"I do," replied Mrs. Ryle, her tone so significantly decisive as to be almost offensive. "He takes his standing from this day as master of Trevlyn Farm; subject only to me."

"I wish you joy of him!" angrily returned Chattaway. "But you must understand, Mrs. Ryle, that your having a boy at the head of affairs will oblige me to look more keenly after my interests."

"My arrangements with you are settled," she said. "So long as I fulfil my part, that is all that concerns you, James Chattaway."

"You'll not fulfil it, if you put him at the head of things."

"When I fail, you can come here and tell me of it. Until then, I would prefer that you should not intrude on Trevlyn Farm."

She rang the bell violently as she spoke, and Molly, who was passing along the passage, immediately appeared. Mrs. Ryle extended her hand imperiously, the forefinger pointed out.

"The door for Mr. Chattaway."

CHAPTER X.

MADAM'S ROOM.

LEADING out of Mrs. Chattaway's dressing-room was a comfortable apartment, fitted up as a sitting-room, its hangings of chintz, and its furniture maple-wood. It was called in the household "Madam's Room," and it was where Mrs. Chattaway frequently sat. Yes; the house and the neighbourhood accorded her readily the title which usage had long given to the mistress of Trevlyn Hold: but they would not give that of "Squire" to her husband. I wish particularly to repeat this. Strive for it as he would, force his personal servants to observe the title as he did, he could not get it recognized or adopted. When a written invitation came to the Hold—a rare event, for the good old-fashioned custom of inviting verbally was chiefly followed there—it would be worded, "Mr. and Madam Chattaway," and Chattaway's face would turn green as he read it. No, never! He enjoyed the substantial good of being proprietor of Trevlyn Hold, he received its revenues, he held sway as its lord and master; but its honours were not given to him. It was so much gall and wormwood to Chattaway.

Mrs. Chattaway stood at this window on that dull morning in November mentioned in the last chapter, her eyes strained outwards. What was she gazing at? Those lodge chimneys? —The dark and almost bare trees that waved to and fro in the wintry wind?—The extensive landscape stretching out in the distance, not fine to-day, but dull and cheerless?—Or on the shifting clouds in the grey skies? Not on any of these; her eyes, though apparently bent on all, in reality saw nothing. They were fixed in vacancy; buried, like her thoughts, inwards.

She wore a muslin gown with dark purple spots upon it; her collar was fastened with a bow of black ribbon, her sleeves were confined with black ribbons at the wrist. She was passing a finger under one of these wrist-ribbons, round and round, as if the ribbon were tight; in point of fact, it was a proof of her abstraction, and she knew not that she was doing it. Her smooth hair fell in curls on her fair face, and her blue eyes were bright as with a slight touch of inward fever.

Some one opened the door, and peeped in. It was Maude Trevlyn. Her frock was of the same material as Mrs. Chattaway's gown, and a sash of black ribbon encircled her waist. Mrs. Chattaway did not turn, and Maude came forward.

"Are you well to-day, Aunt Edith?"

"Not very, dear." Mrs. Chattaway took the pretty young head within her arm as she answered, and fondly stroked the bright curls. "You have been crying, Maude!"

Maude shook back her curls with a smile, as if she meant to be brave; to make light of the accusation. "Cris and Octave went on so shamefully, Aunt Edith, ridiculing George Ryle; and when I took his part, Cris hit me here"—pointing to the side of her face—"a sharp blow. It was stupid of me to cry, though."

"Cris did?" exclaimed Mrs. Chattaway.

"I know I provoked him," candidly acknowledged Maude. "I'm afraid I flew into a passion; and you know, Aunt Edith, I don't mind what I say when I do that. I told Cris that he would be placed at something not half as good as a linen-draper's some time, for he'd want a living when Rupert came into Trevlyn Hold."

"Maude! Maude! hush!" exclaimed Mrs. Chattaway in a tone of terror. "You must not say that."

"I know I must not, Aunt Edith; I know it is wrong; wrong to think it, and foolish to say it. It was my temper. I am very sorry."

