



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

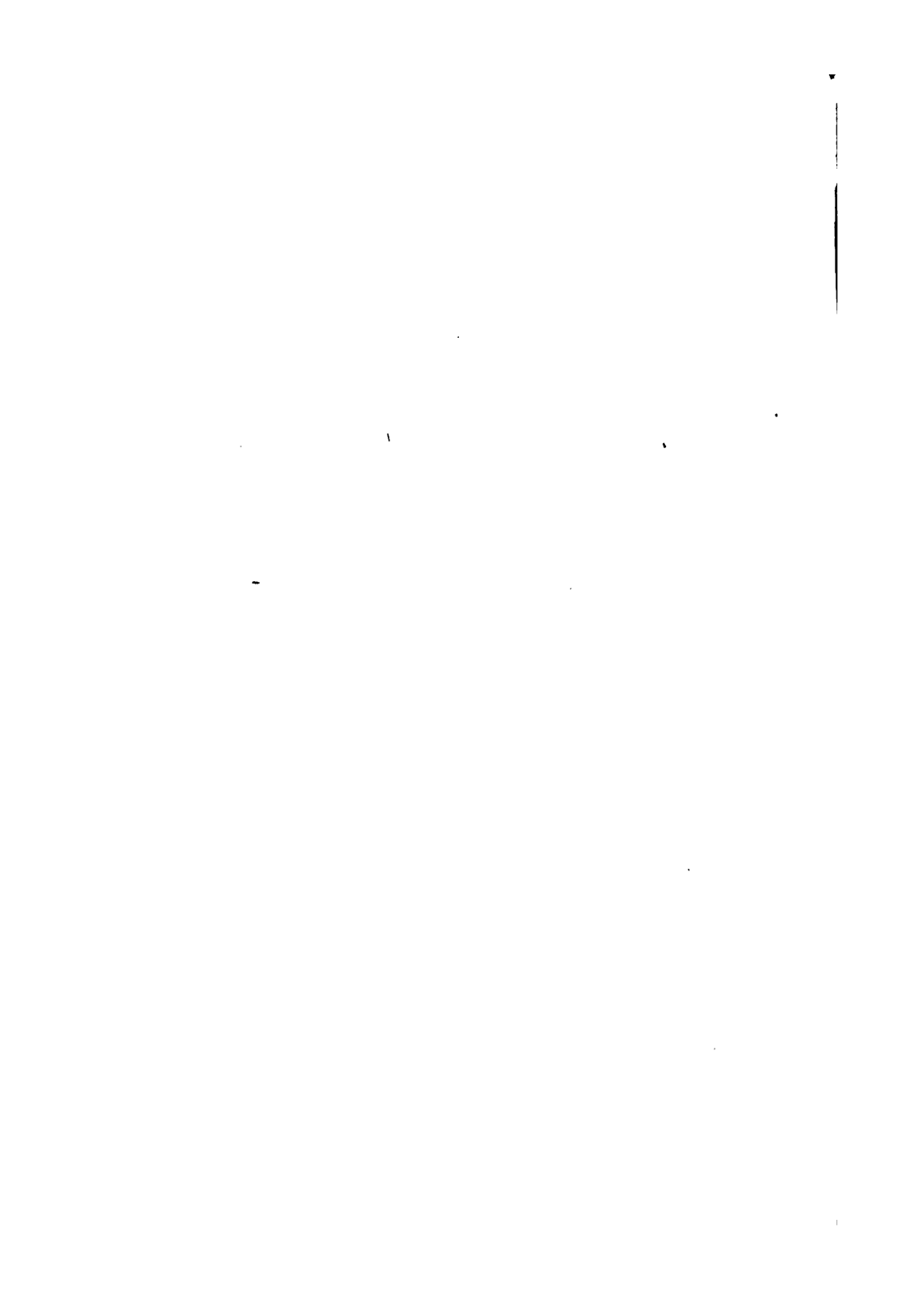
Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>





6000788691





ESTELLE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF
"FOUR MESSENGERS," "MERCER'S GARDENS," ETC.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



LONDON: GEORGE BELL & SONS, YORK STREET,
COVENT GARDEN.

1878.

251. e. 256.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS,
STAMFORD STREET AND CHARING CROSS.

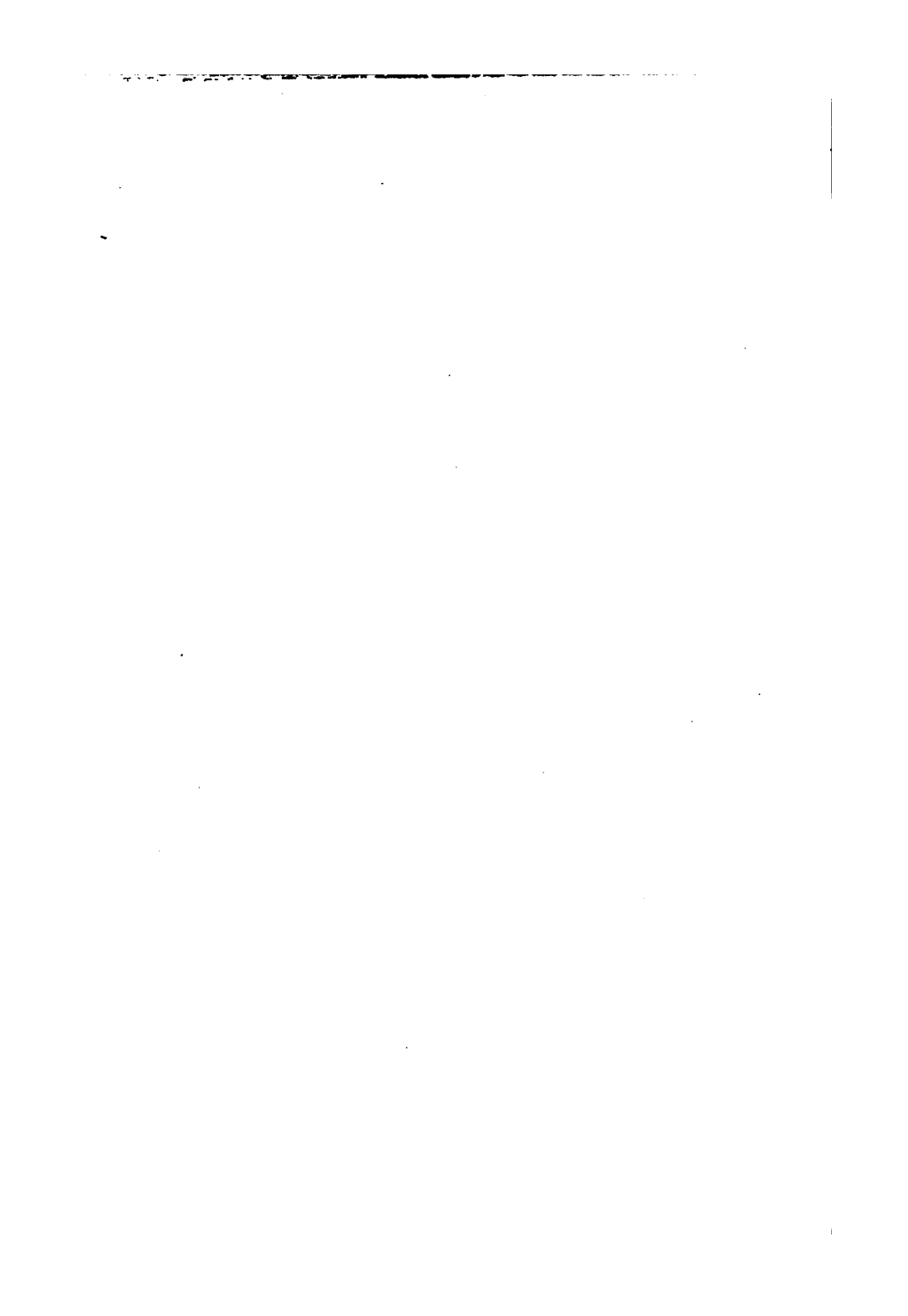
TO
MRS. FITZGERALD,
OF SHALSTONE,
AS A TOKEN OF KIND REMEMBRANCE
OF HER INTEREST IN
THE DESCENDANTS OF AN ANCIENT RACE,
These Volumes
ARE OFFERED BY THE AUTHOR.

QUEEN SQUARE,
November 29th.

CONTENTS OF VOL. I.



CHAPTER	PAGE
I. ESTELLE	1
II. ESTELLE'S SUBMISSION	18
III. THE NEW ACQUAINTANCE	36
IV. A JEWISH HOUSEHOLD	55
V. HURST WOODS AND HAYE PLACE	85
VI. IN THE RUINS	118
VII. PHILIP FLOBIAN	154
VIII. ESTELLE'S SECRET	174
IX. IN THE GARDEN	215
X. AN ANCIENT ANNIVERSARY	237



ESTELLE.

CHAPTER I.

ESTELLE.

SHE sat on the wide, low window-seat that was dark, and ancient, and timeworn, like the rest of the furniture and fittings of the old house. She, too, was dark, but no pressure of years had worn away the peculiar and interesting charm of her countenance. Partly royal, partly mystic, inexpressibly sad and pathetic, and wholly attractive, the quiet maiden, with a world of vast dreams in her heart, worked industriously at an occupation that was homely enough—for it was but mending some of the many articles the wild sister Alexina and the little step-sister and brother wore out so quickly. For, in spite of those hidden dreams, Estelle Hofer

did not excel in accomplishments: she was not quick at learning; she had no marvellous gift of voice, like Lexie's beautiful pure warble that filled the rooms with the sounds that seemed veritably to set the grave abode to constant music. Estelle was slow, and education had been a prolonged trouble. She wrote badly; she was, beyond measure, dull in arithmetic.

All the difficulties of tasks were compensated by reading; but Dr. Hofer considered reading a waste of time unless, indeed, it might be confined to volumes that gave no exercise to the imagination.

And why, if she had such an excellent memory, could she not play the piano? And how was it, with an appreciation of music far beyond that of the careless Lexie, her trembling fingers must refuse to render pages that, played by another, should bring tears to her eyes?

Or, why was it,—how could fate decree so hard a pain as that of this dumb love of melody, and insist on preventing the ability of uttering all her disappointment, in her many failures and the repression of her ideals, by singing?

Sometimes, in the hop-girt woods near to her secluded home, Estelle would listen to the blackbirds, the thrushes, the rapture and tingle of delight they could express.

But she could not express—she could only feel; and although her observant, reflective mind caught every brightness and shadow, of leaf loveliness, of cloud delicacy, of flower grace, she must be silent—she could do nothing.

She did not speak of a pain that even her kind step-mother thought fanciful, but all the same it was a pain: feeling—and a crowd of earnest impulses for which no outlet could be found; eagerness—and the enforced reserve that came from natural shyness and a growing self-distrust.

“Try to be domestic, dear,” the gentle step-mother advised. Estelle was fourteen when that advice was given; and she did try to follow it—to be domestic,—and if creative genius were denied, then to merge herself in Alexina’s triumphs, her pretty successes in daily life, and to forget that she, too, had not been born in Arcadia.

These inner struggles had added something touching and sorrowful to the expression of

her large, soft, brown eyes. Those eyes could be radiant in the excitement caused by the stirring sweetness of her sister's tunes, or animated when she sank the present in reading of the past, or when the poems of a cherished author spoke to the Estelle who was misunderstood, and seemed to tell her tales of herself and her hopes. Her face was picturesque, with its colourless complexion and straight black eye-brows, its extreme youth, and the pleading gravity of the dark, dreaming, drooping eyes, with their long, curling lashes. But she was not thought pretty or even nice-looking in her own immediate circle, accustomed to this heritage of long lengths of fine hair, so intensely brown that in its shades it also deepened to black. The pallor of the olive tints was more conspicuous than their clearness, and there was no brilliancy to make amends for the absence of the real glow that came and went in Lexie's fair cheek.

Sombre, appealing, almost tragic in its calm and force, that face of Estelle Hofer's, leaning against the oak-panelled, many-paned window, comes to her as an inheritance from her race. Majesty and melancholy, dignity

and the habitual humility sprung from centuries of oppression, assert each their separate power in her straight features, and, combining, cause hers to be a most distinctive and interesting type.

Her figure is slim and thin and lithe, and yet there is no want of roundness in its slight outline. The lids are nearly closed over her splendid eyes; she leans against the solemn background, herself resembling a carving in old ivory, and her long hands work on mechanically, while her thoughts are roaming.

Can Estelle really excel in nothing? Is it so—must it be true, while the secret of a wondrous gift impels her beautifully shaped fingers into a certainty of deftness, and the skill of her tedious stitches becomes assured? See what lies in the agility, the wonderful ease of the gestures, and be a fortune-teller to the spiritless girl, and bid her take heart about those drawings upstairs, and urge her to be of good courage.

For those hands are the hands of an artist: Estelle—poor uncrowned poet, voiceless, and forced to be dumb of utterance of the sublime sounds, the glorious sights, God has placed

within the grateful and affectionate mind. Those long fingers cannot play except when solitude gives freedom; any discord of notes both frets and alarms the fine ear, and checks the nervously wrought temperament, forbidding long hours of study.

But to draw, to paint, are soundless as well as entrancing; and when the birds throng to her small casement, and the swaying trees without seem to bid her make haste, not linger—though summer is sweet, art is long, and life is short,—her pencil or brush explain in grace and colour some of the locked visions of her mind.

At the topmost room of the house, in the narrow apartment she called her own, the inner life of Estéle's aims expanded and grew, and at nineteen began to blossom into something that daily became more definite. It was her room alone, and she was looking beyond this wearisome mending of Gabriel's blouse to its solitary comfort. Her thoughts roamed to her little sanctuary, not over full of pretty objects, or in the least luxurious, but a place of refuge, of self-forgetful industry and happy ideas.

"Esty," Mrs. Hofer remarked hesitatingly,

and even sharply, for she disliked breaking this reverie of her step-daughter by an unpleasant mandate, "I am not pleased with you. I have been compelled to overlook the house, you know, because the holy-days approach so closely, and I went into your room. I must own myself surprised at its arrangement; it more resembles a kind of domestic Catholic oratory than a sleeping apartment. If you were ill, you would set everybody conjecturing, surmising, speculating of your faith, your convictions. If your father were to see the *designs* of those photographs, he would order them away, as I must, I fear. Suppose you were ill, Estelle, and a doctor came; of what would those pictures convince him?"

"Papa is so strict in everything. I never am ill; and a doctor comes to see his patient, not her photographs."

"But, Estelle, it is such bad taste to oppose the opinions of those qualified to judge. Your father's reasonable prejudices should be considered, and some sacrifice made to them."

"Are prejudices ever reasonable? With all papa's wisdom and goodness, he cannot for ever decide everywhere. Why, then, can

he not sacrifice an authoritative whim to me, his child ?”

