

room where we sat, and throwing himself into a seat covered his eyes saying,

"Successful, she will see, thank God!" in a trembling voice,

And she does see, thanks be to our Father above, although as yet in a darkened room, still, she sees. The necessary excitement and call for exertion, has done Cora a world of good. I have written a letter to Stuart to hasten his journey, and by the time they return, Adèle will be quite able to bear the light.

Clarence declares the first eyes which see his new picture shall be Adèle's, but she whispers,

"Not till Gracie comes, dear Clare."

To-night we were much astonished by a visit from young Lawrence, Ada's cousin, who used to be such a great friend to my little girls, in their holidays at Rosedale and Ingle-side.

He is the perfection of a light-hearted blue-eyed sailor, heedless and reckless as his boyhood promised. One speech of his, brought a tinge of red to Ada's pale face, spite of her former declarations of carelessness.

"One of your old lovers was making a deuce of a fuss, because he did not arrive in Sicily before you left, and pestered me with all sorts of questions about you, whether you were married, etc. I expect he will follow you here, as likely as not."

"What was his name?" asked Ada laughing.

"Carrol, he is some kind of a ——— by George, if I know what, but he is something, which is going to keep him abroad a deucedly long time."

"He has been appointed consul to some one of the Mediterranean Cities, he wrote me word," said Clare, "Lester is with him this year too."

## CHAPTER LXXII.

DECEMBER.

At breakfast yesterday morning, we were discussing the arrangements of a ball, which Estelle was to give that evening in honor of the Ambassador of S——, and of Marion's wedding day anniversary, she declares.

"I have forgotten to tell you my dear," said Mr. Audley looking up from his paper, "that I have taken the liberty of inviting a guest to your fête this evening."

"Whom pray? lady or gentleman?" asked Estelle.

"Oh, a gentleman of course, and one well worth your knowing, I recommend you and Nora to endeavor to captivate him, for I know of none more worthy of enchaining."

"Dear! who can he be, and what can he be like, to whom you, 'Bien Bon,' take such a desperate fancy," said Lela.

"Ah! he is an old fancy of mine, I associate him with others who were once very dear to me, perhaps that is one reason, why I notice him enough to perceive his own excellence. Remember I recommend him. Although to tell the truth I rather surmise, from two or three things I have heard him say in regard to womankind, that our shy little Gracie is his type."

"Well then what is the use of our exhausting our charms, 'wasting our sweetness on the desert air' etc."

"True enough, Aunt Es, I hate men who have their 'types,' it makes one feel so uncomfortable to know you are being compared with some one else, I will none of your perfect men, I hate him already," said Lela.

"Very well, you saucy minx, now remember you are to keep out of the way, and let Gracie captivate him, that is if the child arrives in time."

"Oh they will be sure to be here by night, dear Gracie, I know they will," said Adèle.

"Yes so they will," quoth Lela, "and I make over my right and title henceforth and forever to Gracie."

"See that you do," laughed Mr. Audley as he went out. Soon after breakfast I was seated alone in my dressing-

room, when the door opened and Cora, with crimsoned cheeks came quickly in, holding a letter.

"Read that, mamma;" she said.

It was a short note from Rolf Livingstone, the latter part read thus,

"My pet, I know, spite of your coldness and pretended scorn of me, you love me yet. I am certain of it, I have watched you from afar, seen your pale cheeks and languid step, and know my darling is pining for me.

"Spite of yourself, your every action shows this, your quiet solitary life. Those whom I have asked, who frequent your house, say, they never have seen 'the widowed sister of la belle Lela,' and add a wish that they could catch a peep 'of one who is almost as beautiful, report says, as the song bird.' Fools! they do not know what they say, how I exult over them in secret. 'Almost as beautiful,' as if my Birdie was not more beautiful even than an angel. Oh Birdie, you may scorn me for a while, but I hope, I hope still, and on my knees I thank you that you conceal those charms, once my very own, but lost, lost now."

