

which my infancy had been passed, was it any wonder then I loved him, and cared only to please him.

"And then for years I lost him, not only his presence, but his love, and I grew reckless and daring, but when he came again after I had not heard of him for years, save through his banker, I thought to win him back again, but I knew too soon alas! it was in vain, for his heart turned ever back to you, and God forgive me, I hated you. What were you, with your pale cold English face, that you should win from me the love of this man, I could not bear to think of it.

"But I am dying now and my boy will be desolate, Rolf came to me the day before he sailed, and offered to provide for my own and the boy's future wants, oh he was so gentle, so kind, so different in many things, and yet so like his old self, but I scorned him, and fled from his presence and hid myself, least he should take my child from me, but now I am leaving him to the mercy of a cold world.

"By the love you once bore his father, (but which he told me you gave him no more, because of his sins,) by that old love, I pray you have pity and come to me fair cold lady,

"NINA DE TOILLE."

"You will go at once dear child," I said when I had read it.

"And will you go with me mamma?" she asked, and with few words we followed the messenger.

But too late, to add one ray of comfort to that sinful sufferer, for ere we reached her side she was a corpse.

Beside her in the wildest grief lay a fair boy, whatever her sins were she was his mother, and with all the vehemence of his half Italian nature he mourned for her, calling upon her by every tender name, to speak to him.

It was a long while ere we could gain his attention, but after a time Cora's gentle voice touched his heart, and looking into her sweet face he said:

"Are you the lady mamma told me of?"

"I think I am dear boy," she replied.

"But ma'ma did not love you, she always wept when she thought of you?" he answered doubtfully.

"She will weep no more," Cora said softly.

"And she wants me to go with you?" he asked.

"Did she not tell you so little boy?"

"My name is Rolf if you please, and mamma said it was a good name, and that I was to live to honor it, and she said I must go to you, and be your good true boy always," and without another word he came home with us.

Mr. Audley has caused this woman to be privately, but respectably interred, and thus ends the life of one upon whose graceful motion and brilliant action, hundreds have hung entranced—and upon whose smiles one had well nigh wrecked his happiness here, and his soul hereafter.

And my daughter with my full consent, has taken this boy to be her own. Mr. Audley, Mr. Marstone, and even Howard at first opposed it, but we have withstood them and gained them over at last, and now she will guide and guard him, it is all the reparation she can make him, or the dead, for her husband's sins, and it is right.

And now the time long looked for has come, and to-night I am writing for the last time I trust in Paris, to-morrow we start for home. The Audleys we leave in Europe, but Mr. Audley says:

"I am growing an old man, and next year if I am spared I will come to 'Ingle-side' to spend the sunset of my life where its dawn began." And we will take our new found Lillian and bring her up to womanhood, the only one beneath the shelter of her father's home, the father whom she never knew.

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

"Mid pleasures and palaces where'er I may roam,
Be it ever so humble there's no place like home."
(J. HOWARD PAYNE.)

"PERCIES' CLIFFE MANOR." APRIL 30.

HOME once more—oh the joy the blessing of it,—who knows the blessing and comfort of a home better than we who have been so long tossed about on the wide world.

We bade Lela and her husband adieu at Havre, where they had accompanied us, it was not very hard to leave her under such safe guardianship, even though we knew a year must elapse before we could look upon her bonnie face again.

And we were bringing home a new child, our bright eyed pleasant Lilly, who was almost a stranger to us, though fifteen years ago she had stolen into our home, one night when the shadows of the grave lay all about us, and made a brightness midst the gloom—but she is all our own, and day by day she grows deeper into our hearts.

We had a safe and easy passage across, and resting one night at our old home in Elm st. with our friends the Greys, we came the next morning towards home.

It was even-tide of the next day when we reached Glendora, we had sent no word of our coming, and therefore found no welcome.

"Mrs. Raymond is at 'Percies' Cliffe,' to-day" was the word we got. Leaving Cora and Gracie at Glendora, we went quickly on, leaving the carriages at the end of the park, so their noise need give no warning of our coming.

The lamps were lighted in the little sitting room, in the east tower, we crept up the steps to the piazza, and looked in upon the faces of our friends.

Mrs. Wilbur, by a shaded light sat knitting, and looking at Dora and a new baby, who sat opposite her, Harley was reading to them, and in an easy chair sat Ernest fast asleep though he held a book in his hand.

As we listened, Harley's voice fell upon our ear, reading from Hyperion—"Tell me my soul why art thou so restless? Why dost thou look forward to the future with such strong desires? The present is thine—and the past—and the future shall be! Oh that thou didst look forward to the great hereafter, with half the longings wherewith thou longest for an earthly future."—Softly opening the lattice I went into the room, and clasping my arms about Dora.