“Estelle, you should not speak in that obstinate way. I never exactly know when you are in earnest, and now, your whimsical words must not baffle me. You are too fond of argument, but consider this closed. It is more graceful that a sacrifice should come from a daughter than her father. Admiration of art must not dominate principle. Before Passover the photographs *must* come down. The Adoration of the Virgin may be most suitable and useful in the abode of a devout Catholic, but it is completely out of place in the room you occupy.”

“Mamma!” exclaimed Estelle. She could say no more, utter no protest against the prohibition. To her it seemed that the secret of that collection and minute study of every good photograph or engraving that her few opportunities mustered, was perfectly plain and credible. She had taken no one into her confidence, no single inmate of her home guessed the cause of her frequent absence from the general apartments to that topmost study; and yet so prolonged and passionate were her struggles, her self-communing, her

tasks, that to Estelle it was quite an old story that she was trying hard to be an artist, while to all connected with her it remained a profound secret. But this—to deprive her of her help in that silent studious path, was an injury, she thought; altogether forgetting that in her own fear of failure, of ridicule, of perverse advice to desist, she never once had spoken of the long hours spent in sketching faithfully every leaf of the bough that touched her window, every flitting form of the hurrying birds that flew to and fro. She drew from nature, knowing that to be the best; but in the winter evenings, over and over again had she copied every fold of the drapery, every limb and soft curve of her photographed Madonnas, acquiring gradually a firmness and delicacy of touch, the result of inborn genius, helped by perseverance and hard work.

One word, and the command might be rescinded. But that word could not be uttered. Estelle was hurt, for she who knew her efforts, for the first time found it actually placed before her as a fact, that she was no other but commonplace and dull to others. Could Mrs. Hofer really believe that day after

day she let her quiet existence slip by—a slow stream indeed—and quite unruffled by the strong wind of any ambition ?

All this passed through her mind. To her vision all was clear—to her it appeared as if the need and worth of her photographs were perfectly plain. To Estelle it was as if a narrative were recited, some person was loudly pleading for this girl—for herself—who never had done anything to convince her friends of talent, who now never would, for if her pictures were taken, how could she assist her drawing ?

And thus this argument was carried on in the depths of her pained and passionate heart. All this pleading, these excuses, for an impersonal Estelle. But she—she was powerless ; she must endure, and forbear to speak ; and yet the agony of giving up the cherished day-dream that should, in some dim far-off way, justify and explain her character and all its deficiencies and desires, and make even to her own needs amends for a repressed and misunderstood youth, was so great, that she covered her face, and a storm of sobs shook her.

“ Estelle,” said Mrs. Hofer, greatly dis-

tressed to see the general calmness of her daughter break so suddenly, "what have I said that you should weep in this way? My dear, if you mourned for death you could hardly grieve worse. Dear Esty, I hoped you had long ago overcome the rebellion of your early days. For a few photographs you cry as if you were still twelve years old."

"Yes," she mused, as she picked up the work that had fallen on the floor, as Estelle, quite unable to control herself, or to give a rational explanation of her apparently disproportionate trouble, flew upstairs; "I do not, indeed, understand her. To me she is often quite apathetic, perfectly silent—a most difficult study to comprehend. And yet she is so docile, notwithstanding her hatred of authority. I will send Lexie to her." And Mrs. Hofer, much perturbed at Estelle's outbreak, and the amazed and regretful glance of her eyes, gathered the little garments together, and followed her up the oaken, shallow staircase that was as the very spine of the house.

But she did not mount as high as her daughter, after all. The ascent tried the

matron more than the impetuous girl, and there seemed little use in seeking to conquer or withstand her grief while it was so fresh and unreasonable. So Mrs. Hofer turned away on one landing, disturbed, perplexed, and with a curious sympathy striving to assert itself above her usual common sense, and prompting her to withdraw her command; while Estelle gained her garret, where art triumphantly exalted itself above furniture.

Outside, in the long corridor, the photographs from Raffaele's cartoons were hung at regular distances, and in their narrow black frames their excellent tint had a good effect against the light grey paint. A quaint Chippendale arm-chair was placed opposite a little mahogany table, so highly polished and black that its great age stood confessed. Here, some favourite books were piled; some belonged to her, and some were borrowed.

Ruskin's "Stones of Venice," with the arms of Pembroke College embossed on the covers; a prize volume from Oxford (and how could Estelle have obtained it, her step-mother pondered below); Chevreul, "On Colour;" the

illustrated catalogue of the Royal Academy ; Mr. Morris's " Earthly Paradise."

And then of her peculiar library—a German translation of the curious and interesting legends, "The Sippurim," "Tales from the Talmud," Gessner's Idylls, Bacon's Essays, the poems of Browning and Wordsworth.

Year by year she had saved the rose-leaves from the ancient wilderness of the garden. She had dried and cherished them, and, with the aid of some foreign spices and a receipt from her grandmother's cookery-book, had retained the pretty, pink, yellowish hues, and their sweet scent. These rose-leaves filled her volumes with fragrance, and lay heaped in two or three tea-cups of Derby or rust china. No carpet was spread over the bare boards ; but they were partly covered by a praying rug her cousin Philip, her father's ward, had ordered from Algiers, and its rich and gorgeous woven array of eastern hues redeemed the plainness and scantiness of the other items. For there was no fireplace ; the window was sunk in the roof ; the little wash-stand, the small iron bedstead, were severely simple and without pretension.

Still, here Estelle worked hard, and poured

out some of the creative genius that restraint or tuition alarmed. Here she drew. In a little handleless cup of a beautiful blue, a cluster of velvet pansies, each with its central shy eye of gold naturally upturned or down-cast, were her motionless models. In an oddly shaped tea-dish, of which the cup was missing, a few ferns unrolled their exquisite details of growth and green life. These were her familiar and cherished studies, taken from the rambling, sweet-scented garden, now in the spring, to be replaced in the broadening rays of summer by heavy carnations, the delicate heliotrope, the sweet-william, the daffodils, and tiger lily, always so luxuriant and plentiful in the neglected beds.

Sometimes Estelle sketched Lexie from memory, for she was too much afraid of that vivacious damsel's love of anecdote to tell her secret studies to her sister. Now and then Gabriel's dark and brilliant face appeared on her block; and also, when the house animals and Grünaugen could bear to be coaxed to sit to her, she could vary her flower-painting and prove herself gifted with ability to draw the endearing, soft individuality of these household pets.

And now, as she mounted on a chair to obey her step-mother, she looked with a fresh affection at the Adoration of the Virgin, that had drawn her into sorrow. It was a photograph from the splendid and tender design of Annibale Caracci, in a broad, flat, gilt frame. It was mounted on greyish blue paper, and was so excellent that it resembled a drawing, very beautifully performed, in shades of burnt sienna, rather than a photograph.

“Mamma must think me strangely vacillating indeed,” Estelle mused, “that my faith should waver for a picture. Surely pictures may be liked, appreciated, without being at once accepted as the signs of worship. There are no good subjects illustrative of our own creed—or they are very rare in comparison with those from the old masters. How can they perplex or perturb religious convictions?—and just because some mythical visitor should come up, these must come down.”

She jumped off the chair and dragged out her copies from this subject, and looked with anxious criticism, that tried to be severe, at the bold and delicate evidences of long hours

of patient perseverance. Her heart swelled, her eyes filled again; but above all her mute despair at this blow to her hopes—for in such a light Mrs. Hofer's order seemed to her—the knowledge of her own powers asserted its healing. The garret might look meagre deprived of its decorations, but her studies would prosper almost as well. She could put away the photographs, rob that dim and quaint little corridor of its attraction, but at night, when all were safely asleep, she could work.

Once more Estelle sighed heavily.

Her step-mother bought all her dress, but her pocket-money was scant. She was the eldest daughter of a large family; not self-asserting; less prominent and beloved and indulged in the household than Alexina, who somehow usurped many of her privileges. Therefore, when the summer was over, the expense of candles or a lamp would be a serious hindrance to drawing at night.

“But oh,” she thought, “there *is* the long summer first. I will not give up; for one day—*one* day it may be that I shall succeed.”

In that vision of success, far off and unreal, she sees herself no longer the silent

Estelle who shrinks from company, who so often needs apologies for staying away from her friends altogether, who has so little to say when Lexie is with her, who beside that bright creature is quite overlooked. But by-and-by, in some sweet and unknown compensation, all will be made clear, all will be well with her ; her step-mother will cease to be vexed, her father will feel pride in his sensitive, retiring daughter.

“They will know,” Estelle continues, in a sort of triumphant and voiceless arraignment of Fate, “that if I am dull, I have tried to grasp something. They will find, if I have failed of some things, just in one I may please them.”

CHAPTER II.

ESTELLE'S SUBMISSION.

AND so, obediently, she pulls down her little art treasures. Like many others, she must follow the world's bidding, and abide by the shadowy if bitter verdict of an unseen jury. For the visitor who may come up, her days are to be without their small luxuries—for to her, her pictures represent luxury. For a doctor who may or may not be required, her snatched studies must be rendered rather more difficult.

That is all; and if Estelle wonders why, as she would phrase it, some people are to be fettered by the fears of other people—why love of art that is wide, should be narrowed because of seeming an injury to faith that is wider, she must endure the judgment of her small world, and conform to its belief, even as the rest of humanity.

“I am a sort of ugly duckling; will my wings ever bear me among swans?” she thought. And yet what an active part she could take, in setting before herself the folly of seeming too deeply to admire by its signs an opposite creed. She, who loved the faithful fervent simplicity of the Hebrew martyrs,—who knew, and long had learnt to practise, the worth of self-renunciation in trifles as in great affairs,—by her heedlessness had entailed a reproach that on the face of it was truthful.

“Scenes from the latter Testament are out of place in my bed-room, while mamma is in ignorance of my wish to be an artist. Scenes where the Madonna’s soft, pitying features occur again and again, might strike a spectator as strange in the dwelling-place of one so orthodox as papa. But, then, none come here but the birds and I.”

She went to the little window set so high in the house, and cooled her hot cheeks against the iron bars. Across those bars light shadows flitted of many a martin and sparrow, whose nests lay safely in the red roofs; of occasional swallows, whose slow, dreamy wings wafted happy thoughts within

A wide parapet gave a sense of freedom and size to the small room, and in the summer a tangle of sweet-peas surrounded the panes of glass.

She could see the grass growing among the untrodden stones of the country road, and the pigeons cooing and fluttering near the verger's house. Softened in the distance, the lovely arches of the cathedral rose, as it seemed to her fancy, in a background of blue and gold. The fleecy clouds of spring closed about its solemn grey outlines. It was as if a hoary head were propped by azure pillows.

How much had the influence of that grey cathedral helped Estelle's patient aim—that hope indulged so long and silently! For strict as Dr. Hofer was, his children were permitted to wander in to hear the grand organ, to admire the stained glass, the sculptured tombs, the peaceful repose and many hues of the building to which they had been so accustomed from their earliest years, that he wisely considered restriction now would be but a stimulant to perversity and curiosity hereafter. He could rely on their principles, and although it vexed him

to hear how enthusiastic Lexie could become on the subject of Catholic music, he made no objection to her practice of masses or sacred themes. But of her fondness of art his eldest daughter never spoke, and he was ignorant of the strength of purpose, the eager study that went on upstairs—just as unconscious as Mrs. Hofer was of the worth of the photographs whose designs had shocked her.

It seemed unjust to Estelle that Alexina might play and sing of subjects at which she might not even look. Alexina's sacred melodies, sung by that beautiful and touching contralto voice, enthralled, while Estelle's drawings might appal her father. It was very puzzling, and it caused parental dictates to appear paradoxical and harsh; and as she looked on the sweet and melancholy prospect, lit by spring tenderness, graced by spring promises, yet chilled by the late presence of winter, she made a parallel between herself—her own experience—and this scene, and found it difficult to check her tears.

Some hearts rebel strongly at injustice, and if the rebellion remains unuttered, still it lives. But Mrs. Hofer allowed kind thoughts to centre on the step-daughter she

found so perplexing to her understanding, and wondered what possession of her own might make amends for the confiscation of her pictures. She forbore to desire Alexina to follow her sister. Perhaps Esty might calm that strange anguish best in solitude—perhaps she was tired of mending. She read too much, Mrs. Hofer conjectured, and grew fanciful over her poems. But her books were not increased by novels, these being absolutely forbidden by Dr. Hofer. Where could she have procured the “Stones of Venice”? And was that a volume likely to cause her weeping? Was the “Earthly Paradise” a *tale* that excited emotion?

Mrs. Hofer was not quite sure, not being very intellectual. She was a kind, charitable, and placid woman, anxious to do her duty, proud of her step-children, devotedly fond of her own two. She had married Dr. Hofer when Estelle was twelve, and Lexie a delicate, petted child of nine. She was young enough to enter into the many pursuits of her step-daughters by sympathy, not through taste. She was sufficiently sensible to make them feel her authority. Lexie was wild, and sweet, and coaxingly selfish—eager, impulsive, pas-

sionate, with a strange sort of romantic worship of her gentle step-mother, on whose affection she often imposed, on whose control she frequently encroached. She was really the disobedient daughter. Disputes amused her, and, being so strongly attached to Mrs. Hofer, she counted securely on forgiveness for any error. Her warm nature delighted in hero worship, and as yet she had not found a hero. So she made her still pretty step-mother a heroine in default, and loaded her with caresses and a quaint flattery that won her love.

Alexina was at that age when a generous heart expends itself in adoration. And in spite of lectures and advice that she did not always regard or obey—for Mrs. Hofer spoiled her,—as also existence had not hitherto supplied her with many occasions for trials in idolatry, like Estelle she had lay figures, and expended much of the ardour of a heart that could love most passionately on the highly principled and sweet-looking matron, whom she sometimes defied and teased, notwithstanding her girlish worship.

And now the step-mother stood thoughtfully pondering—first on Esty, then on Lexie,

—while, with careful hands, she placed and replaced the various articles in her wardrobe.

In this Jewish home, so closely adjacent to the cathedral and its stately close, the spring cleaning that was taking place in many households, here was hallowed and deepened by the fact that it was in preparation for the approaching holy-days. The Passover was close at hand; the spring cleaning assumed greater significance; and Estelle might have continued in undisturbed possession of her photographs, had not Mrs. Hofer's care and anxiety to so faithfully fulfil each particular detail that her husband dictated brought her suddenly to the small garret.

And now she looked with solicitude over every neatly folded paper for something to bestow that should spare Estelle's pain, on being required to render up her favourites.

Here was the sampler worked when she was a girl at school, with the ten commandments in Hebrew and German, and a few good texts, and some examples of strange birds and fruits, and the prayer for William the Fourth and his Queen Adelaide. This specimen of her skill and diligence might

console her, and she gazed at it with the fond, too partial appreciation one is so apt to show to one's own performance.

That is, however, when one's own performance is mediocre as well as ambitious. Estelle, drawing in solitude, knew no such sweet self-exaltation. The depression and true humility that appear as the somewhat sad attendants that often lie in wait on real genius, faithfully followed on too many of her efforts, and cast shadow rather than sunshine over her work. But Mrs. Hofer allowed a gratified glance to rest on this quaint and curious work of art.