Then there are pleadings and love words, which touched my very heart, but only moved her scorn.

Oh! it is strange to see this gentle, loving child-heart so transformed. Henceforth I will say, nothing is so bitterly, fiercely reckless, as a woman wronged. When I had read this through, I looked at her, standing with a fierce, cold light in her eyes and I only handed it back, but said not a word.

"What do you think of that, mamma?" she said sharply.

"It makes my heart ache, Coralie."

"Humph! your heart is more tender than mine,—nay I do not mean that,—I have no heart, mine is in my baby's grave, it was a good, true heart, I must not defame it," she muttered.

"Cora, Cora, do not talk so."

"I will not, dearest, if you do not like it, but I have come to tell you I intend to make my debüt, this evening, as the 'Widow Livingstone.' I have just bargained with Adèle for her white Canton crape, which with a little alteration will suit me exactly, then I will put white moss-buds in my short curls, and it will only take jet ornaments to make my mourning deep enough."

"I will never agree to this deception! never, my child! you must be wild to think of such a thing, beside you know Rolf Livingstone will be here, sadly against his own will, I doubt not, but he is in the suite of the Ambassador, and will be obliged to come; you would never bear a meeting with him."

"Would I not? try me," she said vehemently.

"Your present anger makes you think you could go through much, but it would fail you."

"Nevertheless I will try this night. Forgive me, my precious mother, that I ever do the things you command me not, I of all the others am the bane, the trouble of your life, it is my fate."

"No, it is not so, my pet. I am content to have you as you are, only more happy, my poor child."

"Then, let me have my will this once."

"But the deception," I said, "the falsehood!"

"There need be none told, let them introduce me simply as Mrs. Livingstone, no one knows me here, save one who for his own sake will be silent."

And though I strove to persuade away this plan, Mr. Audley and Estelle espousing Cora's side, they carried it into effect.

Late in the afternoon, our travellers arrived. Stuart and Marion, trembling and anxious, but Gracie free from suspicion was calm as need be.

"Where is Adèle?" were her first words, "naughty puss, not to come and speak to me first of all."

"Here Gracie, dear Gracie," said Adèle's trembling voice behind her.

"Dear sister, how good it is to have you in my arms again, I am so glad to get back to you, I think I will never be tempted from your side, although," with a deprecating look at Stuart, "I have had the best and most charming of times with 'Arty' and 'May.'"

"If you hold me so closely, I cannot see you dearest Gracie," said Adèle softly.

"There, you shall have a chance," and she took her sister's hand and passed it over her face. "I have grown quite old in this long four months we have been parted, feel the wrinkles."

"I have no need to feel any more, it is so much better to see, Gracie, thank God and Uncle Ernest."

For the first time Gracie looked in her eyes, then with a white face she cried :

"What do you mean? Oh Adèle!"

"That I see my sister, my faithful friend once more, my true Gracie."

"Oh Adèle!" it was all she said; and before us all, with a beautiful light in her face, she knelt down where she stood, and bowing her head upon her clasped hands, said :

"For all Thy goodness, I thank Thee, oh my God." For a moment she was very still, then she rose and stretching out her arms to Ernest,

"Oh, Uncle Ernest, if the service, and life love of my heart can recompense you, they are your own forevermore."

He clasped her in his arms and the first tears I have seen him shed for years were rained upon her head. Tenderly she kissed them from his cheeks, then turned to me, and kissing me said :

"Your prayers and thanksgivings, a purer and more acceptable offering than mine, my precious mother, have gone up on high." And clasping her arms once more round her sister, "Adèle, papa's pretty Adèle, thank God!" And she went swiftly from the room.

Then followed the loving greetings of Marion and Stuart.

"The light is beautiful, my darling?"

"Oh is it not, May? but all your faces are more beautiful. It seems like heaven to have seen you all once more," and she hid her face on Stuart's breast and sobbed aloud.