"Now listen to my words dearest," I said, then the scream of delight from Mrs. Wilbur and Dora, aroused Ernest who started up asking quaintly.

"Is the house on fire?"

"Yes with a blaze of love, uncle mine," cried May as she clasped her arms about him.

Then when the greetings and wonderings were over, and a thousand questions had been asked and answered upon either side, Cora and Gracie came bringing with them our precious child. As she sprang into the room, Ernest caught her in his arms.

"Why my blossom you have really come," he said.

"Oh mon maitre mon cher maitre," she said, then turning to me. "May I tell him myself, please?" when the consent was given, she laid her hand upon his arm, and said softly, "Uncle Ernest, I am Tiny, your own little name child, whom the cruel waves wooed from her home."

A silence fell on all while she made this statement, but when by a word or two we had made them sure, many were the tears and blessings shed upon the sweet face of our new found child. Later in the evening she went softly up to Ernest and said laying her hand in his,

"Will you love me as well as when I was Elsie Rennie's grandchild?"

"Yes sweet one," he said.

"But not better, not better! my dear master?"

"Never better than I loved my little Lilly-bell, my merry pupil who loved me more than even the fairies and flowers," and he clasped the child in his arms, and looking at me said, "she is none the less mine because she has proved to belong to you Bertha, I took her first remember."

"And you shall have your full share of her Ernest, for from the very first of her life, she belonged chiefly to you," I replied.

We have been home nearly a month, and we all with one accord, say we are glad to be here. Stuart and his family are already settled in their house, which is the perfection of comfort and prettiness, and which was a grateful surprise to them. Marion calls her quiet wood surrounded home, "Bird's nest cottage."

Stuart has with his usual energy, and decision, taken an office in P——, to which he drives every morning, in company with Ernest, the one to his already multitudinous duties at the college, the other as he declares with a shrug:—

"To expect the *rush* of clients, which will come, if you give them time."

Then Clare is to have his studio somewhere in P——, but the lazy fellow likes to be at home, playing with Tiny

and little Rolf, planing divers employments with Gracie and Howard, or best of all singing with Adèle.

These are the pleasant things but there are sad ones even here in our happy, peaceful, beautiful home. The morning after we came, Ernest handed me a package after breakfast, saying,

"I am sorry that what you will find there, will cause a shadow thus early over your home coming, but I could not prevent it."

When I had gone to my room, I found it was from Rolf Livingstone, and contained letters for Coralie and myself, my own read thus:—

DEAR MRS. PERCY, — Last night I sat busy but sad, in the home beautiful but lonely, which I have made for my wife, sadness oppressed me, I thought of many things, but above all that an ocean rolled between my treasure and myself,—not alone the ocean of dark heaving waters, but an ocean of sin, which my own hand had formed, fierce cruel billows of madness and crime,—but in the midst of the clouds black as midnight which enveloped me, came a bright glad light—Ernest my tried true friend sprang into my room.

"They have come!" he cried, "a half hour since, and in the midst of the noise and merry making I thought of you old fellow, playing hermit over here, and so I stole through the woods to tell you—and now I must back again before they miss me."

"And before I could ask a single question he was gone—for a moment I sat trying to realize what he said, 'they have come,' that meant Cora was near—my wife so dearly loved though lost, was within my reach—but a few steps and my arms were about her and her kisses of forgiveness were on my lips—then I cried out in bitter anguish.

"And I may not go to her, I dare not, I am not worthy, I have not won the blessing of her presence," Oh it wrung my heart!

I prayed long for strength to endure this, the hardest trial of my life, and my God heard my cry and made me strong.

I came late in the evening, stealing softly and carefully, through the dimness the star-light threw over wood and fields, and stood looking in upon you all,—I saw my Cora,

oh I call her so even though I know the thought of being mine would make her shudder,—so fair, so beautiful, she was standing just where the bright light fell upon her—her hand laid tenderly upon the head of a little boy whose face was turned from where I stood, she bent a fond look down upon him, and as as I watched I heard her voice.

"Good night dear son, go now to Milly, God protect my little Rolf," and then as he went away I saw his face, my own boy's face, and they were both so near me, my own once—my injured son—my thrice injured wife, both so beloved, both sundered far from me.

I wound my arms fiercely round the pillar against which I leant, pressing my lips against its cold marble, to hush the groans my stricken soul sent forth. Oh she has heaped coals of fire upon my head! Oh Coralie your goodness crushes me down to earth! it lays me in the dust before you!