"We certainly had our talents," she mused. "It is such a pity Esty does not really care for needlework. Such a task as this would amuse and interest her, but she shall have it to hang up in place of those gloomy things." With the glow of warm feeling that succeeds a kind resolve, Mrs. Hofer went to the door, and called in a cheerful voice for her daughter to descend.

"See, Estelle," she said, determined not to notice the tear-traces on her pale cheek. "I did this when I was a girl. What a pleasure it was to my parents, who thought, and

thought correctly, that any result of patience and industry could not be better shown than by needlework. How they praised me, when I carried it home!"

"Then were you not permitted to learn music, mamma?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Hofer, slightly colouring. "I could play a set of quadrilles merrily enough to make others merry. But other duties stepped in, and so I gave up practising. You may have this, dear, to decorate your room, and I trust, Estelle, that you will not foolishly grieve at what must be inevitable in its alteration. That which challenges remark is dangerous, surely."

Estelle took this framed evidence of former energy just as quietly as the advice by which it was accompanied, and being meek and self-distrustful, as well as singularly humble-minded, she saw beyond its primness, its marked want of grace and originality, and only considered the kindness of the thought that sought to solace. She respected the high principles of her step-mother, even although just now these principles brought her such pain that it was almost rebellion. She liked old things; and even if this were not

sufficiently aged to have a separate beauty apart from any intrinsic merit, yet it had a certain sort of halo surrounding it, and thus seemed a link between her mother's girlhood—so placid, cheerful, and so wholly unstirred by impulses of novelty that warred with circumstance—and her own, controlled, submissive, with its burning lamp of steady enthusiasm that lighted up all the monotony of equal days of docility.

“Thank you, mamma,” she said; and her eyes, that could utter such eloquence and pleading, were fixed on Mrs. Hofer with an expression that moved her to the consideration of what next might be done to give pleasure to Esty when she was so yielding after all her scolding.

She therefore opened some folds of silver paper, and took out two beautiful little hand-screens, worked on white silk. Two graceful haymakers in blue quilted sacques were here depicted in the daintiest, closest of stitches, with the fairest and most delicate of complexions, and broad hats above the angelic countenances of purest tinted red and white: two aristocratic haymakers in an Arcadian atmosphere of sunshine that could not burn,

of air that failed to darken the tender, porcelain-like hue of their pretty features.

What if the satin were yellowed by the progress of years?—the lovely, graceful figures yet preserved the outlines—so harmonious, so easy, so full of vigour and life. The little buckled shoes seemed about to step; the black beaver hats, perched above mob-caps, flapped in the wind; the long, slender hands guided the rakes; the heavy-quilted skirts touched the grass.

Estelle looked delightedly at these treasures that time had left uninjured. Were these to be offered instead of the photographs, there might be a possibility of comfort. Her heart, she knew, would open to receive the gift; her garret would not open more widely to take them in.

“How pretty!” she exclaimed, and examined them with the close inspection that fondly dwelt on each detail; with the artist’s scrutiny that left no trait unnoticed. Why did not Mrs. Hofer give her these screens, with their long twisted ebony handles, rather than the forlorn sampler?

Why? Because the incautious admiration was too sincere, and heartfelt, and apparent,

to gain its object. *Sometimes* Estelle knew what she was talking of; this Mrs. Hofer was fain to admit. She could read the value of her little screens, therefore, in her step-daughter's suddenly glowing face. But that deep and quick flush of joy oddly enough chilled the instinct of generosity, and awoke economy.

They had been hidden away for so long, they might again lie in the recesses of the scented wardrobe, and be produced on some future occasion worthy of celebration by the sacrifice of a little relic. Hitherto they had caused care, rather untinged by praise. Mrs. Hofer's grandmother had executed them, and side by side with that wonderful sampler, what credit could they win? Her own achievement in coloured silks was assuredly more worthy, because of its little moralities and good proverbs. But Esty had no warmth of praise to expend on it. There was no hurry about giving them; therefore they could, they should go back.

Now, if Estelle were married!

Hereupon Mrs. Hofer fell into a reverie, wherein she saw this reserved girl who caused some trouble by her silence and timidity,

with a nature expanded, with a disposition widened, unchecked, brightened, by the sweeter ties of life. Mechanically she held her screen, and ceased to see its coquettish haymaker.

Her daughter's meditative head and dreamy brow usurped that subject, and when she married the screens should be hers.

Estelle, slowly turning the fellow screen, also beheld, in a vivid day-dream, a garret grown to a studio—walls lined and covered with pictures;—her own hand busy and certain; her own soul, assured, brave and hopeful;—that friend of hers who had lent her the “Stones of Venice,” never very far off, but near enough to be consulted; to cheer and encourage her, to help and guide, and strengthen her chosen art;—her father and mother surprised, proud, loving her as they loved Lexie and Gabriel.

No idea of marriage troubled Estelle's happy lapse into dreamland; only this lasting friendship with Cecil Haye, perfectly unruffled by tiresome inroads of love. Her day-dream might have been a boy's, so ambitious was it—so wholly exclusive of love's visions; and yet it was thoroughly girlish and unpractical.

Simultaneously the two shook off their fancies. The screens were consigned to their former coverings. Estelle, with a blush, returned to the fact that Gabriel and Ruth would be waiting for their lessons; and Mrs. Hofer silently hoped that the sampler would gradually obliterate the photographs from memory. Estelle took it to her little domain, and although she felt very sad, chidden, sent into a corner, as if she also were a child, her temper was pliant, and there was a mine of contentment awaiting her in her borrowed volumes. She bathed her forehead, twisted up her splendid, heavy hair, and went to the school-room.

Gabriel only required help in the preparation of his studies, but Ruth was her particular and most restless pupil, and of an exacting nature, that needed stimulus in the form of stories, or sketches on her slate, to smooth her pathway to knowledge.

Both the children were in a high degree picturesque and graceful; and Gabriel, with his wide straw hat slouched over his brilliant face, with its rich colouring, and eyes that could be vivacious yet deeply tragic, was a frequent subject for reproduction by Es-

telle's pencil. His hat was worn in the house, because of the custom that prevails in the East, and which deems it disrespectful to repeat the sacred Hebrew tongue with uncovered head.

A visitor, catching a glimpse of the young governess and her pupils through the open door, paused, forgetful of the breach of good manners, and arrested by the spiritual and powerful charm of the little scene.

Estelle, leaning over the table, with her superb and sombre tints, her slender figure, where royalty and depression met in a beautiful union of tenderness and dignity, was looking away through the open casement, with its tiny panes. The soft air fanned her clear complexion into a delicate glow, and her far-off gaze expressed unconsciously the intensity and force of some of her repressed ardour for all that was true, and fervent, and beautiful, and striving for utterance.

Gilt leather hangings, timeworn and faded, shielded the wide window, whence the cathedral could be seen. The furniture was dark and ponderous, the floor and walls were oaken, and no carpet disguised the grave simplicity of the plain boards. A jar of

field-flowers was placed on the table, and with these English blossoms, this old-world apartment, the striking oriental countenances were oddly in contrast and harmony.

“Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits!” Gabriel’s childish voice, as he translated the poetical psalm, brought these words to the attentive and unseen auditor. The solemn, sweet phrases, the praises repeated in the grand Hebrew language by that boyish tone, finished the charm of the apartment that might have formed part of a Catholic household, it was so massive, gloomy, and ancient.

And now it was inhabited by these three attractive and youthful creatures, bearing in every trait the distinctive mark of their kingly, but oppressed race.

“There is a man, Esty,” little Ruth whispered, in an accent of awe-struck reproach. “He is staring at me doing my copy. Tell him to go away.”

“It is the new man at Hays Place,” added Gabriel. “He is staring at *me*, Esty,” he continued, with that anxious wish for superiority above his twin sister Ruth that always asserted itself over the most interesting

event, and that in this instance was accompanied by scorn.

“I must apologize,” said Cecil Haye, advancing from the shadows in the doorway, and shaking hands with Estelle. “I never heard Hebrew read before, and felt too curious to retreat.”

“What a bad person you must be!” said Ruth. “Don’t you *never* say your prayers?”

“People say prayers in all languages,” interrupted Gabriel; “and Estelle says we ought to pray, not to *say* prayers.”

“Will you let me come to Haye Place?” said Ruth. “Estelle takes us out, but Lexie will not. She says it makes her heart *tabby* with anxiety to walk out with me, I am so vulgar. But I can come with Estelle.”

“A tabby heart!” repeated Cecil, laughing. “What can Miss Lexie mean?”

“I will tell you,” Gabriel went on. “We have a grey tabby cat, and Lexie grows tabby-coloured—grey in her mind—when she is worried.”

“You have brought all this on yourself,” said Estelle; but her cheeks grew scarlet. “Is your sister in the drawing-room, Mr. Haye?”

"Both my sisters are with Mrs. Hofer. But do go on teaching; it is so amusing to witness."

"It is not amusing to experience," remarked Ruth, mournfully.

Estelle hurriedly rang the bell for the nurse, and with a simple and unconscious gesture that delighted Cecil, ran her fingers through her abundant hair. There were visitors, and that act was all for them. She must be tidy, and she fervently hoped she was.

"Mamma will want me," she said, in explanation. "Dear Ruth, do not quarrel with Gabriel while nurse is here."

"Do you quarrel really?" asked Cecil; and he gently lifted up the downcast face, and looked at the shy, magnificent eyes.

"We are twins," said Ruth, as an explanation, "so we cannot agree; for Gabriel says I ought to give way to him, and I consider he should give way to me, and he is ever so little older. I cannot give up to him for such a small, tiny reason. Estelle and Lexie one must obey, in a sort of way, and Philip makes you *fly* if he wants anything. But not Gabriel. I am not going to obey everybody altogether at once."

CHAPTER III.

THE NEW ACQUAINTANCE.

“I DO love children,” said the joyous, kindly young man as he followed Estelle through the dark, low-ceiled corridors, up a few steps, down a few others, until the equally dark and low-ceiled drawing-room was reached. “I like old houses too; but I need not afflict you with a catalogue of my tastes.”

“But I assure you it does not afflict me,” said Estelle. Her shyness, her stiffness were gone, to return when she found herself in the company of Gertrude and Helen Haye. “Are you interested in Hebrew, that you listened to Gabriel’s lesson outside? Or, perhaps it is only because you find the Jewish race fashionable just now. Like other ancient articles, our value has increased lately. We have become precious, like old china, or lace, as regards

our customs, and take our turn at public appreciation the same as pre-Raffaellite art."

"You speak earnestly, Miss Hofer, and as if you were displeased. I am not at all fond of fashions, but I have truly a respect for Hebrew piety, and a delight in Hebrew poetry, and a feeling quite different from idle curiosity in your people."

"Your sisters said those tales from the Talmud were much too learned and deep for their researches. Indeed, Mr. Haye, they do not require researches. I could not help being vexed, because it is but a book of wild and lovely short tales, far less mournful and weird than some I have read in German."

"It is only Gertrude's way. Indeed, young ladies often have that manner, I find, of saying, 'How dreadfully learned! how wonderfully clever!' of those subjects that they do not care to master, and therefore scorn."

"Miss Haye would not care to master Hebrew, then," said Estelle. She spoke sadly, for she felt a gulf stretching between herself and these brilliant new acquaintances, with whom she longed so wistfully to be on friendly terms.

"No, certainly she would not," Cecil re-

plied. And he could have laughed at the idea of the cold and handsome Gertrude devoting her mind to study of any sort beyond accomplishments. But Estelle's face wore such a grave, almost pained expression, that he would not smile.

"Does it grieve you, Miss Hofer, to find me singular in liking the study?"

"Not exactly. But of course your sisters are in the world; they have different tastes. Only—only I did hope Miss Haye would see the beauty of the 'Sippurim.'"

"If I do, will not that suffice?" he said gently.

Estelle opened the door of the room where Mrs. Hofer sat, trying anxiously to entertain her guests; not succeeding very well, for she had fitful forebodings that Dr. Hofer might desire to check an intercourse that her step-daughters already found so charming. Estelle, for her own part, thought the assurance of Cecil Haye's pleasure in her book more than satisfactory, and because of her comfort in that assurance she found herself hesitating to answer; so, almost abruptly, she entered the drawing-room without reply.

"Where can you have been lingering,

Cecil?" Gertrude asked. She was stately, tall, elegant, looking older than her five and twenty years, and possessing a very calm, cold temperament, that concealed indomitable pride and self-will.

"I have been outside the school-room door;" and in answer to Mrs. Hofer's look of surprise, he continued, "There was such a charm in the glimpse of that solemn, old-fashioned apartment, something so suggestive and pretty in the beautiful children's faces within; and without, there was the old grey close and the distant cathedral. One does not often gaze on a picture as perfect in so quaint a setting. The background, to faces like those of Gabriel and Ruth, should have been conventionally palm-trees, or gorgeous colouring of many-hued stuffs, or cool marble, and a glowing sky. It was, therefore, equally delightful and interesting to find them set in so old a frame, at once fanciful and hushed, as this house has devised."

Mrs. Hofer's heart was drawn at once towards the handsome youth, whom she had only seen twice before, and she immediately dismissed fears of Dr. Hofer's displeasure. Cecil was so warm and genial in manner,

and to admire her wild and pretty twins was the sure way to win their mother's approbation.

"I heard, as an accompaniment to this scene, the low sound of Hebrew chanting—and it is like——"

"Ah," said Alexina, starting up from a chair behind her step-mother, "you cannot find words, can you, to describe what it resembles? The wind that stirs among the cedars of Lebanon—the multitude of Israelites in dread, and the silent, hurrying nightmare of the horror of being overtaken; their march through a desert without other echo than their weary footsteps; their coming to the sea-shore, and the waves that advance and recede to taunt them with a yearning for liberty, in their wild rush and tumult; the song of the priests; birds struggling to express, through layers of leaves, praise in every sweet variety;—that is the sound of Hebrew."

"Oh, Lexie, you make my head whirl!" said Helen, who was a younger likeness of Miss Haye. "All those details are not represented to me by any sound whatever."

"You must be a poet to understand forests,

the language of birds, of the sea, and the soundless desert," said Cecil; and for the first time he noticed that Alexina was not merely a slight schoolgirl of sixteen, but that her rose-pink and lily tints, her arched white forehead, and thick golden hair, and animated eyes of darkest blue, belonged to the fair and rare class of beauty chosen by the Florentine painters.

She wore a black dress that fell in unbroken folds to her feet, and a little white ruff round her slender throat. There was neither fashion nor worth in her attire—only the extreme simplicity and economy of material that were apparent in the dress of all the family, but from which her fresh grace and radiance shone triumphant.

She folded her hands on the back of Mrs. Hofer's chair, and looked at Cecil with the straightforward directness of a child.

"Spanish is grand, people say, but Hebrew is majestic and moving; yet Gabriel, at his lesson, would give you such a poor example," she said.

"You really frighten me," said Gertrude; "you all are so clever. Whenever I come here, I feel as if I were entering a college. To

hear you speak in this familiar way of such difficult tongues, overwhelms me; and I am covered with shame at my own ignorance."