She nestled close to Mrs. Chattaway, caressing and penitent.

Mrs. Chattaway stooped and kissed her, a strangely-marked expression of tribulation, shrinking and hopeless, upon her countenance.

"Oh, Maude! I am so ill!"

Maude felt awed; and somewhat puzzled. "Ill, Aunt Edith?"

"There is an illness of mind worse than that of body, Maude; inward trouble is more wearing than outward, child! I feel as though I should sink under my weight of care. Sometimes I wonder why I am kept on earth."

"Oh, Aunt Edith! You——"

A knock at the room door. It was followed by the entrance of a female servant's face. She could not see Mrs. Chattaway; only Maude.

"Is Miss Diana here, Miss Maude?"

"No. Only Madam."

"What is it, Phœbe?" called out Mrs. Chattaway.

The girl came in now. "Master Cris wants to know if he can take out the gig, ma'am?"

"I cannot tell anything about it," said Mrs. Chattaway. "You must ask Miss Diana. Maude, see; that is your Aunt Diana's step on the stairs now."

Miss Trevlyn came in. "The gig?" she repeated. "No; Cris cannot take it. Go and tell him so, Maude. Phœbe, return to your work."

Maude ran away, and Phœbe went off grumbling, not aloud, but to herself; no one dared grumble in the hearing of Miss Trevlyn. She had spoken in a sharp tone to Phœbe, and the girl did not like sharp tones when addressed to herself. As Miss Trevlyn sat down opposite Mrs. Chattaway, the feverish state of that lady's countenance struck upon her attention.

"What is the matter, Edith?"

Mrs. Chattaway buried her elbow on the sofa-cushion, and pressed her hand on her face, half covering it, before she spoke. "I cannot get over this business," she answered in low tones. "To-day—perhaps naturally—I am feeling it more than is good for me. It makes me ill, Diana."

"What business?" asked Miss Trevlyn.

"This apprenticing of George Ryle."

"Nonsense," said Miss Diana.

"It is not the proper thing for him, Diana; you admitted yesterday that it was not. The boy says that it is the blighting of his whole future life: and I feel that it is nothing less. I

could not sleep last night for thinking of it. Once I dozed off, and fell into an ugly dream," she shivered. "I thought Mr. Ryle came to me, and asked whether it was not enough that we had heaped care upon him in life, and then sent him to his death, but must also pursue his son."

"You always were weak, you know, Edith," was the composed rejoinder of Miss Trevlyn. "Why Chattaway should be interfering with George Ryle, I cannot understand; but it surely need not give concern to you. The proper person to put a veto on his being placed at Barmester, as he is being placed, was Maude Ryle. If she did not see fit to do it, it is no business of ours."

"It seems to me as if he had no one to stand up for him. It seems," added Mrs. Chattaway, with more of passion in her tone, "as if his father must be looking on at us, and condemning us from his grave."

"If you will worry yourself over it, you must," was the rejoinder of Miss Trevlyn. "It is very foolish, Edith, and it can do no earthly good. He is bound by this time, and the thing is irrevocable."

"Perhaps that is the reason—because it is irrevocable—that it presses upon me to-day with a greater weight. It has made me think of the past, Diana," she added in a whisper. "Of that other wrong, which I cheat myself sometimes into forgetting; a wrong——"

"Be silent!" imperatively interrupted Miss Trevlyn, and the next moment Cris Chattaway bounded into the room.

"What's the reason I can't have the gig?" he began. "Who says I can't have it?"

"I do," said Miss Trevlyn.

Cris insolently turned from her, and walked up to Mrs. Chattaway. "May I not take the gig, mamma?"

If there was one thing irritated the sweet temper of Mrs. Chattaway, it was being appealed to against any decision of Diana's. She knew that she possessed no power; that she was a nonentity in the house; and though she bowed to her dependency, and had no resource but to bow to it, she did not like it to be brought palpably before her.