Without another look I came away, and now in the gray light of the opening day I write my farewell. Oh Mrs. Percy I know I am unworthy now, I know that even if for pity's sake she would forgive me, and take back those fearful words.

"Rolf I pray God I may never see your face again,"—even then I could not trust myself. Were it love instead of pity, which she gave me, I might be true to my vows—God knows—perhaps I might be trusted, but now I fear—knowing my own heart, with its passions and evil desires—I fear to trust myself to a life of ease, a home wherein she dwells.

I must go forth and battle with life—for an eternal life to come. I have written Coralie a letter, she will show it to you,—if the love which I have striven to hide, is too much spoken of, if my words annoy and disgust her, who has no answering love wherewith to excuse their excess,—speak to her for me, dear friend teach her to pardon my importunity, for the sake of the love she once bore me.

"Once bore me" oh with suffering Cain, I raise my hands to heaven and cry, "my punishment is greater than I can bear," but not than I deserve, I remember that.

But she did love me once, and by that old love I have prayed her to live in the home I have made her,—I did not tell her so—but it will comfort my heart in its weary wan-

derings to think of her there, among the beauties and luxuries my own hand has gathered for her. Plead with her that she go there.

Long ago when we were lovers, both of us happy, and one unspotted by the world, we rode by this spot, and laying her hand upon my bridle she said,

"See yonder old brown mansion Rolf, on that woody mound? it is just within view of my father's study window, if I have one wish upon earth beside that 'Percies' Cliffe' should again belong to my family it is that this place should be my home." And then she blushed and shook her golden curls over her eyes because I said,

"Then it shall be *our* home my pet."

Now I have bought it and had it put in order for her, and henceforth it is her own. Within this envelope I have sent you the deed by which it is settled upon herself, beseech her to take it dear friend.—

Since I came home, I have striven long and prayerfully to discover what was my appointed work, what my Father meant me to do. I remembered that the young man who from his youth up had obeyed the whole law, "went away sorrowful because he had vast possessions." His riches tempted him who was *almost* a good man,—what would mine do for me who am so great a sinner, and I determined to put all this great wealth away from me, after I had decided what to do without it.

Accidentally, perhaps providentially, my attention was directed to the factory town of G——, a few miles below us upon the river. The owner of the mills had been unfortunate, the work was stopped, and hundreds of men were thrown out of employment, and their families reduced to a state of starvation. I visited the place, it was desolate beyond description, the children with hungry eyes, stared at me as I rode through the narrow crooked streets. Filth, squalor and famine, met me every where, and then I said to myself:—

"This scene disgusts you, the very name of factory and trade causes your aristocratic lip to curl, and your refinement to stand at bay, an humble christian should know no such pride, should feel only scorn for sin, not for honest labor, therefore to humble your pride of birth, you shall become a

tradesman a mill-owner,—here is your work ready for you, put forth your hands and take up your life work,"—and forthwith I purchased the whole concern.

There during the last few months I have passed most of my time, the mills are a little out of the town, and around them spread acres of unimproved ground, on this I have erected small houses, and in them the men employed in the factories, can live more cleanly, and cheaper than they now do. In the midst we left room for a church.

I have left the work in good reliable hands, till my return. Now I am going forth, to travel among the manufacturers of other lands, and learn from them my new duties. To learn from their negligences and wrong doings, the right and best way.

I will confess my weakness. God forgive me, that I cannot cast from my heart, this wicked pride. Even now I remember that I have tainted my noble name, by becoming a tradesman with a tingling sensation of shame. It is my English birth. My false unchristian education. No child of mine shall ever start in life with the curse of riches upon him. I have guarded against the temptations which surrounded my early life, ever being endured by those I leave after me.

Except this homestead, and a moderate income for my wife, and the money invested in the factories of G——, I have willed every cent I owned away from me irrevocably. With the advice of older and wiser Christians than myself, I have made a perpetual fund of it, for the benefit of benevolent and missionary societies. Will you explain this to Coralie, and that henceforth, by the labour of my own hands I will provide for the wants of my wife and son.

Pray for me Mrs. Percy, pray that I may not become proud of being humble, but that with fear and trembling I may expiate my crimes, and work out my salvation.

And lead my wife to think gently of me dear friend. Oh I know by the peace I sometimes feel God has pardoned me, will not she? Poor stricken lamb, God's peace be with her now and ever more. Ere this reaches you I shall be far upon my way. (It was signed,) "Rolf Livingstone."

Gone! could it be possible, gone with the thought she did not love him! did not love him! He ought to have known

better, only that night ere she left me she had said with a glad smile,

"To-morrow, I shall see him mamma! to-morrow I will take his son's, *our son's* hand in mine and we will go alone, and plead for his blessing upon us," and now it was all over and he was gone.

