instant; and then with a throb she recognized this wicked husband coming from the window where he had been standing with his back to them. She had never seen him before so close, and yet she seemed to know his face. He looked very cruel, thought Dolly. He had a pale face and white set lips, and a sort of dull black gleam flashed from his eyes. He spoke in a harsh voice. He was very young, a mere boy, with thick fair hair brushed back from his haggard young face. He might have been, perhaps, about two or three and twenty.

"I waited for you, Lady Sarah. I came to say good-by," he said. "I am going back to London to-night. I shall never forget your—" His voice broke. "How good you have been to me," he said, hoarsely, as he took the two brown hands in his and wrung them again and again.

The widow's sad face softened as she told him "to have trust—to be brave."

"You don't know what you say," he said, in a commonplace way. "God bless you!" He was going, but seeing the two, Dolly and Rhoda, standing by the door looking at him with wondering faces, he stopped short. "I forgot," he said, still in this hard matter-of-fact voice. "I brought a cross of Emma's; I thought she would wish it. It won't bring ill luck," he said, with a ghastly sort of laugh. "She bore crosses enough in her short life, poor soul, but this one, at least, had no nails in it. May I give it to your little girl?" he said: "unless she is afraid to take any thing from me."

Lady Sarah did not say no, and the pale young man looked vaguely from one to the other of the two little girls as they stood there, and then he took one step toward Dolly, who was the biggest, and who was standing, straight and tall for her age, in her light-

colored dress, with her straw hat hanging on her arm. I don't know how to write this of my poor little heroine. If he had seemed more unhappy, if he had not looked so strangely and spoken so oddly, she might have understood him better; but as it was, she thought he was saying terrible things, laughing and jeering and heartless: so judged Dolly in an innocent severity. Is it so? Are not the children of this world wiser in their generation than the children of light? Are there not depths of sin and repentance undreamed of by the pure in spirit? One seems to grasp at a meaning which eludes one as one strains at it, wondering what is the sermon to be preached upon this text.....It was one that little Dolly, still playing in her childish and peaceful valley, could not understand. She might forgive as time went on; she had not lived long enough yet either to forgive or to forget; never once had it occurred to her that any thought of hers, either of blame or forgiveness, could signify to any other human being, or that any word or sign of hers could have a meaning to any one except herself.

Dolly was true to herself, and in those days she used to think that all her life long she would be always true, and always say all she felt. As life grows long, and people, living on together through time and sorrow and experience, realize more and more the complexities of their own hearts, and sympathize more and more with the failings and sorrows of others, they are apt to ask themselves with dismay if it is a reality of life to be less and less uncompromising as complexities increase, less true to themselves as they are more true to others, and if the very angels of God are wrestling and at war in their hearts. All through her life Dolly found, with a bitter experience, that these two angels of charity and of truth are often very far apart until the miracle of love comes to unite them. She was strong and true; in after-days she prayed for charity; with charity came sorrow and doubt and perplexity. Charity is long-suffering and kind, and thinks no evil; but then comes truth crying out, "Is not wrong wrong; is not falsehood a lie?" Perhaps it is because truth is not for this life that the two are at variance, until the day shall come when the light shall come, and with the light peace and knowledge and love, and then charity itself will be no longer needed.

And so Dolly, who in those days had scarcely realized even human charity in her innocent young heart, looked up and saw the wicked man who had been so cruel to his wife coming toward her with a gift in his hand; and as she saw him coming, black against the light of the sunset, she shrank away behind Rhoda, who stood looking up with her dark, wistful eyes. The young man saw Dolly shrink from him, and he stopped short; but at the same instant he met the tranquil glance of a trustful, upturned face, and, with a sigh, he put the cross (shimmering with a sudden flash of light) into little Rhoda's soft clasping hand.

"You are not afraid, like your sister? Will you keep it for Emma's sake?" he said again, in a softer voice.

There was a moment's silence. Lady Sarah, never at the best of times a ready woman, tried to say something, but the words died away. Dolly looked up, and her eyes met the flash of the young man's two wild, burning eyes. They seemed to her to speak. "I saw you shrink away," they seemed to say; "you are right; don't come near me—don't come near me." But this was only unspoken language.

"Good-by," he said again to Lady Sarah, in a fierce sort of way, clinching his teeth. "I am glad to have seen you once more." And then he went quickly out of the room without looking back, leaving them all standing scared and saddened by this melancholy little scene.

The lights were burning deeper behind the hills; the reflections were darker. Had there been a sudden storm? No; the sun had set quietly behind Montmartre, where the poor girl was lying upon the heights above the city. Was it Dolly who was trembling, or was it the room that seemed vibrating to the echo of some disastrous chords that were still ringing in her ears?