"Nay, I will not have you dim your bright eyes, sister mine, with tears," said Stuart, "you have no need to weep for light, who always smiled in darkness." Then he let her go to seek for Gracie, and clasping his arms about me,

"Oh I am so joyful in your joy, my mother."

We had sad work before we could make Gracie ready for the evening's party. But Mr. Audley had determined they should both make their entrée this evening.

It has been many years since I was present at a gay ball. But early in the evening I took my place in a quiet corner where Stuart had drawn before a curtain a heavy music rack. It was a well chosen spot, just where three rooms

meet, the dancing saloon, the drawing and music room, which divided from each other by pillars, have only curtains instead of walls to separate them.

Beside one of these pillars in a little nook I felt content to look on unseen at this night's gaieties, for I could not stay away; I could not bear the suspense of not knowing how Coralie would sustain herself,—and then I was doubtful concerning the amount of courage Gracie had on hand after her surprise. Before the arrival of her guests Estelle came to me saying :

"I am glad they have fixed you at the head of the room, for I can receive every one just here, so that you can see them all to the best advantage, and then if you push back your curtains a little way thus, you have full view of the dancing room, and then of the music room as well."

How regally she looked, the humble teacher of Elm street. Oh, wealth is pleasant, but not the best or only thing, for I have known Estelle as gay and elegant, in our quiet home in a plain chintz dress, as she was to-night in her robe of garnet velvet clasped with diamonds and trimmed with rare old lace.

Next her stood Leanore. Her dress was black velvet with a narrow lace collar, clasped with a diamond pin of immense value, at the throat her sole ornament. Only one in a thousand could have worn such a dress, but it made her more lovely, the severe simplicity contrasting with her own brilliant beauty.

Coralie upon Howard's arm, dressed in the manner she proposed, with her short, bright curls decked with flowers, looked younger than either Adèle or Gracie, all her old childish ways resumed again. We watched her anxiously, but her cheek was crimson, her eyes bright, and a smile shot ever and anon over her face, and I did not wonder to hear the words of a gentleman :

"Well, that little fairy is the freshest, happiest bit of beauty I have seen for many a long day. They call her Mrs. Livingstone, who is she?"

"Another of those Percy girls, a sister of la belle Lela, there is a score of them I believe. Mrs. Aldrich, that little quaker-like dame over yonder in white is one of them, and these girls in pink with pearls, are some more," answered his companion.

"Oh yes, I remember Audley told me, they are Walter Percy's children, noble fellow, he redeemed a world from the dreariness of containing nothing good. I knew him years ago in Italy, he married Howard the English minister's daughter, you know. I wonder if she is dead too."

"I guess so, for I have never heard of her, the Audleys bring them out;" then he added, "but have you noticed that one in pink, they say she has been blind for years, and has just recovered her sight. Her face takes my breath away, old man as I am. I almost expect to hear some spirit voice bid her ascend from our sublunary sphere. Let us go behind her and see if she has wings." And they moved away leaving my view uninterrupted; then as I sat watching, the voice of a lady behind me said:

"Is it really true that the delightful Mr. Marstone has returned?"

"Yes, madame, and henceforth we poor fellows may hide our diminished heads, for he always was the *beau par excellence*, but now when he returns a travelled man, with all his other charms, he will take the fair ones by storm."

"Nonsense, Monsieur, you know you are irresistible, but about"—and they passed on. My poor Nora, I must warn her, but how? she was so far away from me, and I might already be too late. Suddenly I saw Clare, and leaning over called to him, but he did not hear, until some one said:

"Mr. Beaumont, a lady is speaking to you," and he came at once.

"Send Lela to me, Clare, as quickly as you can, I want to see her." He went instantly and returned with her just as the announcement was made of,

"The Ambassador from S—and suite," and among them, conspicuous from his height, I beheld Mr. Marstone. Estelle came quickly to her place.

"Come, Lela," said Mr. Audley, "take your place my child."