"Don't apply to me, Cris. I know nothing about things downstairs; I cannot say one way or the other. The horses and vehicles are specially the things that your papa will not have meddled with. Do you remember taking out the dog-cart without leave, and the result?"

Cris looked angry; perhaps the reminiscence was not agreeable. Miss Diana interfered.

"You will *not* take out the gig, Cris. I have said it."

"Then see if I don't walk! And if I am not home to dinner, Aunt Diana, you can just tell the Squire that the thanks are due to you."

"Where is it that you wish to go?" asked Mrs. Chattaway.

"I am going to Barmester. I want to wish that fellow joy of his indentures," added Cris, a glow of triumph lighting his face. "He is bound by this time. I wonder the Squire is not back again!"

The Squire was back again. As Cris spoke, his tread was heard on the stairs, and he came into the room. Cris was too full of his own concerns to note the expression of Mr. Chattaway's face.

"Papa, may I take out the gig? I want to go to Barmester, to pay a visit of congratulation to George Ryle."

"No, you will not take out the gig," said Mr. Chattaway, the allusion exciting his vexation almost beyond bearing.

Cris thought he might have been misunderstood. Cris deemed that his proclaimed intention would find favour with Mr. Chattaway.

"I suppose you have been binding that fellow, papa. I want to go and ask him how he likes it."

"No, sir, I have not been binding him," thundered Mr. Chattaway. "What's more, he is not going to be bound. He has left it, and is at home again."

Cris gave a blank stare of amazement, and Mrs. Chattaway let her hands fall silently upon her lap, and heaved a gentle sigh, as if some great good had come to her.

CHAPTER XI.

LIKE THE SLIPPERS IN EASTERN STORY.

None of us can stand still in life. Everything rolls on its course towards the end of all things. The world goes on, and its events; we go on, in one universal progress: nothing can arrest itself—nothing can be diverted from the appointed laws of advancement.

In noting down a family's or a life's history, it must of necessity occur that periods in it will be differently marked. Years at times will glide quietly on, giving forth few events worthy of record; and again, it will happen that occurrences, varied and momentous, will be crowded into an incredibly short space. Events, sufficient one would think to fill up the allotted life of man—threescore years and ten—will follow one another in rapid succession in the course of as many months; nay, of as many days.

Thus it was with the history of the Trevlyns, and those connected with them. After the lamentable death of Mr. Ryle, the new agreement touching money-matters between Mr. Chattaway and Mrs. Ryle, and the settlement of George Ryle in his own home, it may be said in his father's place, little occurred for some years worthy of note. Time seemed to pass on uneventfully. The girls and the boys grew into men and women; the children into girls and boys. Cris Chattaway lorded it in his own offensive manner as the Squire's son—as the future Squire; his sister Octavia was not more amiable than of yore, and Maude Trevlyn was governess to Mr. and Mrs. Chattaway's younger children. Miss Diana Trevlyn had taken care that Maude should be well educated, and she paid the expenses of it from her own pocket, in spite of Mr. Chattaway's sneers. When Maude was eighteen years of age, the question arose, What shall be done with her? "She shall go out and be a governess," said Mr. Chattaway. "Where will be the profit of all her fine education, if it's not to be made use of?" "No," dissented Miss Diana; "a Trevlyn cannot be sent out into the world to earn her own living: our family have not come to that." "I won't keep her in idleness," growled Chattaway. "Very well," said Miss Diana; "make her governess to your girls, Edith and Emily: it will save the cost of their schooling." And the advice was taken; and Maude for the past three years had been governess at Trevlyn Hold.

But Rupert? Rupert was found not to be so easily disposed of. There's no knowing what Chattaway, in his ill-feeling, might have put Rupert to, had he been at liberty to place him as he pleased. If he had not shown any superfluous consideration in placing out George Ryle—or rather in essaying to place him out—it was not likely he would show it to one whom he hated as he hated Rupert. But here Miss Diana stepped in, as she had done with regard to Maude. Rupert was a Trevlyn, she said, and consequently could not be converted into a

chimney-sweep or a shoe-black: he must get his living at something more befitting his degree. Chattaway demurred, but he knew better than to run counter to any mandate issued by Diana Trevlyn.