Oh Rolf, brave hearted, noble Rolf, remember not by works can you be saved, this was more than was required of you, it was not needful that you should thus banish and torture yourself. The thought comes over me— who of all those who through a long life have professed to serve God, would thus have given up their all, and lain even their pride, a sacrificial offering upon the altar of their God!

Coralie bore this last stroke meekly, as she does all things now, only, "If he had not doubted my love," she said sadly. The next day, as he had willed she went with her young son to the home his hand had made, scarcely a half-mile distant from our own.

Now like a spirit of light she goes among her husband's workmen, a part of every day, cheering them with gentle smiles, and pleasant words, and already they couple her name with a blessing, my precious child!

Ernest and Harley have recounted to me many of the noble deeds which have employed Rolf's time since he came home, and though the discipline has been severe, it has borne precious fruits, and will in the end win a reward.

Another great change has fallen upon us, a few days after our return—Howard after much earnest talk, expressed his determination to become a minister of the everlasting Gospel, we had always taken for granted he would study his father's profession, and take his place, but this is surely better. Therefore again at college my grave, good boy prepares himself for his life work. All is peace, about us—the day brings with it enough of care and labor, to make the night time a sweet season of rest, God's goodness is all about us, the trials and temptations, of the past are as a dream when one awaketh,—even the hardest sufferings of our life, now they are gone seem mist-like—or only clouds round which our present sunshine sheds a roseate hue,—the past afflictions, but make the present good more enjoyable—thank God for all his mercies, and they have been strewn all along

our pathway since life began,—a few gloomy cloudy days, but mostly having a sunbeam somewhere over them.

CHAPTER LXXIX.

"I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,
And gather dust and chaff, and call
To what I feel is Lord of all,
And faintly trust the larger hope—" TENNYSON.

AUGUST 1.

ANOTHER August day—the first since our return,—the fifteenth since Walter went home—it seems a long, long while to say that fifteen summers with their weary days have flown,—that days and nights for such a time have been heaped mountain high, one laid upon the other, some good or evil deed illumining or staining the fair tablet, which has been given us by God, wherein to record our life thoughts and deeds.

So many things have chanced since then, so much has changed, it makes me sing the old song,—Walter dearest, that we used to sing in lang syne,

"Many the changes since last we met;
Blushes have brightened, and tears have been wept,
Friends have been scattered like roses in June,
Some to the bridal, some to the tomb."

So many of mine to the bridal, so few thank our Father, to the tomb, and yet even those few have made me sadly wicked, for though I always try not to, my heart will feel what my lips refuse to say. "Why not I, others go home, why oh my Father may not I? how long! O Lord! how long!"

To-night these thoughts come thickly over me though I strive against them, knowing how full of evil the desire is, Father pardon my sinfulness, for Jesus' sake.

I write to-night, with my Ernestine by my side, her great eyes fixed gravely upon the fire, and when I asked her—

“What are your dreams to-night my fairy?”

“I was pitying myself mamma,” she replied turning her eyes to my face.

“Why my little one? what ails my baby?”

“I was thinking how sad it was never to have known papa, whom you all love so dearly, never to have shared the sorrows of that life which followed his death, which has knit you so closely together—I feel an outcast among my own, and O mamma I fear papa will not know his Lilly up yonder.”

But I folded her in my arms and taught her a better knowledge, than that,—and bade her rejoice that her father's blessing was sure in Heaven.

And is it not so my own, whatever comes to pass if we live aright shall we not come with thee in that company, that wait upon His will.

OCTOBER.

A thing I have hoped for, prayed and even planned for, has come to pass in the most matter of fact way imaginable, Ada and Carrol are married.

It seems so strange—after the years of separation, that the matter should be all right at last, and so quietly done.

Carrol has been studying his profession of medicine, and assisting Ernest in his laboratory as a procurator, he has visited us constantly, and always seen Ada, at least since she has been with us, for on our first arrival, she went directly from the steamer to pass a few months with her poor lonely aunt Mrs. Du Tille, before she came to live with us, or rather near us, for in her independent fashion she chose to live in her own home of Rosedale, a few miles from us, saying,

“I must not get used to being with you always, for it may be I shall be called to part in some future time, and it would break my heart.”

And so for many reasons, and because we could see her every day, and aid and comfort her, she has been keeping what she calls ‘an old maid's hall,’ with a host of friends always around her.

Carrol met her here—went with others at all times to her own house—and yet they grew no nearer to each other. But one day, Ada tired and worn out with a siege of calling and shopping in P—, seated herself in the cars to come home: just as the train started Carrol came in, and as a matter of course took the vacant seat beside her.