"You need not feel so ashamed," Alexina answered, with her usual matter-of-fact readiness. "If Gabriel can learn it, why not you? As for being terrified of us, Miss Haye, of course you do not mean it? Hebrew is just as natural to us as Latin is to little Catholics."

"Little Catholics repeat prayers; but I never knew them in love with Latin, as you seem with Hebrew. You do seem fond of it!"

"Ah! indeed I am," exclaimed Lexie, clasping her hands, and quite forgetting the indignant tears the trouble of the Hebrew verbs and translation had cost her. Carried away by her feelings for her faith, she truly believed now it had been but an easy pathway until she had reached the Pentateuch, and understood it in the tongue in which it had been written.

"I suppose," said Miss Haye, "you could read a Hebrew novel, then?"

"Yes," she said, with her fair face flushing, "if any were written, of *course*. Do not

shake your head, mamma dear. But when we were all patriarchs and martyrs, no one cared for frivolous stories."

"When you were a patriarch or martyr, as you say, dear, I am certain a brilliant love story, with a melancholy *finale*, would still have had its little solace for you. You are very severe on frivolity, Lexie, all at once. But have you no Jewish literature that is not scholastic?"

"Oh; I do not know," Lexie said, impatiently. "Esty has some mystic legends; and there is a sweet old tale of two brothers loving one girl, somewhere among my father's books. One brother hides his strongest love, lets his heart break in silence, and, without a spoken regret, buries his trouble. To resign, to endure," she went on, in a dreamy voice, "what can be nobler? To bear the agony of a sacrifice that continues always, without the sympathy of friends, free from the world's applause, and to be compelled to live on and on till one grows old, and fretful, and uninteresting, perhaps. Ah, Mr. Haye, Naphtali lived this patient existence for his twin-brother—for his Rachel. He could give up. And we, too, we have not forgotten, we never

shall forget, the habit of self-denial, of patience in oppression. See now, still in Roumania, that down-trodden regal remnant of a once glorious kingdom showing in every instance family affection, filial duty."

Cecil smiled at the eager, beautiful creature, with her changeful colour and sweet voice.

"But, Lexie dear, it is so whimsical to hear *you* uphold filial duty; you, who borrow novels against Dr. Hofer's express prohibition," Gertrude remarked.

She said this, not without thinking or without any care for consequences. Lexie Hofer might be very amusing and clever, and was altogether nicer than her quiet, ill-assured elder sister. But Cecil should not, must not, believe Alexina's fine sentiments based on any firmer ground than a general appreciation of the true and fervent things of life. She was but a girlish idealist, disobeying her father when she could escape detection, and yet exalting self-denial.

"You are a little paradoxical, my dear," thought Gertrude. "Sometimes one's small errors disappear before discovery. These grand notions are very entertaining in a young Hofer with such a lovely child's face.

But, alas, Cecil is a man, and the master of Hays Place must admire you *as* a child, and this time as one who is naughty."

"Why, Alexina," said her step-mother, sharply, "have you really been so disobedient again? How vexed your father will be!"

The radiant face drooped, and tears rose to Alexina's eyes, but she was too proud to let them fall. To be scolded before strangers was dreadful to her, and although she knew his sisters, she had hardly spoken to Cecil until this day.

"It was but the novel remaining from the last subscription," she said, raising such lovely, imploring eyes to Mrs. Hofer's, that it seemed hard their further unuttered excuse should fail of forgiveness.

"Estelle, too," said Mrs. Hofer, much perturbed. "Where did you get the 'Stones of Venice'?"

"Indeed, Mrs. Hofer," Cecil here interrupted, "that volume is on art alone. Gerty, you should not have led to these disclosures. Miss Hofer borrowed it from me, and all my novels are at Oxford."

"And mine is only 'Cometh up as a Flower,'" said Lexie, earnestly.

“Pray permit Alexina to enjoy her subscription,” said Helen, laughing, “and please make her excuses to Dr. Hofer. My brother has never heard her sing. If she wanted anything of me, and found me hard-hearted, she should put the request into singing, and it should be granted.”

“Yes, that is very kind of you,” her step-mother replied, glancing at Lexie, who was kicking her shoe off and on, with her head drooping and her mouth firmly closed, and every line of her light figure expressive of the revolt and anguish that authority caused her. “But she is quite too much indulged as it is. Get up at once, Lexie, and sing something for Miss Haye.”

“What shall it be, mamma?”

“Estelle shall choose,” said Gertrude.

She hoped it might be possible that the dark, quiet girl might be sullen, envious, too, of the younger and petted sister, and select something above her powers. Not that Gertrude, who was a fastidious judge of music, desired to stint her own pleasure in listening; but in her intense anxiety that Cecil should not be too much enchanted, she would willingly forego that pleasure in part.

But the *dark* sister, as she persisted in naming Estelle, was altogether different from her imagination.

"Sing Cherubini's 'O Salutaris!'" she said, to Gertrude's intense astonishment. "Do, Lexie. That exactly suits your voice."

"Mamma is so cross," Alexina said, as she pettishly twirled the music-stool to the requisite height of her little figure. And then, in another rapid whisper, she continued, "My shoe is so tight; I really must take it off, Esty."

"Nonsense; you must just pay the price for your vanity. You do not wish to get into disgrace, really. You will, if you are so childish."

"Because I am treated as a child. Mamma need not lecture me before that cold Miss Haye;" and with great composure Alexina stooped, and with an air half whimsical, half defiant, took off her little black silk slipper and put it on her lap. Then raising her head as a bird might who feels happy in its gift, her wonderful, untrained voice poured forth the splendid notes her sister had chosen.

Can music be described by words? Estelle thought not, as future fame, like a will-o'-

the-wisp, trod its freakish dance and lit its delusive lamp, and came to her in the entrancing visions summoned in the ancient apartment by Alexina's bidding.

Cecil thought not also. That voice stirred noble impulses, and bid him remember early resolutions of greatness and distinction—not worldly distinction, but of something beyond and above the earth.

Both Estelle and Cecil were thus in a way rendered self-conscious by the sweet, soul-inspiring, and solemn theme. Both felt their thoughts turn inward, on their own hopes, their dearest aims, their best determinations. Gertrude, thoroughly taken by surprise by Lexie's talent, grew somewhat paler; but that change of colour was the sole evidence of *her* visions.

Tears were in Estelle's eyes; Helen Haye was rapturous in her expressions of praise; while Lexie, who was used to being made much of, placidly received the honey of applause.

"Do you know, when I asked you to sing," said Helen, "I fully expected you to give us one of the usual songs by Claribel, or one such composer."

"Did you?" said Lexie, glancing at the speaker. "Have I disappointed you, then, so much? Your sister says nothing."

"Neither does yours," retorted Gertrude.

"Ah," exclaimed Lexie, "that is because she feels so deeply. Music wakes her up. But if you choose I will sing you something English;" and without further prelude she commenced, "To Althea, from Prison."

"Your sister is wonderfully free from shyness," Gertrude remarked to Estelle.

"Yes; she has no disagreeable self-consciousness to prevent her charming people by the exercise of her delightful voice," said Estelle, simply, for she saw no second meaning in the words, and was so free from envy or suspicion, that implications were misunderstood.

"It is a pity every one cannot, as you say, employ their abilities in the same easy way," Gertrude went on.

"It is, indeed," Estelle replied, so earnestly that Gertrude's attention was roused, and she wondered whether this girl, who seemed so retiring and ignorant beside the brilliant Lexie, really was the dull, uninteresting character she had believed.

“ We are going to have a picnic on Thursday,” Miss Haye said, turning to Mrs. Hofer. “ Will you bring your daughters and join us ? ”

“ Pray do,” added Cecil. “ We are scarcely settled here, and want to make acquaintance with the neighbourhood as well as the neighbours. We intend to have carriages to take us to Hurst, to see the beautiful ruins. And we pass another castle on the road. Pray join us.”

“ But I am afraid I cannot,” said Mrs. Hofer. “ I am very busy just now.”

“ Oh, mamma ! ” Alexina exclaimed, “ you always have some worrying affair with the house to detain you and keep *us* from any pleasure. Surely the house can take care of itself. Papa lets us have no books, and you let us have no picnics ! This place is like a convent, and Esty and I are turning into old nuns, just because of your tiresome duties and employments. Do go.”

“ If Mrs. Hofer is so much occupied, perhaps she would allow you to accompany us just the same,” Cecil suggested. He pitied Lexie. She should not be disappointed if it were possible to prevent it. She was wild

and saucy, but her lovely face was so amiable, that even now her temporary discontent hardly clouded its expression. And then, if she were inclined to be self-willed, she was so ingenuous, striving openly to gain her point.

“Well,” Mrs. Hofer said, distressed at Lexie’s impetuosity, “if you and Esty—are——”

“Are good, are you going to say?” Lexie interrupted. “Yes, dear, we will most particularly mind all that Miss Haye tells us, if you will permit us to go without your sweet companionship.”

“I intended to say, Alexina, if you and your sister are willing to forego meeting Philip on his return from Algiers.”

“Yes,” said Estelle; for, to her surprise, her sister now was silent. It seemed so odd of Lexie to hang back, all at once, when the request was granted. “Philip!” thought Estelle, with much quiet wonder. “Should he keep them from Hurst Castle, and its woods just bursting into tender foliage, and from the soft dreamy drive over the grass-grown levels, and oh! most of all, from Cecil Haye and his sisters, who, although one

might be cold and supercilious, still belonged to Haye Place and its owner?" All the eager wish for freedom, for happiness, for something altogether different from everyday life, impelled her, notwithstanding her timidity, to try to obtain this indulgence. All the pent-up pleasure in refined and artistic conversation, in beautiful views, asserted itself in her mind, and urged her not to allow such an opportunity to escape.

Philip! Why, there would be days and days to see Philip, to watch Lexie teasing him, and listen to his grave answers. He was of the old life—of that date before Cecil came to the cathedral town. Already existence before his arrival seemed like a long sleep to Estelle—a sleep broken by a pretty dream, it is true; still, that dream of excelling in art was sometimes sad, and often despondent, until Cecil's kind, cheering manner awoke a fresh spirit in her, and gave her spirit and confidence. Until she knew him who talked to her, who ever was at the pains to draw her from her reserve? Philip, Dr. Hofer, her step-mother, all considered her as the one least endowed with quickness of ability, and surely it was only a whim of

Lexie to withhold her answer, to hinder her from seeing her new friend.

“We can see Philip on our return,” Estelle said. “I should like to visit Hurst Castle again; and it would be something so new and delightful to join a picnic. Shall you not like it too, Lexie?”

“Oh yes; of course. Only you know, mamma dear, I do feel so lost without you.”

“Was Alexina so ingenuous as she appeared?” Gertrude mused, for the bright colour flew to her cheek as she spoke. “Why did she hang back after wishing so sincerely to go? Who was Philip, too? and how was it likely that she cared for the society of her step-mother, when she had been scolded about reading novels five minutes previously?”

Gertrude judged others by her own disposition, that was strangely cold and intolerant. It was very well for Lexie alternately to vex and flatter her step-mother, but some stronger feeling must prompt her now to waver than Mrs. Hofer’s absence from their picnic. It was absurd, at her age. The other sister, who could neither sing nor play, was the least puzzling, after all.

“Well, then, that is settled,” said Cecil, gaily. “Mrs. Hofer consents to trust you both with us, and if only we get a fine day, we may look forward to spending a pleasant one.”

CHAPTER IV.

A JEWISH HOUSEHOLD.

“AND I wonder,” said Alexina pettishly, when the visitors had taken their departure, “what we shall wear? Of course the Hayes will be everything that is elegant and cool and seasonable. As for us—— Esty, which silk shall *you* choose? Oh! your last simple print perhaps, if you prefer beauty unadorned; and Gabriel’s straw hat, for yours is horrid. Fortunately, it will *not* be hot, so we can share the parhelion between us.”

“The what?” asked Mrs. Hofer, half amused at her little step-daughter’s satire.

“The parhelion, mamma dear. That is a mock sun in Iceland, that deceives everybody; this is a mock sun-shade that deceives nobody. Your daughters’ appearance will be so distinguished, we shall figure in the Stad-

chester news as foreigners who forgot that spring succeeds winter.”

“But, Lexie, I never said you should go ill-dressed. We will see what can be done for you both.”

“Will you, will you, darling?” she said, rapturously jumping up and down, and the slipper fell at Mrs. Hofer’s feet; “and oh, what a lovely day we shall have! And when we return——”

Here Alexina broke off; but her mother continued, “When we return there will be Philip to admire you. That will rob home of its forlorn aspect.”

“Oh, mamma dear, not forlorn; but you know life is so grumblesome without novels.”

“And without tidiness, Lexie. Just fancy sitting without your slipper at the piano! Life, perhaps, is not so grumblesome, to adopt your truly descriptive epithet, as Alexina Hofer, who grumbles sometimes at its ordinances.”

“See, darling, what you have to trim us up with. Do, dear, and do not preach, for you are far too pretty, Mrs. Hofer, *ever* to preach well. Ugly and not pretty persons should have that mission, for they would perform it

better than you. Just listen, mamma—I will not go if I am to be ill-dressed, or even plainly dressed. To sit apart from other people would be horrid, and no one notices badly attired individuals.

‘ Dear Chloe, while the busy crowd—
The vain, the idle, and the proud—
In folly’s maze advance ;
Though singularity and pride
Be call’d our choice, we’ll turn aside,
Nor join the giddy dance.’

Do you remember those lines, mamma ? Well, I detest them. Esty and I hate being called singular and proud, and we will join the dance, whether we are giddy or steady, or whatever the old poet chooses to call us. Dear mamma, if we are to advance ‘in folly’s maze,’ on Thursday, we may do so properly, surely ? If not, I shall stay at home.”

“ We shall see, dear Lexie.”

“ How contrary you are to-day !” said her sister to Alexina as the door closed on Mrs. Hofer. “ You make so many obstacles to going to the picnic, and at first you did wish it. Pray do not say anything to hinder such a delight.”

“ Esty, how contrary *you* are ! Do you

forget Philip's arrival on the same day, and how strange it will be to find us both away?"

"But we never have been used to the celebration of Philip's return from his journeys, by staying at home. And do not you like the Hayes?" Estelle asked anxiously.

"Yes, of course; but I am not so full of their superiority as you seem. Miss Hays is clever, and Helen seems amiable—more amiable than her sister,—and Mr. Hays is handsome. But you will see papa will do all that is possible to check this friendship. They are not of our faith, and he will foresee all kinds of disastrous results from its continuance."

"Oh, Lexie, it will be too hard. What harm can come of a pleasant acquaintance? We are so hedged in by probabilities, that truly, like Agag, we 'go delicately,' as if in dread, all the days of our life. You have your own way in so many things; do your best not to retard this advancement on our usual routine. *What* harm can come of it?"

Alexina was surprised to see Estelle's agitation. She was so matter-of-fact herself, notwithstanding her enthusiastic speeches,

that she had no just comprehension of her sister, who said so little and felt so acutely.