"One moment, Lela, do not look round, my child, can you be very calm and collected, if I tell you something?" I said hurriedly.

"Yes, what is it?" but her cheek grew pale as death.

"Mr. Marstone is here, the guest of whom your uncle spoke I suppose."

She shut her teeth tightly over her lips, and a kind of groan escaped.

"Leanore, your uncle is angry that you do not come," said Estelle leaning towards us, "come you have just time to take your place." The color flew into her face and pressing my hand she said quickly:

"Trust me, mamma," and stood beside Estelle and her husband just as he presented his guest to her.

"And my adopted daughter, Miss Percy, of the United State, your highness." Her only answer was a bow.

When his lordship had moved away with Estelle, Mr. Audley broke through the crowd which instantly surrounded Lela, saying:

"Nora, here is an old friend whom I hope you have not forgotten, Mr. Marstone, who spent sometime with us years ago at Paris, and afterwards at Ingleside."

"I remember Mr. Marstone, and also Monsieur Lambert," she said, extending her hand to a gentleman who accompanied him. "I doubt if either of them remember me so distinctly."

"My fair lady, you do us wrong," cried the one she called Lambert, "how could we ever forget such charms." But Mr. Marstone's sole reply was a grave bow.

"How is Madame, M. Lambert?" she asked.

"*Merci, Madame sa porte bien*," was the answer, "and at this moment she calls me, and I must leave you to my friend Marstone."

"Shall I have the pleasure of a promenade, Miss Percy?" he asked.

"Excuse me, but I am engaged for the next dance and will remain here, lest my partner should be unable to find me amidst the throng."

"Your mother?" he said after a pause, "I hope she is quite well."

"As well as usual, thank you, she is always frail."

"And I presume she is in Paris, as I see all the rest of you are here to-night," he added.

"Oh yes, I suppose," she added laughing, "you think us rather a large family to transport from one continent to another."

"I believe something of the kind did occur to me," he said smiling.

"Well we did think it a terrible undertaking, but it was not much worse than the journey between Ingleside and B—— used to be," she said lightly.

"How well Mrs. Aldrich is looking. I have not seen her since her marriage until now you know; they have been married a year to-night I hear. How well she is looking."

"Is she not? and Stuart, have you seen him? Oh he has grown such a noble man, we are so proud of him," she said warmly.

"And they are so happy," he said sadly, withdrawing his eyes from her face, upon which they had been fastened while she spoke, and looking into the distance with a but half-surpressed sigh.

"Oh, very, such good, true hearts, could not fail to be very happy," but seeming to remember suddenly to whom she was speaking, she said hurriedly: "Have you seen Adèle since her sight was restored?"

"Her sight restored!" he repeated, "then it was she whom I saw as I came up the room, I am very glad, what a source of comfort to your mother."

"Oh is it not?" and her voice trembled, "and to all of us such a joy."

Then others joined them, and the conversation became general, and several cases like and unlike Adèle's were cited, then Lela's partner claimed her, just as Mr. Audley came back with Gracie. A look of pain shot across Lela's face, and I saw she was remembering her guardian's words of the day before.

"Marstone, this blushing damsel has just been going into raptures over the pleasant times you made more pleasant in her childish days."

"Thank you kindly, Miss Gracie, it is very pleasant to be remembered. Mr. Audley has little idea how acceptably his words fell upon my ear." And Lela turned quickly away, she could bear to hear no more I plainly saw.

"Shall I have you for a partner, little friend?" said Mr. Marstone, "there is a place unoccupied opposite your sister," and he led her away.

When the dance was through he brought her back to the old place, and stood looking down into her flushed, smiling face.

"May I ask you a question, Miss Gracie?" he asked.

"If you like to, sir," she replied simply. He smiled gravely at her.