Several things were tried for Rupert. He was placed with a clergyman to study for the Church; he went to an LL.D. to read for the Bar; he was consigned to a wealthy grazier, to be made into a farmer; he was posted off to Sir John Rennet, to be initiated into the science of civil engineering. And he came back from all. As one after the other venture was made, so it failed, and a very short space of time would see Rupert returned as ineligible to Trevlyn Hold. Ineligible! Was he deficient in capacity? No. He was only deficient in that one great blessing, without which life can bring no enjoyment—health. In his weakness of chest—in his liability to take cold—in his suspiciously delicate frame, Rupert Trevlyn was ominously like his dead father. The clergyman, the doctor of laws, the hearty grazier, and the far-famed engineer, thought after a month's trial that they would rather not take charge of him. He had a fit of illness—it may be better to say of weakness—in the house of each; and they, no doubt, one and all, deemed that a pupil predisposed to disease—it may be almost said to death—as Rupert Trevlyn appeared to be, would bring with him too much responsibility.

So, times and again, Rupert was returned on the hands of Mr. Chattaway. To describe that gentleman's wrath would take a pen dipped in gall. Was Rupert *never* to be got rid of? It was as the slippers in the Eastern story, which persisted in turning up, their unhappy owner knew not how. And up came Rupert Trevlyn. The boy could not help his ill-health; but you may be sure Mr. Chattaway's favour to him was not increased by it. "I shall put him in the office at Blackstone," said he. And Miss Diana acquiesced.

Blackstone was the name of the locality where Mr. Chattaway's mines were situated. An appropriate name, for the place was black enough, and stony enough, and dreary enough for anything. A low, barren, level country, its flatness alone broken by the signs of the pits, its uncompromising gloom enlivened only by the ascending fires which blazed up near the pits at night, and illumined the country for miles round. The pits were not all coal: iron mines and other mines were scattered with them. On Chattaway's property, however, there was coal alone. Long rows of houses, as dreary as the barren country,

were built near: they were occupied by the workers in the mines. The overseer or manager for Mr. Chattaway was named Pinder, a brother to John Pinder, who was on Mrs. Ryle's farm; but Chattaway chose to interfere very much with the executive himself, and may almost have been called his own overseer. He had an office near to the pits, in which accounts were kept, the men paid, and other business items transacted; a low building, of one storey only, consisting of three or four rooms. In this office he kept one regular clerk, a young man named Ford, and into this same office he put Rupert Trevlyn.

But many and many and many a day was Rupert ailing; weak, sick, feverish, coughing, and unable to go to it. But for Diana Trevlyn, Chattaway might have driven him there ill or well. Not that Miss Diana possessed any extraordinary affection for Rupert: she did not keep him at home from love, or from motives of indulgence. But hard, cold, and imperious though she was, Miss Diana owned somewhat of the large open-handedness of the Trevlyns: she could not be guilty of trivial spite, or petty meanness. She ruled the servants with an iron hand; but in case of their falling into sickness or trouble, she had them generously cared for. So with respect to Rupert. It may be that she regarded him as an interloper; that she would have been better pleased were he removed elsewhere. She had helped to deprive him of his birthright, but she did not treat him with personal unkindness; and she would have been the last to say he must go out to his daily occupation, if he felt ill or incapable of it. She deplored his ill-health; but, ill health upon him, Miss Diana was not one to ignore it, to reproach him with it, or to put hindrances in the way of his being nursed.

It was a tolerably long walk for Rupert in a morning to Blackstone. Cris Chattaway, when he chose to go over, rode on horseback; and Mr. Cris did not infrequently choose to go over, for he had the same propensity as his father—that of throwing himself into every petty detail, and interfering unwarrantably. In disposition, father and son were alike—mean, stingy, grasping. To save a sixpence, Chattaway would almost have sacrificed a miner's life. Improvements which other mine owners had introduced into their pits, into the working of them, Chattaway held aloof from. In his own person, however, Cris was not disposed to be saving. He had his horse, and he had his servant, and he favoured an extensive wardrobe, and

was given altogether to various little odds and ends of self-indulgence.