Then he noticed she was pale, and sad, and they talked their present life over, her loneliness, his business, then by some chance word the old times when they were young and light-hearted, and free from care was brought up.

“You liked me then Ada,” said Carrol with a half laugh at calling her thus.

“Indeed I did Charlton very much,” she said quietly.

“Better than any one else, while the fancy lasted you.”

“The best in the world, with my whole heart,” she answered calmly.

“And by my cursed folly I lost your priceless love, oh Ada!”

“Yes, you lost it such as it was,” she said, but her cheek was very pale, and she shut her hands tightly together as they lay in her lap.

He sat silently looking at her for a little while, then he asked sadly.

“Who has that heart now Ada Lawrence?”

“One who will never spurn it, casting its love back, making its life a weary thing.”

“Did I do that Ada? oh did I?” he said quickly.

“It was not a very bright sunshiny time, Charlton, when I proved you false, but I lived through it bravely,” was the quiet answer.

“But whose is the heart which might have been my own, you said some one who would not misunderstand or lightly esteem its worth.”

“Only me—self and Mrs. Percy,” she said gaily “but let us change the theme, old times must be forgotten.”

He laid his hand softly upon her clasped ones and said in a low voice:

“I pine for your old love Ada Lawrence, give it me again.”

“For what intent, to have it cast back once more?” she said checking a quick sob, which welled up from her loving

heart, but which pride who keeps the doors forbade an utterance.

"As God is my witness no, but that by the devotion and faith of a man's love, I may show the light esteem to be placed upon a boy's folly. Oh trust me Ada, a heart tried by years is better worthy of a kindly hearing, than the fickle fancy of a silly boy."

"But I have lost the old love, Charlton," she said.

"Oh Ada, learn it over once more," he pleaded.

"I can not, if I would, because——" and she paused.

"Because?—because what?—oh tell me Ada."

"Because I have learned a better love than my girlhood ever dreamed of," he drew his hand quickly away but she caught it in her own and although she blushed deeply, "do not spurn the woman's love dear Charlton, be true to the lone orphan girl who has given you her heart."

"Oh Ada, dearest Ada," and he bent his head over her hand, and I saw a tear-drop lay upon the white wrist, for though he knew it not, I was just behind them, for Ada and I with our bundles and our weary limbs had been together in the city little dreaming what would come of it.

And now after two months time they are married, two more whom I dearly love, have found this resting place on earth, after many trials which now they are over matter not, save to make the present more fair.

CHAPTER LXXX.

—“God's greatness
Flows around our incompleteness.
Round our restlessness His rest.

(E. B. BROWNING.)

AUGUST 1.

My husband, did'st see our boy to-day—did'st listen to his words of grace—oh God was never so near to me—never so

truly my friend as to-day—when for the first time, in his youthful fervor, with his matchless beauty, and love-toned voice, my son, stood up and proclaimed before his fellow-men, the truth as it is in Jesus.

His father's fervid eloquence, and zealous heart have descended upon him like the mantle of Elijah upon Elisha in old times—and the grace of his father's piety, envelops him, my boy my blessed boy.

To-day—by the appointment of those who have had charge of his spiritual progress, he preached his first sermon before the vast congregation of the 'Calvary' Church. Oh how very near he was to his God, appeared in every thought, and many a heart beside my own, invoked a blessing upon the boyish preacher, thus early buckling on the armor, ready for the charge, his banner unfurled, his helmet down.

To-night I wonder if it is much longer needful for me to bide here. I will not ask to go, but these are the things which make me remember to thank God that I can go with few backward glances.

Marion my little friend and comforter, amidst her children, with my own true Stuart guarding her, leads a happy shielded life, no storms come near my May-flower, and if they do, in the future, God is her stay.

Leafore, proudly laid her heart, her name, her all, upon the altar of her love. A happy wife, a happy mother, is my queen. A noble man is Paul Marstone and we prize him well, taking his stand in the first rank, as a scholar and a citizen, he represents his state, at the nation's conference, filling the same place which Walter Percy's name gave grace to, in other years. And though my Lela shines a belle among the proudest of the land, yet she comes back to her village home, with its duties and cares, with a kindly affection for the life so different it presents to her. One bright eyed boy, blesses their home, and she proudly says:

"My Percy has his father's eyes, and noble brow."

"No, no, they are his plebian grandfather's very own," her husband responds, and then Stuart taking up Paul's bantering says with a laugh in his eyes:

"Sister mine how came you a Percy to link your high mightiness with a mechanic's son, I am shocked at such taste!"