"I cannot understand," he said, "about your sister Coralie, I heard she was married to Rolf Livingstone, and yet she is every where spoken of as a widow, and they meet as strangers, I observe. I have seen him for the first time for years, since I came into this room, and thus have heard no explanation from him, I do not understand it." Gracie looked down in great distress, and was entirely speechless, but a voice at his side said:

"Let me answer your question, sir."

"Mrs. Livingstone excuse me," he said, turning quickly round and taking her proffered hand, "please pardon my curiosity."

"No need of an apology. Will you do me a favor for the sake of the old times?"

"To the utmost of my ability," he replied.

"Forget whom you have heard my husband was, for I have none; he is as truly dead to me as if the grass grew a yard above his grave. I am a widow in heart; Mr. Audley will explain this to you, but yonder man is a stranger to me forevermore."

"I will remember all you——" but as he spoke, Mr. Livingstone approached.

"Welcome back old friend; why Marstone, I did not think I could have existed three years and more without a hand grasp from you," he said with his genial smile and voice, which is always so heart-winning.

"Thank you Rolf, it is indeed a long time," was the reply as they shook hands.

"Birdie, will you not speak to me just once?" his voice, sunken almost to a whisper, was trembling in its pleading tones, and he extended his hand toward her.

"Sir," and she drew herself up proudly, and her eyes flashed scornfully, "you evidently are laboring under a mistake; I have not the pleasure of your acquaintance."

"Excuse me," he replied haughtily.

"Oh certainly," she rejoined calmly, "such things as resemblances often mislead one." Turning to Mr. Marstone she added lightly, "will you not introduce me to your friend?" And he did so, both he and Gracie looking far more the parties concerned than the principal actors, who were calm and self-possessed.

"Why you have the same name," said some one near by, "are you related?"

"We may possibly be, Madame," answered Cora looking coolly at Mr. Livingstone, "my husband had some connections, I believe, but I never knew them," then she added turning with a bright smile towards her interrogator, "you know although I bear the name of Livingstone, I am a Percy, and all my pride is there, the other name, begging this gentleman's pardon, is not a pleasant one to me, doubtless he will consider me sadly wanting in taste, but no name is so sweet as Percy to me; it is my *Espérance*."

"Then of course we need none of us hope to induce you to change, unless we can tack Percy to the end of our cognomen, as one of your ancestors, Josceline Duke of Brabant, did when he married a Lady Percy, in the days of Henry II. of England, although he claimed his own from Charlemagne," said some gentleman.

"Try me, Monsieur," she said merrily, "nay do not, if you do not mean I shall say yes," and bowing gaily, she took his offered arm, and laughing lightly, walked away to the dancing room.

All this while Gracie stood listening in utter dismay, and in her fright holding fast upon Mr. Marstone's arm, totally oblivious of the fact.

"There is no use in trying to persuade you to dance with me Gracie," said Willie Lawrence pettishly, as he came up to her, "you seem so pleased with Mr. Marstone's arm, I suppose mine will not tempt you." For the first time aware of her position, she blushed and withdrawing her hand,

"I did not mean—excuse me I did not know——" she said shyly.

"Did not mean what?" he replied softly, "to be kind to me; nay then I will not excuse you, even to my old friend Lieutenant Lawrence," he said shaking the young man by the hand kindly.

Lela passing by upon the arm of the Ambassador, to the music room, heard his words, and with a weary look in her dark eyes, went on to thrill with pleasure the hearts of many, while her own was filled with sadness and pain.

Then Clare came and fixed the curtain so I could look into the music room. While Lela sang all stood entranced,

how could they help it, it made me weep in my dark corner, she seemed to be singing her very heart away.

"The nightingale has surpassed herself to-night, I never heard her sing so well before," said some gentleman near me, after she had sung several songs.

"Do not your sisters any of them sing, Miss Percy?" said her attendant as she arose.

"Yes your highness, all of them, but only Mrs. Livingstone, in public, I know she will gratify you."