Yes, Cris Chattaway rode to Blackstone; with his groom behind him sometimes, when he chose to make a dash; and Rupert Trevlyn walked. Better that the order of travelling had been reversed, for that walk, morning and evening, was not too good for Rupert in his weakly state. He would feel it particularly in an evening. It was a gradual ascent nearly all the way from Blackstone to Trevlyn Hold, almost imperceptible to a strong man, but sufficiently apparent to Rupert Trevlyn, who would be fatigued with the day's work.

Not that he had hard work to do. But even sitting on the office stool tired him. Another thing that tired him—and which, no doubt, was for him excessively pernicious—was the loss of his regular meals. Except on Sundays, or on those days when he was not well enough to leave Trevlyn Hold, he had no dinner: what he had at Blackstone was only an apology for one. The clerk, Ford, who lived at nearly as great a distance from the place as Rupert, used to cook himself a piece of steak at the office grate. But that the coals were lying about in heaps and cost nothing, Chattaway might have objected to the fire being used for any such purpose. Rupert occasionally cooked himself some steak; but he more frequently dined upon bread and cheese, or upon some old scraps brought from Trevlyn Hold. It was not often that Rupert had the money to buy steak or anything else, his supply of that indispensable commodity, the current coin of the realm, being very limited. Deprived of his dinner, deprived of his tea—tea being generally over when he got back to the Hold—that, of itself, was almost sufficient to bring on the disease feared for Rupert Trevlyn. One of sound constitution, revelling in health and strength, might not have been much the worse for the deprivation in the long-run; but Rupert did not come under the head of that favoured class of humanity.

It was a bright day in that mellow season when the summer is merging into autumn. A few fields of the later grain were lying out yet, but most of the golden store had been gathered into barns. The sunlight glistened on the leaves of the trees, lighting up their rich tints of brown and red—tints which never come until the season of passing away.

Halting at a stile which led from a lane into a field white with stubble, were two children and a young lady. Not very young children, either, for the younger of the two must have

been thirteen. Pale girls both, with light hair, and just now a disagreeable expression of countenance. They were insisting upon crossing that stile to go through the field: one of them, in fact, was already mounted on it, and they did not like the denial that was being dealt out to them.

"You cross old thing!" cried she on the stile, turning her head to make a face at the lady who was interposing her veto. "You always object to our going where we want to go. What dislike have you to the field, pray, that we may not cross it?"

"I have no dislike to it, Emily. I am only obeying your papa's injunctions. You know he has forbidden you to go on Mrs. Ryle's lands."

She spoke in calm tones; in a sweet, persuasive voice. She had a sweet and gentle face, too, with its delicate features, and its large blue eyes. It is Maude Trevlyn, grown into womanhood. Eight years have passed since you last saw her, and she is twenty-one. In spite of her girlish and graceful figure, which scarcely reaches to the middle height, she bears about her a look of the Trevlyns. Her head is well set upon her shoulders, thrown somewhat back, as you may see in Miss Diana Trevlyn. She wore a grey flowing cloak, and a pretty blue bonnet.

"The lands are not Mrs. Ryle's," retorted the young lady on the stile. "They are papa's."

"They are Mrs. Ryle's so long as she rents them. It is all the same. Mr. Chattaway has forbidden you to cross them. Come down from the stile, Emily."

"I shan't. I shall jump over it."

It was ever thus. Except when in the presence of Miss Diana Trevlyn, the girls were openly rude and disobedient to Maude. Expected, though she was, to teach them, she was yet denied the ordinary authority vested in a governess. And Maude could not emancipate herself: she must suffer and submit.