“Of course, dear, I shall never go against your expressed wishes. But when they are not expressed, when I have to guess them, how then, Estelle?”

“Then we must trust in each other, Lexie. There are only you and I; for papa, with all his wisdom and learning, is very unsympathetic, and mamma cares for you and the children much more than for me.”

“Oh, Estelle, but *I* love you, and you can be content with that. And I am certain that mamma has a true affection for you also. Only you shut yourself up away from all. Why, I just do and say as it comes into my head! Why should one be frightened? The world is made for such as you and me, who are young and *not* ugly.”

“You are not ugly, Lexie, certainly.”

“No, Estelle, neither are you.”

A heavy sigh broke from the very depths of Estelle's heart. This sister, so dear to her, still could not flatter; still could not say, “Take heart, you are pretty.” All that she could truthfully affirm was contained in the phrase, “You are not ugly.”

Cecil by his looks of approbation, Philip by his faithful attentions, told Alexina how beautiful she was. Her mother and father by fond indulgence repeated the same sweet truth. The old servants, the poor people, echoed it; and Estelle, too, was proud of her loveliness. How different, how very different from the lot of the elder girl, who rarely heard any praise, and then only a praise most cautiously limited!

Some wonder and pain at Fate, that gave so much to some, and withheld so greatly from others, haunted her as she returned to her charges, who, full of curiosity about the new arrivals, plied her with questions concerning them.

Cecil Haye, meanwhile, felt his imagination strongly excited by this family, so widely opposed to his pre-conceived notions of Jews, who, according to his belief, were distinctly eastern in tastes, and traits, and training, very bigoted, lazy, and uncultivated, but from a picturesque point of view extremely attractive. This family was refined, well-bred, educated, and with just that freshness of idea, and peculiarity of principle, and firmness of faith, that heightened their charm, and added piquancy.

“Well, Cecil,” Gertrude asked, less decidedly than her wont, “what do you think of the Hofers? I almost regret we know them, for it will be so difficult to keep clear of small annoyances concerning them.”

“In what respect?”

“We shall be always running against their prejudices. It will be so awkward, especially when they mix in our society.”

“They do not wear turbans, nor speak in Hebrew, nor are they loaded with jewels. They are quite Anglicized, and just as civilized as any one else. Why should you be afraid?” said Helen, laughing. “And, Cecil, tell me—I also am quite eager to know your opinion. For instance, do you admire Miss Hofer? Is she not a foil to that beautiful, wilful little Lexie.”

“I think her a splendid example of her nation. What a grave and gracious face she has! And, Helen, what a sad and yet what a meek expression! She is a glorious girl; she looks like the moon in India.”

“Oh, Cecil!” And Helen glanced at Gertrude with dismay, and a sort of unspoken apology, very comical. She it was who had brought the Hofers prominently to Cecil’s

notice, she also who had praised them so highly. Therefore she was guilty, if any disagreeable result followed, and responsible for all consequences. None knew better than his sisters how strongly Cecil was carried away by his imagination. If this acquaintanceship developed to intimacy; if this outspoken admiration, so unconcealed for Estelle, were really but a shield to hide love for her beautiful sister! To Gertrude and Helen Haye, Estelle was simply a foreigner, as interesting as foreigners usually are when young,—more, perhaps, because of the ancient race from which she had sprung, than because of the fact that neither by parentage nor culture could she be considered English.

But if she were to become a dangerous foreigner, or if the lovely Lexie were to cause their only brother to overlook the difference of faith, and enter into an imprudent marriage!

To this hasty conclusion both hurried, with the dismal conviction that Cecil would never submit to be thwarted, more particularly by his sisters. As the carriage bowled smoothly along the wide, white country road, above which the trees met, and where again they severed their budding green, gemmed branches,

the anxious hearts of the two girls were busied with speculations generally assigned as the peculiar privilege of scheming matrons. It seemed strange and even pitiful that they should be so indifferent to the landscape, the soft spring sky, the clear, sweet atmosphere. But Helen was mentally accusing herself of the most idiotic folly, and wondering what its *finale* might be; while Gertrude felt intensely aggrieved that the master of Hays Place insisted on choosing his own guests, and found it harder than ever to accommodate her mind to the belief that it really was *his* Place and not hers.

“Of course, then, I need not ask your verdict of Miss Alexina,” she said presently. “If Miss Hofer reminds you of the moon in India, she must certainly be like the sun of Italy.”

“All that and more,” laughed Cecil, who could tease his sisters occasionally, and who just perceived the drift of their remarks. “Miss Hofer, with her sombre hair, her mystical countenance, her reserve and silence, and the mingled languor and dignified gravity that are such especial attributes of the orientals, *does* carry out my comparison.

So, too, does the younger girl fulfil *yours*, Gertrude."

"You admire everybody," Helen said. "Every *new* face—for I cannot call Miss Hofer's *pretty*—awakes a kind of romantic curiosity. It is, I suppose, the distinctive attribute of a poet to be slightly given to change, as languor and—what is the other quality?—dignified grandeur is of the oriental."

"I said gravity, not grandeur. What an amiable and delightful circumstance is that of universal admiration! It procures many additional pleasures. Do you mean it as a compliment when you say it is mine?"

"No, I do not," said Helen, who found it more difficult to be vexed by Cecil than Gertrude could acknowledge for her part. "But you are very provoking, because you do take such sudden, inscrutable attachments to nobody knows who."

"Everybody here knows and respects the Hofers," he answered, throwing off his jesting mood. "You assured me yourself, Helen, of their several claims to liking and consideration. In all of these I can warmly acquiesce. What a sweet, mild countenance Mrs. Hofer

has! One sees such in the Madonnas of Bellini. I admire her simple, quiet manner, and the respect with which her step-daughters treat her."

"Oh, Cecil, but that is ridiculous. Alexina behaves as if her mother were her sister, and I am certain has few scruples against disobeying her."

"Gertrude, you seem in a very fault-finding mood. What can have caused it? That pretty little creature, with her splendid voice and childish ways, surely need not provoke very hard judgment."

"She *is* a child, dear Cecil, as you say, and of course a child need not incur criticism. What a pretty view!" said Gertrude, changing her tactics, and wisely resolving that the way to draw Cecil's ideas from the subject she dreaded, would be to avoid any discussion either of the Hofers' natural gifts which he would admire so warmly, or of their acquired errors which he persisted in defending.

By the easiest and lightest rein she always had guided him. He must not perceive that he was being thus led, and then her path was clear. Gertrude flattered herself that she was advising her brother, at those crises

when her wishes strongly opposed his will, and when she made them known by expressed contradiction or repeated urging. She had a fond belief in her own power, and, with all her calm and cold penetration, strangely enough failed to see that Cecil's long absence from home, his knowledge of the world, and the new friendships formed in society, would all conspire to weaken her former supremacy.

Helen saw this truth plainly enough, and consoled herself with the remembrance that she was by no means dependent on Cecil, and being of age, could hereafter please herself. No brother would endure his sisters' advice; for, like Gertrude, her notion of advice, if strictly interpreted, consisted in strenuous efforts to get some one to give up, or give in to continual pleading.

Cecil, free from the slightest idea of the plans for and against his benefit that troubled the minds of the young ladies, employed his imagination in wondering the cause of that sad and preoccupied air which gave to Estelle in her youth a tinge of melancholy in keeping with the old house, in unison with her appearance, in harmony with her shyness.

Was she stupid, as his sisters said, beside

Alexina? Estelle did not play or sing, but her eyes glowed with a pure and spiritual lustre when she listened to music, and when she spoke of painting. He determined that he would make her show him these drawings, and began to find the picnic which he had lazily heard his sisters plan, invested with a fresher attraction than he had believed possible, because Estelle would be one of his guests.

And now, when the spring day had faded by delicate grades into twilight, Dr. Hofer and his wife and children assembled in the dining-room.

The high oak mantel-piece was surmounted by a carved head of Phœbus Apollo, and the dark panels of the walls were wreathed in an intricate design of leaves and tendrils. From the ceiling hung an antique silver lamp, the beautiful heirloom that had shed its subdued light over many generations.

This was the Sabbath lamp, lighted by Mrs. Hofer week after week, as the late afternoon or summer eve of Friday ushered in the day of rest. In the fog of winter, when it commenced as soon as four o'clock; in the April twilight, when the stroke of six sum-

moned the family together, or (when the weather willed) divided or collected them for synagogue; in the blaze of the July sunset, when the days were long, and the varying hour of that Sabbath "from even till even" was half-past seven, the swaying lamp with its silver chains cast its mild beams over the long table, the snowy cloth, the varied and earnest faces.

Few artists have chosen the illustration of the Jewish festivals, the Hebrew customs, except, just lately, the spirited and sympathetic Oppenheimer. But Estelle had a drawing, where the active, still graceful figure of a matron stretches across just such a table to perform the holy office. One hand rests on the cloth beneath the light that gathers above her. One arm is uplifted, extended towards the silver lamp. There is a gravity and cheerfulness in the expression of the face, in the composed but elastic bearing of the figure.

An old man, bowed, hale, and venerable, rests in an easy-chair, watching the ceremony with the satisfaction and comfort in daily or habitual customs plainly to be read in the easy, contented pose of his feeble frame. He

bends a little forward. He wears a velvet cap and long coat; his snowy beard flows over the curly head of a boy with intent and brilliant eyes, who leans against him. The trembling hand caresses that curly head. The old man can do nothing now; still he can pet the younger people, and observe, with placid conviction, that all is being done properly—the old, old ways of his own youth faithfully followed, the early usages of his faith strictly honoured. In the boy's face all is pleased and reverent interest, eagerness, and fire. In that of the aged grandfather the holier, deeper meaning of the Sabbath is reflected, for he sees the visible light, and feels how the Sabbath lamp of eternity illuminates his own days of rest. The contrast between age and youth is not forced, or insisted on, in the drawing, but grows naturally from the simple incident of the grandfather's delight in having his little one always as near to him as the restless boy permits.

Two slim and tall girls read from the same prayer-book, in the window.

England is the actual scene of this picture, but Jerusalem, with its mystic and hallowed

laws, has nevertheless taken up its departed glory with that ordinance of lighting the lamp.

Outside, house roofs, red tiles, bathed in the solemn, fading sunbeams. Within, these few joined together, performing the rites enjoined on an ancient community.

Outside, the hurrying crowd; within, a beautiful custom, crowned by the halo of time. Within, the dignified and beautiful old man, whose aged head is so tired with its weight of years, so white with their weariness, resting and cheered like the child by his side, making a sort of silent protest against the careless and unjust opinion of those still prejudiced against the Hebrew race.

Who takes note of the rapt and pious group? Who heeds the sanctity and hush that enfold it, and make it so true and elevating a witness against the harsh and cruel words of scorn often spoken of the inner, better life of Judaism?

Estelle thought of her drawing now, as she saw the evening shadows fall on her father's fine features, settle on the upturned face of her step-mother, and centre on the massive, highly polished silver cup for the *Kiddush*, or wine of sanctification.

There were the twisted loaves, sprinkled with poppy seeds, made to resemble the shew-bread of the Temple; the ancient plate, the fine, transparent china, the heavy decanters of diamond-cut glass, made at a time when Jews were famous for their cleverness as glass-cutters.

“To meet the Sabbath, come, let us go.”

“Thou kingly temple, thou royal city,—long, long enough hast thou dwelt in the vale of tears.”

“Arouse, arouse! thy light has come! Arise, shine! Awake, awake! chant a hymn; the glory of the Lord is revealing upon thee.”

“Come, O beloved, to meet the bride; the approaching of Sabbath let us receive.”

These words of the weekly service still sounded in her ears. Thus esteemed, honoured, and chosen, was the Sabbath compared to the bride; that sweetest of the seven days, selected to meet her Lord, who names her chief and beloved above all other festivals of joy and peace.

Estelle's fervent fancy supplied many details hinted at in this poem. She seemed to behold a fair vision of the Sabbath, which represents pure, unbroken rest; pardon for

the sinner, healing for the broken heart, hope for the persecuted.

She saw Babylon arise from its tearful vale, where the city crouched in grief for the destruction of her temples; she understood how the white veil of that Bride would have soothed the week's anguish, would have spread its folds over her desolate, grief-stricken forefathers.

"Estelle," her father exclaimed impatiently, "how you linger! Of what are you dreaming? The cup of wine waits for you to taste after your mother, but your thoughts roam as usual. Respect your parents' table, and follow its customs. Alexina should be looked on as the elder, for she is always ready."

"My dear father," said Lexie, anxious to shield her sister's inattention, "what a compliment! What a remark! Am I really always ready for wine? I dare say Esty was truly more attentive than I, after all, and pondering about some ideal; while I was just getting hungry in a commonplace way."

Estelle's cheek grew scarlet. Those visions of a foregone and chastened Sabbath were quickly banished.

"The wine gets into your head, Estelle.

See how red you are. It would be better not to have it," said Gabriel.

"It would be better for me to drink it," remarked Ruth, with great candour. "I am so fond of wine, and *not* in a little sip. Next week there will be wine without spirit, that does not rise to your face and turn you pinky. I like Passover, for then I may have sweet wine in a tumbler."

"Ah," said Lexie, "do not be too sure. If you like it for no other reason, and it depends on me to fill your tumbler, you will soon appreciate the holy-days for half a reason, or for no reason whatever."

"There, never mind," said Dr. Hofer, whose sternness always yielded to his younger children. "Lexie is in jest. But, Gabriel, have you no better feeling connected with next week?"

"Oh yes, papa. Ruth and I are perfectly different. I like it because we have a week's holiday."

"We are *not* different!" exclaimed the aggrieved Ruth. "I hate learning, and that is my one other reason for liking Passover, Miss Lexie," she said triumphantly; "so you cannot mulct me of my tumbler. *Mulct* is my new word in history, papa."

“Is it?” said Dr. Hofer. He was a tall, studious man, with grey hair and steely blue eyes, whose gaze was equally abstracted and absorbed. Now and then a glance, at once shrewd and penetrating, would flash from under his thick brows, but his general appearance betokened an engrossed and earnest student, who rarely troubled himself with events that interfered with his own pursuits.

“In my father’s time the festival was kept very much more strictly than in latter days. Things that are permitted now, in those days were never allowed,” he remarked.

“We have progressed,” said Lexie.

“But I do not agree with you. We have laid aside certain links that united us as a body. We have done away with some ceremonial, but have we adopted better? We voluntarily give up much that once was wrested from us; and now, when persecution has ceased, and tyranny has made way for an undisturbed practice of our own forms—when the weight of intolerance no more crushes our energies, we willingly forego little acts by which the rabbis ever sought to propitiate the Creator and keep us unique

and distinct. We quietly lay down old laws, for which our ancestors gave their lives."

"I suppose," said Estelle, "Passover in a way is like the Lent of the Catholics, papa?"

"We go without so many articles likely to ameliorate the extreme severity of our unbuttered, unleavened bread," said Alexina. "I do not call it a festival really. A solemn, but emphatically meagre holiday; an anniversary of suffering, anxiety, bondage."