Was she mad to think of such a thing. Ada who had stolen softly in to me for a while, caught my hand quickly, but in a moment we knew it was a concerted plan, and that Lela was carrying out her sister's behest.

Then many voices joined in the petition for a song. She came lightly forward. I never in my life had seen her so bewitchingly graceful, so charming, as with a pretty shake of her head, and a shrug of her white shoulders, she looked archly into the Ambassador's admiring face, and said:

"Well, as you will, but your highness will have need to regret your condescension in requesting me, for even in my palmiest days, I was but a second rate singer, they used to keep me at home to show off Nora's superior excellence, and I must fain take up my old occupation again, it seems, but I am terribly rusty, for want of practice," and she cast a slightly sad glance upon the remnants of mourning she wore.

"Of course, dear lady, we will make all necessary allowance, though I doubt none will be needed, spite of your words," and he led her towards the instrument.

"Oh not the harp, your highness, I hate the harp, the piano is my delight."

"Hate," was the laughing response, "you should hate nothing but snakes; is not that one of your English maxims Livingstone?" he said turning to that gentleman.

"I believe it is, or American, which is the same thing."

"Well, I do not your highness," she replied gaily, "in one sense of the word, that is if you use the viper as a metaphor," and she began a prelude, before a reply could be made, saying:

"Only a ballad your lordship, I sing nothing else," and she began,

"I've been roaming."

How we all remembered the time when she had sprung in at the window at Rosedale, singing it the day Lela came home, Rolf Livingstone's face showed he did, and Mr. Marstone's too, though from another cause, for it was on that day Lela returned his letter. And poor Ada remembered too, that happy light-hearted time.

"Oh Mrs. Percy how can she!" she said clasping my hand.

When she had finished, and was listening with a pleased smile to the shower of compliments from her audience, Rolf Livingstone who had watched her keenly all this while, bending towards her asked:

"Do you sing this little thing from 'Maritaine?'" and he handed her a piece of music; it was a song they had learned about the time of their engagement. How the name brought her back to me, fair and pure in heart, before the serpent had charmed her, and then wearying of his prey, left her a passionate, revengeful woman. I trembled for her composure, and May in her distant place turned pale, but Lela and Cora stood unmoved, proud, resentful,—looking into his very eyes; they were prepared for his request.

She took the sheet, looked over it an instant, humming it softly, then said: "Oh yes, I used to sing this a great deal and was very fond of it, but it is nearly a year since I have attempted it, I fear I should fail."

A cold sneer lay upon his lips at her refusal, but apparently she did not observe it.

"Do oblige us, Madame," pleaded some one, taking up the piece she had laid down, "it is a great favorite with his highness."

"Is it indeed? then I wish I could sing it; Lela do you know it? No! alas then, Monsieur, you and Mr. Livingstone must select something else, for this is a duett, and I cannot sing both parts you know," and she laughed merrily.

"But Livingstone, you sing it yourself, where is your gallantry which is so renowned, that you do not offer your services to the fair lady?"

"I will most gladly, if the lady will do me the honor to use my poor voice." Oh I almost sprang from my seat, and even Lela looked startled as with a light laugh, she sat down.

"Well if I must, I must, but I doubt whether it will give satisfaction; it is rather hazardous for people to sing together unless they have practiced, and moreover I understand Mr. Livingstone is accustomed to sing with the fair cantatrice, Nina De Toille, and I am a sorry substitute for such talent."

"By Jove, not very elegant of her, to bring up a man's cast-off mistress to punish him," whispered one dandy to another who stood near me.

She played the prelude carelessly through, then bowing graciously said:

"Now we will begin if you please, now—" and they sang 'Holy mother guide his footsteps,' her voice never quivered, but was clear as a bell from the first note to the very last.

"Really better than I expected, you are an admirable timest," she said as she rose, "but you sang rather too low, Monsieur, I fear I quite drowned you out."

His face was ghastly pale, and he turned quickly away with a slight bow. With a light laugh, and a half-contemptuous raising of her eyebrows she looked after him.