Dolly went to the window and leaned out over the wooden bar, looking down into the rustling, glooming lilac garden below. How sad the scent of the lilac-trees in flower seemed as it came flooding up! She was still angry, but she was sorry too, and two great tears fell upon the wooden bar against which she was leaning. She always remembered that evening when she smelled lilac in flower.

Rhoda was very much pleased with her cross.

"I shall hang it on a black ribbon," said the child, "and always think of the poor gentleman when I wear it; and I shall tell the girls in class all about him, and how he gave it to me."

"How you took it from him, you mean," said Lady Sarah, shortly.

"No, indeed, Lady Sarah; he gave it to me," cried Rhoda, clutching her treasure quite tight.

CHAPTER VIII.

IMMORTELLES.

Frank Raban, having left the three standing silent and sorry in the calm sunset room, ran down to his own apartment on the floor beneath. He was to go back to England

that night; he felt he could not stay in that place any longer; the memories seemed to choke him, and to rise up and madden him. As he came now down the echoing stairs he heard the voices of his servants: the front-door was wide open. The concierge was standing in the passage in his shirt sleeves; M. Adolphe was discoursing; a milliner was waiting with her bill. "Not two years married," he heard them saying; "as for him, he will console himself." Their loud voices suddenly hushed as he appeared. Adolphe flung the door open still wider for his master; but the master could not face them all, with their curious eyes fixed upon him, and he turned and fled down stairs. Only two years since he had carried her away from her home in the quiet suburban cottage—poor Emma, who wanted to be married, and who had ever loved him! Where was she now? Married only two years! What years! And now his remorse seemed almost greater than he could bear. He crossed the crowded road, heedless of the warning cries of the drivers, pushing his way across the stream; then he got into a deserted country close upon the bustle of the main thoroughfare (they call it Beaujon), where great walls run by lonely avenues, and great gates stand closed and barred. Would they burst open? would *she* come out, with a pale, avenging face, and strike him? She, poor child! Whom did she ever strike in word or thought? Once he got a little ease: he thought he had been a very long way, and he had wandered at last into an ancient lane by a convent wall, beyond the modern dismal Beaujon, in the friendly older quarter. Lime-trees were planted in this tranquil place. There was a dim, rain-washed painting upon the wall, a faint vista of fountains and gardens, the lilac-trees were blooming behind it, and the vesper song of the nuns reached his ears; he stood still for an instant, but the song ceased.

The old avenue led back to the great round Place in front of the Arc; for, in those days, neither the ride nor the great new roads were made which now lead thronging to the Bois. And the tide came streaming to the end of the long avenue of the Champs Elysées and no farther, and turned and ebbed away again from the gates of the Douane. Beyond them the place was as silent and deserted as though no roar of life was swelling. The young man hurried on, not caring where he went. If I had loved her! if I had loved her! was the burden of his remorse. It was almost heavier than he could bear. There were some children swinging on the chains that separate the great arch from the road; the last rays of the sun were lighting the stones and the gritty platform; twilight was closing in. I think if it had not been for the children he would have thrown himself down upon the ground. They screamed shrilly at their play, and the echo from under the great vault gave back their voices. A few listless people were standing about; a countryman spelling out by the dying lights the pompous lists of victories that had been carved into the stone—Jena, Marengo, Austerlitz. Chiller and more death-like came the twilight creeping on: the great carved figures blew their trumpets, waved their stony laurels, of which the shadows changed so many times a day. He staggered to a bench; he said to himself, "I should like this Arc to fall down upon my head and crush me. I am a devil, I am not a man. I killed her with neglect, with reproach, and suspicion! But for me she would have been alive now, smiling as when I first saw her. I will go away and never be heard of any more. Go away!—how can I go from this curse? could Cain escape?" Then he began to see what was all round about him again—see it distorted by his mad remorse. All the great figures seemed writhing their arms and legs; the long lists of battle seemed like funeral processions moving round and round him, fighting and thundering and running into one another. The Arc itself was a great tomb, where these legions lay buried. Was it not about to fall with a stupendous crash? and would the dead people come rising round about at the blast of the trumpets of stone? Here was an emperor who had wanted to conquer the whole world, and who had all but attained his object. Here was he, a man who had not striven for victory, but yielded to every temptation—a man who had deserted his post, betrayed his trust, cursed a life that he should have cherished. Though his heart were broken on a wheel and his body racked with pain, that would not mend the past, sanctify it, and renew it again.

A sort of cold sweat lay upon his forehead. Some children were playing, and had come up to the stone bench where he was sitting, and were making little heaps of dust upon it. One of them looked into his face and saw him clinch his hand, and the little thing got frightened, and burst out crying. The other, who was older, took the little one by the hand and led it away.