"Yes, but we were saved from bondage, delivered from slavery. We were brought from hardship into security and safety," Estelle said.

"All the same, the rabbinical law exaggerates the decrees of our faith. Why should we have separate wine for the passover?" Lexie exclaimed.

"Why should we not, dear?" Mrs. Hofer answered. "Even the severest opponent of orthodoxy must own it a greater proof of zeal, evincing a sincere, if too anxious, feeling of respect shown by these small differences, than in permitting the festival to come and go as if it were a bore, as many do."

"But, mamma," urged Alexina, "those small differences do carry away so much

liberty, and make us appear narrow-minded and bigoted in our belief."

"No," said Dr. Hofer; "they hedge it in. The Jews are a peculiar people."

"Yes," said Alexina eagerly, "very peculiar; and strangers wish to make us more distinctly and peculiarly peculiar. Now, when we go to Haye Place on Thursday, I feel sure that Miss Haye will expect to see us attired like Sir Walter Scott's 'Rebecca.'"

"Like Ivanhoe's 'Rebecca,' you mean," Gabriel added, as an amendment. "He grew tired of Rowena, Lexie. She had nothing to say."

"Well," his sister retorted, "no one can accuse you of that error. But as you have nothing particularly interesting to utter at any time, allow your elders to converse."

"And who is going to Haye Place, Lexie? You say *we*."

"We, we," Ruth repeated thoughtfully; "my kitten speaks like that. And *oui* is French, papa dear. Lexie, did you say '*oui*' to the new man at Haye, when he asked you to go to see him? Oh, I would. I would even have said more. I should have said, '*Oui, mon cher, most willingly.*'"

"No doubt, you impertinent little magpie. When your extremely limited French failed, English would have served you. Just attend to my last advice to Gabriel. Ella and I are going, papa, because mamma cannot spare herself from home, and we are going to drive to Hurst to have lunch in the ruins."

"Does Iceland moss come from ruins?" Ruth inquired. "Is it the same as lichens and ivy?"

"Oh, exactly," said Lexie. "We are going expressly to gather some, and sell it to grocers and chemists."

"And Ella can do a portrait of Hurst to put on each packet," Gabriel concluded.

"I do not approve of great intimacy with these new friends," Dr. Hofer observed. "Do not accept invitations when your mother is engaged. You are neither of you wise enough to be left to your own guidance. You, Lexie, in especial, become too quickly interested in strangers."

Estelle drooped her head, for, to her sensitive conscience, her pleasure in the prospect of the visit appeared deceitful. Perhaps her father deceived himself. He never had cared

to study her tastes or disposition, but took it for granted that her habitual silence proceeded from lack of interest in interesting things, forgetting how he discouraged her by impatience or scorn.

Still, she would not let it be supposed that Alexina derived more delight from the idea voluntarily, at least—she would not continue Dr. Hofer's mistake.

“Papa,” she said, colouring with the effort—for suppose it cost her her picnic?—“I look forward to going beyond Lexie. It will be so pleasant to have fresh society.”

“Well, Estelle, you very frequently make excuses to keep you out of any society. However, I am glad to hear at last that you mean to rouse yourself. I do not fear to learn that your enthusiasm was disproportionate to this event; and perhaps, when you see what other young ladies can do, you will become rather more ambitious and industrious. I am glad you should go, I repeat; but how do you come to know the family at Haye Place?”

“We met them at the Cravens,” said Mrs. Hofer. “The two young ladies made a great deal of Estelle and Lexie at first, and called

here; and to-day their brother accompanied them."

"And we often meet them when we are out walking," said Lexie. "As for me, papa, you need have no fears of any sort. They have a great curiosity concerning our ways and customs. You would not wish me to be rude?"

"No, certainly not. Only, do not become enraptured, and then suddenly disenchanted."

"Miss Hays, I am sure, is better pleased to keep us in our own groove. She has no idea of a Jewish household that has kept pace with the world's progression, and yet held firmly to its faith amidst its changes. She would prefer to see us both only speaking when we are spoken to, and attired in gabardines, to keep up her delusion. But Mr. Hays is totally different, and much more agreeable."

Alexina said this with such complete composure, that Dr. Hofer's fears were allayed at once.

"Miss Hays was surprised because I sang 'O Salutaris,'" she continued. "She fancied I would have chosen some little conventional song. She hinted as much. So I told her

she should have one, and then I sang 'To Althea.'

"Lexie, you are very saucy, I fear," Mrs. Hofer replied. "You must not forget that everybody is not as patient and indulgent to your wildness as Philip."

"Oh no, I do not," she answered, blushing; and in a low voice she added, "*that* I never forget."

It was an affecting and interesting sight when Estelle bent her tall head, when Gabriel and Ruth's dark locks, and the bright-haired Alexina in turn stooped beneath Dr. Hofer's outstretched hand to receive his weekly blessing. Thus in the dim years had the failing and faithful Jacob blessed his children.

"Father," whispered Estelle in a trembling voice, "say something in English to me. Say, 'Ella, you are very plain and slow, still I do not hate you.'"

"I certainly can say that," Dr. Hofer said, with his rare smile. "I depend on your less excitable temperament, too, to guard Alexina from any rashness. You have seen too little of the world to perceive exactly where danger lies in forming new acquaintances of

a different creed. Still, you have fortunately no impulsive, highly wrought, or romantic ideas, and I think Alexina also often says more than she means. Therefore, Estelle, I trust not to regret my permission."

"Yes, papa," she assented gently. Who knew better than herself that Lexie, in spite of her ardent speeches, her lovely face and voice, was thoroughly practical and matter-of-fact, and had selfish, sweet, little winning ways of coaxing, that invariably provided her with the objects of her wishes, and never carried her away?

Who understood better than Estelle that her own heart, that throbbed so unevenly and quickly at the contemplation of lofty or beautiful ideals, was that most likely to be impressed by novelty and change? Still, her father must know best; and she accepted his words with the simplicity and sincere humility that led her to believe she was indeed slow and dull to others besides her own relations.

"I think Lexie will never really be carried away by her emotions," she said thoughtfully; "she has much more common sense than you give her credit for, papa."

“Well,” said Dr. Hofer, pleased with the perfect love that existed between his daughters, “it may be so. At any rate, Esty, I do not give *you* credit for any extraordinary freaks of imagination. I have no need to warn *you* in that particular, I am happy to find.”

He thought she would smile and be comforted, for he intended the words for praise. But she turned her head away, with a pained sense that she must be very deceitful, very egotistical, or wholly misunderstood. She could not return the jesting speech. Oh, was it in jest, when it wounded her so deeply?

But Estelle’s unspoken and true religion came to her aid, and led her to overcome vexation that thus it would always be—care and indulgence for Lexie, for herself sober and commonplace guardianship.

“You can rely on us both, papa,” she said. “It is rather perplexing to avoid discussions that enthrall Lexie, who likes to argue; but she knows where to stop. And it is very pleasant to have acquaintances as refined and clever as the Hayes, and Edith and Mrs. Craven. You know there are very few of our own faith to mix with in Stadchester.”

“Very well,” said Dr. Hofer, who was quite as ignorant and unsuspecting of flirtation and possible love affairs as Estelle could be. His children were distinctly children to him; he had no anxiety of that uneasy kind to caution either. But he would not allow his daughters to drift into laxity of observance unwarned and carelessly. In mixing with such a totally different class of society as that at Hays Place, they would see such new ways, such opposite habits, that they might be tempted to oblivion of their own. Alexina might become too much excited, and Estelle grow discontented.

Thoughts of love and marriage for his children never entered Dr. Hofer’s mind. He had loved and married, but this fact was no precedent for them. They were to be obedient and quiet, and keep at home as much as might be, and their mother would manage anything outside this somewhat monotonous plan of existence.

Here Dr. Hofer’s arrangements ceased for their well-being. His daughters knew that he desired rather to discourage than to promote their intercourse with any others than Mrs. Craven, whose society bore the impress

of age and experience, to render it a very safe and excellent preventive of romance. Edith, too, her daughter, was a prisoner to her couch, with a spinal complaint, and for her uncomplaining and resigned character Dr. Hofer had thorough respect. Home was, or should be, sufficient to girls.

CHAPTER V.

HURST WOODS AND HAYE PLACE.

THE sun rose the following Thursday at least on three individuals determined to have their own way.

On Gertrude, who resolved to keep Alexina's marvellous gift of singing in the background, or to let it be heard when Cecil was at a safe distance.

It rose on Cecil, who determined to devote himself to finding out what sort of girl Estelle Hofer actually was; whether any depths of feeling beside love of art lay beneath such an undemonstrative, calm manner. He had not ceased to think of her since his visit.

Alexina's face could be seen repeated in Florence again and again, but Estelle's was grand, and typical, and characteristic.

The sun rose on Lexie, who had made up her mind to tease Mrs. Hofer for a beautifully worked filigree bracelet. She had a pretty wrist, and had set her heart on being fashionable and conventional, to mortify Gertrude and Helen, who should not display her as an oriental guest. Her fair Florentine face and reddish gold hair were to be enhanced by a little white crape bonnet; she would not go in a hat, as Ruth might. She would wear a white *piqué* dress, and a mantle of black lace, and grey gloves, and her own coral necklace, and Mrs. Hofer's Indian bracelet would finish her appearance, and make her look, as she phrased it, like everybody else.

And the delicate rays of the spring sun found Estelle perfecting a pretty painting of the silver lilies dreaming in the neglected, luxuriant garden, without a thought beyond her occupation. Her attic door was locked; she feared no interruption as she worked on, absorbed and happy.

The true poetry and sensitive sympathy of her nature seemed to have escaped and entered this pretty sketch. They were not gathered flowers, but lilies still living in their own bed, that she had selected for models,

bending a little forward, almost swaying in the night breeze, dreaming in the silvery moonlight, not glowing in sunshine. "Flowers Asleep," she had called this sketch, and every graceful bell and leaf expressed sleep. One might say that her lilies bent forward in ever so slight a degree, as if their dreams were of the bees who had whispered praises to them all day; or as if to listen to the grasshoppers breathing, who rested under their sheltering stems; or, being crowded, to give more space to the tinier blossoms nestling together. The chill of the night atmosphere pervaded the picture, and seemed its essence. All was still, silver-touched, subdued, and sweet in the serene and tremulous shadows cast by the high, unseen moon on this one bed of lilies; yet much of the thought and hope, the labour and rest, of humanity, appeared to centre here in one spot, and as if indicated and explained by the flowers.

"Esty!" Her sister's voice dispersed her industry and intentness, and she started up to put away her sketch, and hide all traces of her employment. "Esty, mamma is perfect. See, she has lent me her bracelet at last, after miles of entreaties and endless

promises to be careful. Are not you ready?"

"Lexie, how can you be so teasing? We are not to go to Hays Place till eleven."

"And, Estelle dear, do not wear colours. I overheard Helen say something about gorgeous eastern tints. Do not let us, either of us, be gorgeous, but English. She evidently expects us in amber and rubies. As I knew we were to leave at eleven, I began to beg of mamma after breakfast. What have *you* been about since that hour?"

"Oh, at work," Estelle said, hurriedly. She was wondering now whether any other sympathetic imagination would ever comprehend her lilies, and feel the same glamour spread over them as she had, when opening the ruined, rust-locked gate that led to the garden. Decay and delicacy had met here in a blending of picturesque confusion, and, among it all, the lilies were dreaming. Her fancy had seized their meaning, and her ready fingers had followed it. Was it very badly done? Would Cecil ever see it?

"Estelle," Alexina impatiently continued, "what shall you wear?"

"Black?" said Estelle, doubtfully.

“Black, you doleful little negro! No, certainly not. White,” said Lexie, stamping her foot with decision.

“But, Lexie, I am not fair.”

“Still, it must be white.”

And when Estelle looked at herself, notwithstanding the absence of fairness, she was compelled to own that Lexie’s choice reflected credit on her taste and Estelle’s complexion. Estelle wore no coral, but a triple row of Bohemian garnets, and the brilliant stones lent some glow and colour to her clear olive tints. It was an old-fashioned and pretty ornament, with a silver clasp; and over her sloping shoulders a black-and-white striped burnous was drawn. It was from Algiers—one of the gifts of Philip Florian,—and she wound it over her with an inborn instinct for graceful drapery.

“Your black hat spoils you,” said Alexina, meditatively; “but you can take it off directly it is possible. And do not forget, Estelle, that *then* you must wear this little Roman scarf. There is all the difference, dear, in colour, judiciously mingled and used, and great *fields* of unsubdued dyes.”

Estelle smiled to hear the exordium, and

forbore to turn again to the glass to note its result in her own appearance.

“You *shall* look,” said Lexie, gaily. “Take off that pensive frown, put on a smile, *determine* to be the *best* Estelle of the sort. Now how do we find ourselves?”

“Thanks, Lexie, only tolerable.”

“Philip thinks you nice,” said Alexina, with some anxiety.

“That is kind of him, and good of you to repeat it. He, too, is nice.”

The animation of Lexie’s features left them suddenly, wearing a dejected and downcast expression instead.

She was silent while her sister took her gloves, and it was only when the door closed on both, and the fresh, soft, exhilarating air met her, that she recovered her spirits.

“Is not mamma perfect?” she said gaily. “See, Estelle; the dear little heart could not hold to its refusal. Again and over again I begged for the bracelet, and over and over and over again she refused it. But I went on bravely, and said, ‘Mamma, how would you have liked, when you were wild and young, for your own mother to keep on with her nasty negatives to all your wishes?’”

“Lexie, mamma never could have been wild; and she is *not* your own mother, and she looks younger than I am. What palpable flattery—and two blunders!”

“Well, Estelle, it gained its object. She lent me the bracelet, with a hundred precautions. To three I listened: ‘Do not break the snap; do not leave it in the grass; do not imagine it is other than a loan.’ I do, however, believe it is a gift, and as such I mean to wear it. Borrowed trinkets entail such heaps of care. It would be easier to regard it as a gift for mamma’s sake. Look, Estelle, at that soft, charming little baby linnet! Shall I sing to you, my soft pet? Would you like to hear what Lexie did when she was a bird, before she transmigrated into a dull human creature, who is not allowed to live in idleness and read novels?”

As the sisters took their way through the sunny, lonely fields, Alexina commenced one air after another, in a low voice, that, indeed, might have easily been mistaken for a bird’s entrancing warble. Her light steps sped along as if she, too, were winged, and her sweet, happy laugh reached the lingering Estelle, who walked far more slowly, and

who had none of the natural vivacity of her companion.

“You can neither go up a hill nor down a hill!” Lexie exclaimed, as after the fields were passed the road became broken and fatiguing. “What a shame that papa does not have a carriage!”

“But he is not rich enough.”

“Well, then, he ought to be. That is just what I complain of. Other people’s fathers are rich. But, Estelle, you are pale. I cannot carry you, but lean on my arm heavily, as if I were Alexis, and not Alexina. Are not you well?”