"Why the gentleman seems literally exhausted," then she said: "Lela, my lord pleads for another duo, shall we try something?" and they did to the delight of all.

"Nay, now I am really done, I shall miss all the dancing my lord, I have a passion for dancing, and yonder music almost distracts me."

"Then may I claim this fair hand for the quadrille just forming?" and he led her away. Just then Gracie passed with Willie Lawrence, and stopping her Mr. Marstone said:

"You are to dance with me once more, Miss Gracie, please remember."

"I shall like to very much indeed," she said, and he turned towards Lela:

"What a charming little lady your sister has grown Miss Percy."

"Which one, sir, I have so many?" she replied coldly.

"Oh the one who has just deserted me, Miss Gracie."

"Yes she is a dear little girl, but Adèle is our beauty."

"So Miss Gracie thinks, she has been giving me wonderful accounts of her sister's perfections, of which according to her, the least is her angelic beauty; I remember as children they were all in all to each other."

"And are still," she replied, "the truest friends."

"Why are you not dancing?" he asked after a pause.

"At first because I was tired with singing, and now because it is a waltz in which I never take part.

"Your sisters I believe do?" he replied.

"No, none except Mrs. Livingstone, and the two girls sometimes together, mamma does not permit us, but Cora of course does as she likes."

"I am glad you do not like it," he said gravely, "but I knew you did not. Shall we seek a cooler place in yonder shaded conservatoire? I should like to tell you something of my Eastern travels, you used to have a penchant for all that belonged to the land of the Saracens." And taking his arm they walked away together, they who had once loved so fondly. Lela's kiss upon my cheek when she went to her room, told me better than words, of the sad weary heart within, yet she was calm.

"But Cora's arms flung round me, and her hot kisses rained upon my face, told how she needed the comfort she would not take. Marion and I have talked her strange, unnatural conduct over, and concluded it is best she should have had her will; indeed I doubt whether she would submit to any opposition, however gently urged.

To-night she met him at the opera, and they say talked as freely and carelessly to him as to the other strangers.

"And mamma," says May, "Stuart and I both think Mr. Marstone is very much pleased with Gracie; would it not be a wonder if plain little Gracie should make such a conquest as that finished gentleman and scholar; we used to think he liked Lela you know."

## CHAPTER LXXIII.

MARCH.

Two more months have passed in a round of never-ending gaiety and excitement. I wonder how they can endure it!

Clare's great picture has taken the prize at the "Exhibition." I need not attempt to describe what he has already done so admirably. Howard stands in the midst, the young Benjamin, with the coat of many colors, the same which his brother once wore about him. It looks like an angel's face shining out in the midst of those dark, stern men who surround him.

Clare's health has suffered sadly on account of his application, and his uncle has determined that he and Howard shall go on a journey to the Holy Land, and wherever else they will, to recruit. It will be sad parting from them, but it will be good for both of them, for Clare is worn out, and Howard is never strong.

Stuart and Marion left us some weeks since and are now quietly living in the old town of "Heidelberg," and Stuart is hard at his books once more, they have taken Ada to stay with them, until I go to Marion, which I shall soon.

Adèle's eyes seem quite well now, but we are very careful of them, especially Gracie who makes her sister sit hour after hour with them closed, telling her:

"I will be your eyes for a while, sister mine."

Cora meets Mr. Livingstone abroad, but of course he never comes here. I have not seen him since that first night, but they tell me he is sadly changed. The rest meet him as she desires them to do, as they would any other stranger.

Mr. Marstone visits us constantly, indeed so fond is Mr. Audley of him that he presses him into service upon all occasions, but Gracie, not Lela, is his companion, and often by Mr. Audley's arrangement I imagine.

"I would rather the child married him, than any man living," he says.

"But why Gracie, more than the others?" asked Estelle, carelessly.

"Oh only because he seems to have taken a fancy to her,