Of what good was it thinking over the past? It was over. Emma was dead, lying up on the heights toward which Dolly had been looking from her window. He had been to blame, but not to blame as he imagined in his mad remorse and despair. He had been careless and impatient, and hard upon her, as he was now hard upon himself. He had married her from a sense of honor, when his boyish fancy was past. His duty was too hard for him, and he had failed, and now he was free.

It was that very evening—Dolly remembered it afterward—a letter came from her mother, written on thin lilac paper, in a large and twisted handwriting, sealed and

stamped with many Indian stamps. Dolly's mother's letters always took a long time to read; they were written up and down and on different scraps of paper. Sometimes she sent whole bouquets of faded flowers in them to the children, sometimes patterns for dresses to be returned. Henriette brought the evening's mail in with the lamp and the tea-tray, and put the whole concern down with a clatter of cups and saucers on the table before Lady Sarah. There was also a thick blue lawyer-looking letter with a seal. The little girls peeped up shyly as Lady Sarah laid down her correspondence unopened beside her. She was a nervous woman, and afraid of unread letters; but after a little she opened the lilac epistle, and then began to flush, and turned eagerly to the second.

"Who is that from?" Dolly asked at last. "Is it from Captain Palmer?"

Her aunt laid one thin brown hand upon the letter, and went on pouring out the tea without speaking. Rhoda looked for a moment, and then stooped over her work once more. Long years afterward the quiet atmosphere of that lamp-lit room used to come round about Dolly again. The log fire flamed, the clock ticked on. How still it was! The leaves of her book scraped as she turned them, and Rhoda stuck her silken stitches. The roll of the carriages was so far away that it sounded like a distant sea. They were still sitting silent, and Dolly was wondering whether she might speak of the letter again and of its contents, when there came an odd muffled sound of voices and exclamations from the room underneath.

"Listen!" said Rhoda.

"What can it be?" said Dolly, shutting up her book and starting up from her chair as Henriette appeared at the door, with her white cap-strings flying, breathless.

"They were all disputing down stairs," she said. "Persons had arrived that evening. It was terrible to hear them."

Lady Sarah impatiently sent Henriette about her business, and the sounds died away, and the little girls were sent off to bed. In the morning her aunt's eyes were so red that Dolly felt sure she must have been crying. Henriette told them that the gentleman was gone. "Milady had been sent for before he left: she had lent him some money," said Henriette, "and paid the milliner's bill;" but the strange people who had come had remained. The lady had been packing up and carrying off every thing, to Julie's disgust. "A great stout lady and a little gentleman," said Henriette—connections, she imagined.

Events and emotions come very rarely alone; they fly in troops, like the birds. It was that very day that Lady Sarah told Dolly that she had had some bad news—she had lost a great deal of money. An Indian bank had failed in which they all had a share.

"Your mamma writes in great trouble," said Lady Sarah, reading out from a lilac scrap. "'Tell my precious Dolly that this odious bank will interfere once more with my heart's longing to see her. Captain Palmer insists upon a cruel delay. I am not strong enough to travel round the Cape, as he proposes. You, dear Sarah, might be able to endure such fatigue; but I, alas! have not the power. Once more my return is delayed.'"

"Oh, Aunt Sarah, will she ever come?" said Dolly, struggling not to cry.....Dolly only cheered up when she remembered that they were ruined. She had forgotten it in her disappointment about her mother. "Are we really ruined?" she said, more hopefully. "We should not have spent that money yesterday. Shall we have to leave Church House? Poor mamma! Poor Aunt Sarah!"

"Poor Marker is most to be pitied," said Lady Sarah, "for we shall have to be very careful, and keep fewer maids, and wear out all our old dresses; but we need not leave Church House, Dolly."

"Then it is nothing after all," said Dolly, again disappointed. "I thought we should have had to go away and keep a shop, and that I should have worked for you. I should like to be your support in your old age, and mamma's too."

Then Lady Sarah suddenly caught Dolly in her arms, and held her tight for a moment—quite tight to her heart, that was beating tumultuously.

The next time Rhoda came out of her school for a day's holiday Lady Sarah took the little girls to a flower shop hard by. In the window shone a lovely rainbow of sun rays and flowers: inside the shop were glass globes and china pots, great white sprays of lilacs, lilies, violets, ferns, and hyacinths, and golden bells, stuck into emerald-blue vases, all nodding their fragrant heads. Lady Sarah bought a great bunch of violets and two yellow garlands made of dried immortelles.

"Do you know where we are going?" she asked.

Dolly didn't answer; she was sniffing, with her face buried in a green pot of mignonette.

"May I carry the garlands?" said Rhoda, raising her great round eyes. "I know: we are going to the poor lady's grave."

Then they got into the carriage, and it rolled off toward the heights.