“Perfectly,” said Estelle; but her lip quivered. She had been up early at work, and the rush of emotion that caused her heart to throb unevenly as she drew, had unfitted her for the long walk. The remembrance of her admiration for the ancient hand-screens came to twit her, not with a feeling of envy of Lexie, who, by dint of pretty urging, constantly managed to obtain the goal of her childlike fancies, but as a warning to herself to withhold rather than to utter a request, as hitherto. They rarely had been, they seldom would be, granted.

She resolutely stifled the choking sensation that drove unwilling tears to her eyes, as she felt an uncontrollable longing for an affection that should be demonstrative, tender, indulgent, as that extended to her sister. Lexie was distinctly treated as the younger, with all the privileges of her pretty youth most willingly accorded. Estelle was just as completely looked on as the elder; yet, if reverence or respect were the attributes of *her* nineteen years, she found them not. She also loved Mrs. Hofer steadily, truly; yet Lexie's half wilful, half timid, and occasionally romantic affection pleased and flattered most.

All this somewhat mournful meditation entangled itself with the roadside scenery, and the serene and sweet details of her walk. When Haye Place was reached, she cast off any thought beyond that of the present; but her sad musing and her morning's employment had given her countenance something wistful, spiritual, and earnest that Alexina's lacked, with all its superior loveliness. Estelle seemed as if she were searching for some lost view. In her eyes was that far-away and almost solicitous expression fre-

quently visible when in youth one is not so happy as the young nature craves.

Cecil saw and noted this, and came forward to meet the sisters with an especial welcome, plainly to be discerned in his frank and courteous manner.

Gertrude saw and noted it likewise, and traced a mental comparison between Lexie's brilliant, joyous face and the calm, pale Estelle.

"That little one keeps Cecil's Indian moon in clouds," she thought, "or at least throws a shadow over her majesty. I will brighten her up a little. She must not become too interesting. We will see how smiles suit her. Cecil, I am sure, has resolved to baffle me. I know that where two girls present a difference so clearly marked, one must be most admired. Which of the two can it be?"

Helen, who was distinguished and stately of demeanour, felt attracted more towards Lexie than Estelle. Lexie could not in any way compete or cope with her, and therefore she was inclined to change her first opinion, and admire the youngest most.

Wholly unused to society, both Lexie and Estelle were resolved to enjoy and be in-

terested by its variety and novelty; and when the carriages drew up at the imposing entrance, and the soft-voiced flutter and rustle of arrangement began, Lexie's cheeks grew pink and her eyes brightened, while a crimson flush burst on Estelle's pallor.

Haye Place was but of a recent date. It was built during the latter part of the last century, and after the dark and time-mellowed house of the Hofers, it impressed Alexina as a cheerful and lively abode.

"I do like modern buildings," she said, innocently. "I suppose, Miss Haye, you have neither rats, beetles, ivy, nor noises here?"

"We certainly have no noises," said Gertrude, somewhat offended. "In a house where there are children, of course noise is sure to occur."

"Oh, but Gabriel and Ruth are perfect," said Lexie, who always found her relations perfect when she was absent from home. "They really are dear little creatures, however; and as for being noisy!—if they were inclined to be loud, Esty would soften them in a few days. But your house is so light and free—it raises my spirits."

"They are never very depressed, I should say," Cecil said, smiling. "You do not strike me as one easily saddened."

"Oh no, I am not!" she answered. "You are quite right. But then, you know, I have always been so happy. I wonder how it would be if I were unhappy? Perhaps then I might turn out very gloomy."

"I do not care to carry out that speculation," Cecil answered, touched and interested by the shade that fell on the radiant countenance all at once. "Do not continue to wonder concerning improbabilities. You are not meant for unhappiness."

"Who can speak of such fancies on such a sweet day?" Helen remarked brusquely. "We are all meant to be happy, more or less, according to our own deserts and fate's chances. Lexie, if a shower comes down, I shall think you foresaw and invoked it."

"Miss Hofer, would you like to go in the open carriage or the omnibus?" Gertrude asked. "I am so sorry, but we have had an accident with the other carriage, and it could not be set to rights in time. Shall you mind the omnibus for one of you two?"

Alexina's face fell dismally. "Estelle," she whispered, "*do* prefer the omnibus."

"I do not in the least care about being shut up," Estelle said, quietly.

"Do you not indeed? How nice of you!" Gertrude said, her brow instantly clearing. "Some people have such a dislike to a close carriage."

Estelle smiled, and considered that enough had been said about such a trifle. She was accustomed to yield in small affairs, and tried not to dislike going in the shut carriage; but she was sensible of much encouragement when Cecil mounted the box.

She was still inside, certainly; but, then, Cecil was outside, and Estelle was on the way to think the sound of his voice, and the sight of his face now and then, made amends for the privation of not gazing on the budding scenery—a gentle pleasure to which she had so eagerly looked forward.

The omnibus contained Helen and her cousin Gerard Holden, who was older than Cecil; he had but lately returned from Syria. In addition to these were two tall lads, one of whom was excessively solemn, and the other very mischievous. These were the sons of

the rector, and between them Estelle was placed, while opposite sat the kind, old aunt of the Hayes.

Helen talked continually to Gerard, and Estelle, feeling very much left to herself, studiously averted her gaze from the various occupants of the omnibus, and sought companionship in the objects of the landscape; and as the delicate, green glowing trees, the cottages, and wide pauses of the fields seemed to fly past, the pained sense of being forgotten and overlooked, gave way to the placid consideration of nature, that with unfailing bounty brings its solace to the sensitive or disappointed.

Soon her life's little anxieties—so great and difficult to her—had merged in a sort of dreamy comfort and ease, with which only the wavering, exquisite spring shadows, the tremulous, lovely little leaves, and the blue and golden sky had part, when Helen's somewhat imperative voice roused her.

“Miss Hofer!” she exclaimed. “I have asked you three times—*are* we far from Hurst? You know all about this neighbourhood, do not you? But we seem never to reach our destination. Are there no

landmarks, or waymarks, by which we can tell whether we are really advancing?"

She spoke sharply, as if to a dull coachman—to Estelle's surprise; for Helen had sought her acquaintance, and noticed her, and she was ignorant of the mixture of distrust and annoyance with which she now regarded her.

Gerard, as well as Cecil, was certainly attracted by Lexie and her sister; so Helen's mind, as well as Gertrude's, was clouded by anxiety, and an urgent regret, that would insist on being attended to, that she had ever seen either of the Hofers. She wished she had left them unnoticed, with their various talents, in their old house. This regret forced its sting through all that was sweet and pleasant, and shadowed the bright hours, and it was this which chilled and sharpened her voice, and that drew the attention of others to the fact that their hostess was not very happy.

"I did not know that you were speaking to me," said Estelle, most truthfully. "We are not very far from Hurst, but first there are the Levels."

"And what are the Levels?" Gerard

asked. If Helen would not bring Estelle into their conversation he would. Why should a girl of such an interesting and intelligent aspect be left so plainly to her own society?

“The Levels are yards and yards of short grass—a sort of bird-haunted solitude,” she answered, with so evident a hesitation that he wondered who this timid young foreigner could be.

“How gloomy!” said Helen, with an insincere shudder; “do not you think so, Gerard? But then, Miss Hofer, I have no doubt that your sister would speedily put a stop to that spell of solitude. She would laugh and sing in any poetic space, and break that bird-haunted, grassy silence very soon.”

“Lexie’s bright ways and sweet voice do certainly scatter one’s ideas of loneliness,” Estelle said, astonished at the scorn in Helen’s tone.

“And quite right,” said the cheery, white-haired old lady. “Loneliness cannot be for the young. They love company, and youth demands it. Still, at your time of life one likes one’s dreams, and I can see that dreaming is a special indulgence to you.”

Estelle blushed, but her spirits rose. It was pleasant to find sympathy, and if only from an old lady, what did it matter? She was Cecil's aunt, and she had sweet and vivacious blue eyes, and surely all Estelle's foregone existence had prepared her for the forbearance of age rather than the companionship of those of her own years.

"Dreams are a great loss of time," said Helen, decidedly. "I have no patience with dreamy people."

"But you have been very patient with me, Miss Haye," Estelle said in a deprecating voice, that struck sadly on the ear of Miss Charteris.

"You should not take every speech to yourself in that way. Of course one avoids personalities," Helen answered. "But is there nothing to see beyond birds on the Levels?"

"There is the distant view of the ruins, wreathed in ivy. And sometimes the grey terrace still remaining is distinctly visible. It stands out of the hazy prospect boldly, and yet in a vague and very picturesque manner."

"And that is all?" asked Helen.

“That is all,” Estelle repeated; and Edward Thornton laughed—

“Oh, what a programme, Miss Hofer! ‘This way to the ruins—inquire of the sundial,’ and so on. Now, you make it a solemn, visionary sort of place by your description; while I know it to be a jolly kind of fossil restaurant, where one brings a good appetite and an excellent lunch,—am I not right, Miss Haye?—and when both are exhausted, scratch, or cut one’s name in a wall or window, and good-bye.”

“That is just like you,” retorted his brother. “Who with any taste or respect would think of putting his insignificant initials of *this* century where all the past centuries have been at work, overlaying and hiding decay in mosses?”

“Oh, I say, don’t hit *too* hard. *My* insignificant initials! The same as yours, my dear fellow. Edward, or Edgar Thornton—what is the distinction? I saw the name of Edith Perkins with my own eyes—written, or scrawled on a lovely Norman arch. The generations to come will rejoice and stand pensive, perhaps, hereafter, when they see ‘E. T.’ on the same surface. I shall entwine

those letters round the signature of Miss Edith Perkins, and one of the anti-scrape society for the protection of ancient buildings, beholding that touching inscription, may wonder what faithful pair of the past ages wrote their little copies together."

"We do not look at Hurst Castle from the same point of view," said Estelle, smiling. "But, then, I have seen very little. Only, one often travels away from lovely places, just because they lie in one's own neighbourhood."

"Of course," said Gerard; "for it is generally inferred that people are apt to grow too familiar with their own immediate surroundings. Change is good, Miss Hofer; but you may be tired of travelling?"

"Who—I?" said Estelle, laughing. "All my travels lie in the future. Lexie and I claim a sort of distinction by that fact, reversing the regular ways of the world. Since we came as small children from Frankfort we have never crossed the sea."

"You claim distinction from stagnation, then?" said Helen.

"It does seem so, I am afraid," Estelle replied. "We read of tours, we see an occa-

sional tourist, and we know that the world holds other cities besides Stadchester. But our existence is hardly progressive."

"So I should imagine," Helen laughed. "How refreshing, Miss Hofer, in these days of exertion, to hear of such monotony! What if it limits your pleasures?—it certainly decreases your pains."

"I like the sea when I am on land," said Miss Charteris, meditatively.

"But I *should* like the sensation of being on the sea," Estelle said. "What is it like, I wonder, for I cannot remember?"

"I am trying to forget the sensation," said Miss Charteris. "My dear, it is not so delightful if you are an indifferent sailor. The last time that I went to Paris it was very rough, and I never saw it at all until I came off the boat, when, I will own to you, my love, I shut my eyes."

"Now that is what I call an ideal view," said Edward Thornton. "Sense opposed to romance, Miss Charteris; very different from the absurd flights of fancy of *our* young days. That idea of closing your eyes is quite original; something similar to turning your back on Mont Blanc."

"I should like to see London," Estelle remarked, thoughtfully.

"Oh, imagine never to have been in town!" said Helen. "Why, Miss Hofer, one is inclined to envy you all you have to enjoy."

"I was there yesterday," said Gerard, to whom Estelle was a puzzle. Where had he seen a face of the same type—sad, mobile, sensitive, with a strange harmony of dignity and patience? Helen was not very communicative; she might have told him of this new acquaintance, whose appearance oddly reminded him of familiar and far-off scenes, of incidents set in the very heart of London, and of graceful, dreamy, dark-eyed maidens of the eastern regions he had lately left. Was she only a German girl? and how was it that she had been reared in such Quaker-like seclusion? and how had she acquired the oriental traits of hair and eyes?

"Yes," he continued, while he was yet engrossed with attempts to account for Estelle's dignified bearing, and shy, retiring demeanour, her refined pronunciation, and her marked ignorance of society and its ways. "I was in a strange part of London, too. What would you say to my having walked

through the extreme eastern quarter, through streets almost completely occupied by Jews, Miss Hofer? I am fond of studying strange places and faces, and this was an excellent opportunity. There appeared to be some particular cause for turning all the furniture into the streets, and in every house there was furious scouring of floors. It was singular indeed to notice the really handsome and grand countenances thronging together in the dingy, dirty courts. One or two of the men stood leaning against their doors, dreamily idle, and gazing into the streets with an air of combined nonchalance and complacency, while children literally strewed the pavement, in positions of equal beauty and picturesque ease. Some actually lay on their backs in the gutter, from which place of repose they gazed up at me with the most delicious composure, and their splendid colouring, unstudied movements, and lithe limbs, and languid content in being perfectly idle, stamped the peculiarities of their race on the meagre, crowded labyrinth of this network of courts and alleys where I found myself. I was told that all this extraordinary and late cleanliness (which hitherto had not been

associated with ideas of Judaism in my mind) was undertaken to do due honour to the Pass-over, and that a particular solicitude to exclude all leaven from their homes for seven days prompted the industry of the good-tempered, busy matrons. Strange, is it not, to have found this scene enacted in squalor and poverty, just the same as if thousands of years had failed of annihilating the early regality of the Jews by the hard pressure of bondage? It was as if one perceived an antique gem shining clear and lucent in a ditch."

"Oh!" said Estelle, her colour rising, her voice trembling with agitation, "how can you have that idea of Jews—that they should be *dirty*—when our multiplied laws should guard us on every side from the least reproach of the kind? Oh, papa was right when he forbade Lexie and me to go out much in the world. What a cruel world to condemn a nation that exists distinct, unique, by its obedience to Biblical doctrine! Do not you know that it is *my* religion, *my* people, who won your attention?"

"I did not, indeed, Miss Hofer," said Gerard earnestly, and with a reproachful

glance at Helen. "But, even had I suspected that you were of the same creed as those poor, cheerful, and I must say splendid-looking creatures, what harm have I done? I meant none, I most truly declare. In some parts of the East they are not always as clean as their ordinances enjoin, but they are no worse than Greeks in that respect. And I will own that one is apt to take one's experience from novelists."

"Yes," said Estelle, with quivering lips, "from Mr. Dickens, and, in a more refined way, from Thackeray. You, who have seen the grand and grave orientals, Mr. Holden, can you believe it possible that they should be models for a caricature like the sentimental, ridiculous Riah—who is like nobody on earth except a slide from a magic lantern, with exaggerated light and darkness,—or that other miserable character in 'Oliver Twist' that papa told us of? Sir Walter Scott's 'Rebecca,' Mr. Dickens's 'Riah'—those are considered sketches calculated to represent mediæval and modern Judaism."