Emily Chattaway put her foot over the top bar of the stile, preparatory to carrying out her threat of jumping over it, when the sound of a horse was heard, and she turned her head. Riding along the lane at a quick pace was a gentleman of some three or four-and-twenty years: a tall man, as far as could be seen, who sat his horse well. He reined in when he saw them, and bent down a pleasant face, with a pleasant smile upon it. The sun shone into his fine dark eyes, as he stooped to shake hands with Maude.

Maude's cheeks had turned crimson. "Quite well," she stammered, in answer to his greeting, losing her self-possession in a remarkable degree. "When did you return home?"

"Last night. I was away two days only, instead of the four anticipated. Miss Emily, you'll fall backwards if you don't mind."

"No, I shan't," said Emily. "Why did you not stay longer?"

"I found Treve away when I reached Oxford, so I came back again, and got home last night—to Nora's discomfiture."

Maude looked into his face with a questioning glance. She had quite recovered her self-possession. "Why?" she asked.

George Ryle laughed. "Nora had turned my bedroom inside out, and I found nothing in it but wet boards. She accused me, in her vexation, of coming back on purpose."

"Did you sleep on the wet boards?" asked Emily.

"No, I slept in Treve's room. Take care, Edith!"

Maude hastily drew Edith Chattaway back. She had gone too near the horse. "How is Mrs. Ryle?" asked Maude. "We heard yesterday she was not well."

"She is suffering very much from a cold. I have scarcely seen her. Maude," he added, leaning down and speaking in a whisper, "are things any brighter than they were?"

Again the soft colour came into her face, and she threw him a glance from her dark blue eyes. If ever glance spoke of indignation, that did. "What change can there be?" she breathed. "Rupert is ill again," she added in louder tones.

"Rupert!"

"At least, he is poorly, and is at home to-day. But he is better than he was yesterday——"

"Here comes Octave," interrupted Emily.

George Ryle put his horse in motion. Shaking hands with Maude, he said a hasty good-bye to the other two, and cantered down the lane, lifting his hat to Miss Chattaway, who was coming up from the distance.

She was advancing quickly across the common, behind the fence on the other side of the lane. A tall, thin, bony young woman, looking her full age of four or five-and-twenty, with the same leaden-coloured complexion as of yore, and the disagreeably sly grey eyes. She wore a puce silk paletot, as they are called, made coat fashion, and a brown hat with black lace falling from its brim: an unbecoming costume for one so tall.

"That was George Ryle!" she exclaimed, as she came up. "What brings him back already?"

"He found his brother away when he reached Oxford," was Maude's reply.

"I think he was very rude, not to stop and speak to you, Octave," observed Emily Chattaway. "He saw you coming."

Octave made no reply. She mounted the stile by the side of Emily, and gazed after the horseman, apparently to see what direction he would take when he came to the end of the lane. Patiently watching, she saw him turn into another lane, which branched off to the left. Octave Chattaway jumped over the stile, and went swiftly across the field.

"She's gone to meet him," was Emily's comment.

It was precisely what Miss Chattaway *had* gone to do. Passing through a copse after quitting the field, she emerged from it, just as George was riding quietly past. He halted and stooped to shake hands with her, as he had done with Maude.

"You are out of breath, Octave. Have you been hastening to catch me?"

"I need not have done so but for your gallantry in riding off the moment you saw me," she answered, resentment in her tones.

"I beg your pardon. I did not know you wanted me. I was in a hurry."

"It seemed so—by your stopping to speak so long to the children and Maude," she returned, with irony. And George Ryle's laugh was a conscious one.

There was an ever latent antagonism seated in the minds of both. There was a latent consciousness of it running through their hearts. When George Ryle saw Octave hastening across the common, he knew as surely as though he had been told it, that she was speeding to reach him ere he should be gone; when Octave saw him ride away, a sure voice whispered her that he so rode to avoid meeting her; and each felt that their secret thoughts and motives were known to the other. Yes, there was constant antagonism between them; if the word may be applied to Octave Chattaway, who had learnt to value more highly than was good for her the society of George Ryle. Did he so value hers? Octave wore out her heart, hoping for it. But in the midst of her unwise love for him, in the midst of her never-ceasing efforts to be in his presence, near to him, there constantly arose the bitter conviction that he did not care for her.