They went out beyond the barriers of the town by dusty roads, with acacia-trees; they struggled up a steep hill, and stopped at last at the gate of the cemetery. All round about it there were stalls, with more wreaths and chaplets to sell, and little sacred images for the mourners to buy for the adornment of the graves. Children were at play, and birds singing, and the sunlight streamed

bright. Dolly cried out in admiration of the winding walks, shaded with early green, the flowers blooming, the tombs and the garlands, and the epitaphs, with their notes of exclamation. She began reading them out, and calling out so loudly that her aunt had to tell her to be quiet. Then Dolly was silent for a little, but she could not help it. The sun shone, the flowers were so bright; sunshine, spring-time, sweet flowers, all made her tipsy with delight; the thought of the kind, pretty lady, who had never passed her without a smile, did not make her sad just then, but happy. She ran away for a little while, and went to help some children who were picking daisies and tying them by a string.

When she came back, a little sobered down, she found that her aunt had scattered the violets over a new-made grave, and little Rhoda had hung the yellow wreath on the cross at its head.

Dolly was silent then for a minute, and stood, looking from her aunt, as she stood straight and gray before her, to little Rhoda, whose eyes were full of tears. What was there written on the cross?—

TO EMMA,
THE WIFE OF FRANCIS RABAN,
AND ONLY DAUGHTER OF DAVID PENFOLD, OF EARLSCOURT,
IN THE PARISH OF KENSINGTON.
DIED MARCH 20, 18—. AGED 22.

"Aunt Sarah," Dolly cried, suddenly, seizing her aunt's gown, "tell me, was that young Mr. Raban from John Morgan's house and Emma from the cottage? When he looked at me once I thought I knew him, only I didn't know who he could be."

"Yes, my dear," said Lady Sarah. "I did not suppose that you would remember them."

"I remembered," said Rhoda, nodding her head; "but I thought you did not wish me to say so."

"Why not?" asked Lady Sarah. "You are always imagining things, Rhoda. I had forgotten all about them myself; I had other things on my mind at the time they married;" and she sighed and looked away.

"It was when Dolly's papa—" Rhoda began.

"Mr. Raban reminded me of Kensington before he left," said Lady Sarah, hastily, in her short voice. "I was able to help him—foolish young man. It is all very sad, and he is very unhappy and very much to blame."

"Is he?" said Dolly; and then she walked away quietly; but before they got to the carriage she was at her rigs again.

This was their only visit to poor Emma Raban's grave. A few days after, Lady Sarah, in her turn, left Paris, and took Dolly and little Rhoda, whose schooling was over, home to England. Rhoda was rather sorry to be dropped at home at the well-known door in Old Street, where she lived with her aunt Morgan. Yes, it would open in a minute, and all her old life would begin again. Tom and Zoe and Cassie were behind it, with their loud voices. Dolly envied her; it seemed to her to be a noisy elysium of welcoming exclamations into which Rhoda disappeared.

CHAPTER IX.

THE BOW-WINDOWED HOUSE.

RHODA, as she sat at her work, used to peep out of the bow-windows at the people passing up and down the street—a pretty girlish head, with thick black plaits pinned away, and a white frill round the slender throat. Sometimes, when Mrs. Morgan was out, Rhoda would untwist and unpin, and shake down a cloud upon her shoulders; then her eyes would gleam with a wild willful light as she looked at herself in the little glass in the work-box, but she would run away, if she heard any one coming, and hastily plait up her coils. The plain speaking and rough dealing of a household not attuned to the refinements of more sensitive natures had frightened instead of strengthening hers. She had learned to be afraid and reserved. She was timid and determined, but things had gone wrong with her, and she was neither brave nor frightened in the right way. She had learned to think for herself, to hold her own secretly against the universal encroachments of a lively race. She was obliging, and ready to sacrifice her own for others, but when she gave up she was conscious of the sacrifice. She could forgive her brother unto seven times. She was like the disciple, whose sympathy did not reach unto seventy times seven.

Rhoda was not strong, like Cassie and Zoe. She was often tired as she sat there in the window corner. She could not always touch the huge smoking heaps that came to table. When all the knives and forks and voices clattered together, they seemed to go through her head. The bells and laughter made her start. She would nervously listen for the boys' feet clattering down the stairs. At Church House there was a fresh silence. You could hear the birds chirruping in the garden all the time Lady Sarah was reading aloud. There were low comfortable seats covered with faded old chintz and tapestry. There were court ladies hanging on the walls. One wore a pearl necklace; she had dark bright eyes, and Rhoda used to look at her, and think her like herself, and wonder. There were books to read and times to read them at Church House, and there was Dolly always thinking how to give Rhoda pleasure. If she exacted a certain fealty and obedience from the little maiden, her rule was different from Aunt Morgan's. Dolly