"I wished to ask you about the book you promised to get me," she said. "Have you procured it?"

"No; and I am sorry to say that I cannot meet with it," replied George. "I thought of it at Oxford, and went into every bookseller's shop in the place, unsuccessfully. I told you it was difficult to be had. I must get them to write to London for it from Barmester."

"It is an insignificant book. It costs only three-and-sixpence."

"True. Its insignificance may explain its scarcity. Good afternoon, Octave."

"Will you come to the Hold this evening?" she asked, as he was riding away.

"Thank you. I am not sure that I can. My day or two's absence has made me busy."

Octave Chattaway drew back under cover of the trees, and there halted. She did not retreat until every trace of that fine young horseman she was gazing after had faded from her sight.

CHAPTER XII.

A NIGHT BELL UNANSWERED.

It is singular to observe how lightly the marks of Time sometimes pass over the human form and face. An instance of this might be seen in Mrs. Chattaway. It was strange that it should be so in her case. Her health was not good, and she certainly was not a happy woman. Illness was frequently her portion; care seemed ever to follow her; and it is upon these sufferers of mind and body that Time is fond of leaving his traces. He had not left them on Mrs. Chattaway; her face was fair and fresh as it had been eight years ago; her hair fell in its mass of curls; her eyes were still blue, and clear, and bright.

And yet anxiety was her constant companion. It may be said that remorse never left her. She would sit at the window of her room upstairs—Madam's room—for hours, apparently contemplating the outer world; in reality seeing nothing.

As she was sitting now. The glories of the bright day had faded into twilight; the sun no longer lit up the many hues of the autumn foliage; all the familiar points in the charming landscape had faded to indistinctness; old Canham's

chimneys at the lodge were becoming obscure, and the red light thrown up from the mines and works was beginning to show out on the right in the extreme distance. Mrs. Chattaway leaned her elbow on the old-fashioned armchair as she sat in it, and rested her cheek upon her hand. Had you looked at her eyes, gazing out so pertinaciously upon the fading landscape, you might have seen that they had no speculation in them. They were deep in the world of thought.

That constitutional timidity of hers had been nothing but a blight to her throughout her life. Reticence in a woman is good; but not that timorous reticence which is the result of fear; which dare not speak up for itself, even to oppose a wrong. Every wrong inflicted upon Rupert Trevlyn—every unkindness shown to him—every pang of sickness, whether of mind or body, which happier circumstances might have spared to him, was avenged over and over again in the person of Mrs. Chattaway. It may be said that she lived only in pain; her life was one never-ending sorrow—sorrow for Rupert.

In the old days, when her husband had chosen to deceive Squire Trevlyn as to the existence of Rupert, she had not dared to avow the truth, and say to her father, "There is an heir born." She dared not fly in the face of her husband, and say it; and, it may be, that she was too willingly silent for her husband's sake. It would seem strange, but that we know what fantastic tricks our passions play us, that pretty, gentle Edith Trevlyn should have *loved* that essentially disagreeable man, James Chattaway. But so it was. And, while deploring the fact of the wrong dealt out to Rupert—it may almost be said *expiating* it—Mrs. Chattaway never visited that wrong upon her husband, even in thought, as it ought to have been visited. None could realize more intensely its consequences than she realized them in her secret heart. Expiate it? Ay, she expiated it again and again, if her sufferings could only have been reckoned as atonement.

But they could not. *They* were enjoying Trevlyn Hold and its benefits, and Rupert was little better than an outcast on the face of the earth. Every dinner that was put upon their table, every article of attire bought for their children, every mark of honour or substantial comfort which their position brought to them, seemed to rise up reproachfully before the face of Mrs. Chattaway, and say, "The money to procure all this is not yours and your husband's; it is wrenched from Rupert." And