"But you must not be so angry with me," said Gerard, and his gentleness abashed Estelle. "Recollect, Miss Hofer, that I never

guessed it was of your nation I spoke. And I spoke in praise. Will you forgive me, if that one blunder caused you pain?"

"Yes," said Estelle, very much ashamed of her warmth, and shrinking nervously from the hand that he lightly laid on her sleeve, with a mute promise of good-will. "It is I who should apologise; but I cannot help seeing that the world judges us more with curiosity than respect. Industry is far more the source of our success than greed or avarice. Papa says so. What code has been observed in all places by a scattered nation in every vicissitude of pain and struggle for upwards of three thousand years, like ours? And it is a code full of humanity, of gentleness, and an exquisite tenderness, that enjoins us in spite, or rather as a result, of our own misfortunes, to *love the unfortunate and the stranger*. People consider it a sort of duty to inquire about us now—to investigate the worth, and admire the transcendent charity of the precepts that render Jews still the most benevolent and charitable of nations. The particular tenets and principles of our faith interest and rouse strangers. If it surprised you to find the grand and mystical

observance of the Passover still awaited, still honoured, in an obscure quarter, among the very poorest of the community, how would it touch you to find, on the day of atonement, our assemblies ardent and repentant, strictly fasting—in common regretting their past errors, and in the company of their brethren sorrowing for their transgressions, and imploring Divine pardon? Such a scene has no parallel, surely. The synagogues and the worshippers present a distinct proof of fidelity and piety yet unsurpassed.”

Estelle had spoken rapidly, in soft, low tones. And now, as she ceased, she raised her dark eyes as if in a timid desire to appeal against her own warmth. A short silence fell on the others, who were all rather astonished by the earnestness of one who was generally silent and reserved. Again she blushed vividly, and almost wished herself at home, when Helen said—

“When one is compelled to live in a narrow sphere, of course the mind becomes a little contracted, and disposed to keep to narrow views. If you had more experience, Miss Hofer, you would know that people rarely discuss their favourite opinions with

quite so much zeal, and also that it hardly matters to talk about one's particular creed—so that the general principles by which the world is governed are well obeyed.”

Helen said this because she felt Gerard was annoyed in believing he had annoyed Estelle, and the vexation might extend to herself for neglecting to name her guests' religion. But her words fell on Estelle's excitement like ice, and she saw herself ridiculous, ill-bred, needlessly roused about a trifle.

Miss Charteris came to her assistance. “I admire your explanation, my dear; for however narrow one's peculiar experience may chance to be, it is not a contracted or narrow-minded girl who would know how to describe the solemnity and grandeur of such incidents as you mention. Do you live at Stadchester, then? I should like to see you, if I may come.”

“We live at the Ivy House, near the Close,” said Estelle, who was nearly crushed by the severity of Helen's reproof.

“This is my card,” said Miss Charteris; but she had none to offer in return, and drew back into her corner with burning cheeks and downcast eyes.

But to Gerard, who was struck by her tremulous and warm vindication, she appeared neither narrow-minded nor ignorant. The antiquity, the wretchedness, the persecutions, and royalty, and noble martyrdom of the Hebrews might be safely entrusted to this young disciple of an ancient faith.

So, now the charm that had puzzled him was explained; and if this shy yet stately maiden lived near the cathedral, how strange and subtle would the contrast be of her glowing but repressed youth, touched by the romance of her descent, and that grave and sombre prospect on which her eyes were accustomed to dwell! Would she, or would she not, be a counterfeit presentment of her faith—the faith that had stood as a rock, lashed by the fierce waves of the harsh and intolerant years? Was she as simple, as lofty-minded, as sincere, as her wistful words indicated?

“Helen,” he said, when the omnibus stopped, “how was it you did not tell me of Miss Hofer’s belief? It was a wonder that I was not led into some awkward remark. You just told me she was the daughter of a Dr. Hofer—and it was not fair.”

“Why not?” she answered coldly. “Surely you can see by her face that she is of eastern origin.”

“No, but that is what I could not determine. Do not you like her? How was it that you spoke so sharply?”

“I?” repeated his cousin, colouring. “Such discussions as hers are against good taste.”

“That is foolish, Helen. I admire the moral courage that prompted her to express her opinion, and save me from wounding her by blundering. Her countenance certainly seemed to whisper hints of cedars, and palm-trees, and purple mountains, but I should never have believed her to be Jewish.”

“Why?” she asked anxiously. “Lexie, the little one, is quite fair and pretty—quite strangely resembling some little Florentine model of loveliness. But Estelle—she is dark-haired and dark-eyed; and in that Roman scarf and white dress especially, her native orientalism asserts itself by the very fitness of the costume to her peculiar style.”

“She is foreign, but not like the Hebrew girls I have seen,” Gerard said slowly, wondering in what respect lay the difference. “And as for the little one, she is like and yet unlike

some examples I have met with of her nation. Dark hair and eyes are not always the characteristics by which they can be known. Miss Lexie reminds me of one of the ancient Christians of Syria. She is remarkably fair and pretty, but Miss Hofer has a wonderful dignity and grace. Who are these girls?"

"I told you, Gerard," said Helen impatiently. "The daughters of Dr. Hofer—as far as I know, the only one of his faith in Stadchester. We met them at the Cravens', and Estelle seemed so delighted with a little attention, that insensibly I became drawn into acquaintanceship. But it will not do at all."

"But why, Helen? They are quite well-bred, educated; and both young ladies seemed more than usually talented. Surely you must know the world is fast outgrowing the vulgar prejudices formerly felt against the Jews."

"Yes—oh, of course," said Helen, unwillingly. "Really, however, the whim of wild friendship originated with Estelle. She is actually more sanguine than Lexie, I believe. Still, to have a small civility exaggerated into intimacy is disagreeable."

There are always two ways, if not more,

of relating, and Gerard accepted without question this statement. In Helen's present strong anxiety to soften her first knowledge of Estelle, she unconsciously misrepresented, or probably forgot, her own eager speeches of praise. But to Estelle herself these were persistently audible. Over and over again she appeared to hear the unaccustomed words, wherein she was told that the colour of her hair and eyes was admirable, that her words were picturesque. "And Cecil and Gertrude agreed with me," Helen had added.

It was the first time she had won praise from strangers, and who shall say how valued and precious such a first time, such first praise, became to the fervent, repressed disposition? Estelle had used herself to spread a sort of solitary banquet, where on this one dish of flattery all her wistful, shy desire of notice fed itself. Sometimes she blushed, as she truthfully discerned the folly, the vanity, of this meagre mental feast. But all the same it appeased her, when her heart grew sore in powerless wishes that, as Lexie received it—without effort, with a clamorous self-assertion,—the light of affection and admiration might be accorded.

How gladly and gratefully had she hailed this promise of something equally sweet and novel in her experience! But now it was failing her evidently, and what would take its place? This flattering preference, this tacit proffer of friendship from another girl—one who had travelled, who was in society—had been met as a boon, with a gratitude pitifully disproportionate to the favour. Helen was becoming chilly, unapproachable—shielding herself in a cold reserve, that occasionally developed to sharpness, against the attraction or imputed liking for Estelle.

What did it matter, after all, Estelle pondered. Friendship, fancy, proficiency in painting, each would be a delusive will-o'-the-wisp, to mislead, to treacherously tease her. Heart-ache, disappointment, these were her portion, and in the whimsical medley of great and small events that passed before her disturbed contemplation, she gave equal importance to real and imaginary failures.

These were gloomy reflections thus to rob brightness from the longed-for day of the picnic, but to her misunderstood and sensitive nature what can surpass the loneliness of standing alone? Estelle resolved to raise a

guard of defence, so as to prevent any more inroads of hope or ardour overthrowing her hardly gained tranquillity. This guard should be indifference. Her attempts at a wider life were certain to be defeated, and it would be wise to encase herself in an extra garment of silence, and thus remove the sting of pain.

From all these conclusions, the sight of the ruined castle of Hurst, dressed with ivy, embossed with moss and lichens, garlanded with ferns, standing on a short, thick carpet of the richest emerald grass, awoke her. Those wide and silent apertures, once finished by stately doors and many-paned windows, now were tenanted by birds, whose gentle, entrancing melody seemed to set the delicate grey ruins to a kind of tender music.

CHAPTER VI.

IN THE RUINS.

“ESTELLE,” Lexie said, seizing her arm, “what a darling you are! I have had the most delightful drive, although you gave up to me. By enjoying myself so thoroughly the moralities are quite upset, and Fate’s measures reversed. I should have been the one to be dull, by gain; you, dear, unselfish Estelle, the maiden enriched by loss. But all to the contrary, as Ruth would write in her exercise. Were you bored, or snubbed, or sorrow-stricken in the omnibus?—because it was such a beautiful, beautiful drive to me, and you look sad.”

Gerard and Cecil heard these words, for Lexie never thought of lowering her sweet, rapid tones for strangers. Both saw the happiness of the lovely beaming face, and to

both Lexie was but a child. The fresh air, the gaiety of her disposition, the pleasure of light, love, life, all were in turns reflected by her animated, careless movements, her glowing cheek, her vivacious voice.

Who could understand, what she herself hardly yet understood, that underlying every natural source of joy, was the knowledge of Philip Florian's speedy return? Beside her radiant, joyous sister, Estelle did indeed look pale and downcast, and yet the two young men who observed them had fully comprehended the greeting, and discovered that Lexie liked to have her own way, and that Estelle was accustomed to grant it, when it depended on her will.

"Who is that person?" exclaimed Alexina, catching Helen's hand. "How he stares! And who is he?"

"That person!" she repeated. "You are not very civil, little Lexie. That person, as you call him, is my cousin, the nephew of Sir Arthur Holden."

"Oh, is he? But he is not very civil either, just to keep staring, as if we were old, or ruins, or something remarkable."

"If you are not too tired shall we walk a

little?" Gertrude suggested. "Aunt Mildred, it will be too much for you; will you wait here for us? This is the spot we have chosen for lunch—here, where the great chestnut avenue is visible. Miss Fairfax, and Lexie, and the rest of us will go on; but Estelle looks greatly fatigued, and has often been to Hurst. Will you remain with aunt Mildred, dear?"

Estelle caught at this kinder phrase with eagerness, and as the sincere ebullition of a mood hitherto genial and courteous. She did not perceive Gertrude's intentional exclusion of herself from the party, but gratefully hoped that she meant to be kind. Perhaps Helen had some concealed cause of vexation that kept her in such a capricious state. Perhaps she had a headache. She was not proud, only preoccupied, and if Gertrude were civil and attentive still, it must be inferred by Estelle that her sensitive anxiety was but proneness to take offence.

Thus the warm-hearted girl pleaded—against sense, against fact. Soon Estelle was persuaded to believe that it was she who was morbid and exacting; not Miss Haye, or Helen, who could possibly be fickle or cross.

No warning came, or would come, to bid her beware in time of placing too ready a confidence in those whose sphere was widely apart from hers. She, too, trod on air; the sunshine came as a smile. New light sent brilliancy to her eyes, and once more she trusted that some unknown source of joy was contained for her, as for others, in the scheme of life.

Just for a little word spoken by Gertrude Haye! But, then, she was Cecil's sister, and even independently of that relationship Estelle liked her.

Miss Charteris was accustomed to study faces, and it struck her as odd, that the down-cast shade should so suddenly, and without any apparent reason, vanish from her young companion's features. It could not be because Estelle was tired, nor did Miss Charteris honestly believe that a quiet half-hour spent in the society of an elderly lady should change her pallor to pleasure, and smooth her sadness into this calm content.

And Gertrude, how strange of her to leave out this one guest, decidedly, even if more gracefully than Helen. What was the reason? How did it come to pass that Estelle

was invited, if her nieces disliked her companionship?

“My dear Gertrude,” she remonstrated, “surely I can take care of myself. Miss Hofer will be very dull, and I shall not.”

“Gerard, and Edward and Edgar, will escort you through the ruins,” said Cecil. “I will stay here.”

The shadow of discontent was transferred from Estelle and settled completely on Miss Hays at this arrangement. Cecil was resolved to outwit her—to do what he chose, rather than what she judged fit. Argument would have been useless, so she gathered the forces of pride and self-control, and resolutely kept every sign of annoyance from being shown.

“I have to speak to William, and see if we cannot have an open carriage for our return,” he said lightly, perhaps by way of explanation. “It must be very hot and stuffy in the omnibus; and then, after lunch, when aunt Mildred and Miss Hofer are rested, we can all go together.”

“As you please,” said his sister.

So, without a thought beyond the present, Cecil Hays went off to fulfil his transparent excuse, leaving Gertrude and Helen perfectly

sure that it was but an apology to account for remaining near Estelle.

But Miss Charteris neither guessed nor suspected, and directly commenced talking to Estelle.

“You *were* a little hot in the omnibus—hey, dear?” she said, with a good-humoured, rallying smile. “Your people are held in veneration nearly all over the world. Well, well, let us except Roumania and Poland, and Russia. They are also a prominent subject of discussion just now. My nephew, Gerard Holden, is a clever fellow—surely his old aunt may say it,—and he has been to Jerusalem and Syria, and now he is writing a series of sketches describing his travels. I assure you, my dear, when you see more of the world you will find one’s particular form of faith is of less consequence than the way in which it leaves its marks on morals and manners. I admire your warm words, for indeed I have known some who would have been silent, and have permitted Gerard to continue in ignorance that one of his auditors was Jewish—not from deceit, but from a sort of false feeling of timidity.”

“Timidity!” said Estelle, bewildered.

“Dear Miss Charteris, I would not go about proclaiming my religion—but why should I fear to speak of it? Tyranny and persecution exist no longer for us in Europe. We are all individual representatives of our race, and therefore to each is given the honour of maintaining its dignity. But I am sorry,” she added, with a flushed and troubled face, “if I said something ignorant or silly. And even if I felt, as you say, timid, I still could not listen to Mr. Holden, who was, however good-naturedly, considering us only from that point of view that beholds us as if we were fine or funny pictures. We should be judged apart from adventitious aids of tents and palm-trees now, surely. We are in, and of, England. Oh, Miss Charteris, when you know my cousin Philip and mamma, they will prove that charity, and filial piety, and reverence, and amiability are our natural virtues. All those hateful habits that novelists ascribe to us are untrue, and dismally failing as jests. A little kindly humour—why, we regard ourselves very often in a smiling way, just as other people laugh good-temperedly at their imperfections. But I have said too much.”

“Not at all, my dear, not at all. I think my nieces said that beautiful sister of yours is the clever one, too (but I have my own opinion as to that); if so, she must have a sort of fairy-tale monopoly of gifts. But I shall find out for myself. Now, what do you do? Play, sing?”

“I do very little, and that little badly.”

“You cannot persuade me that you let Alexina excel you in everything? Nay, that is right, then; smile, even if it is through tears. I read ambition in your eyes, child, and sure it echoes in your voice.”

“But,” said Estelle earnestly, although tears choked her words, “you must not think me envious. I love for Lexie to excel. I have no talents, except—oh! sometimes, Miss Charteris, I hope God means me to be an artist, for I think a great deal about everything, and I have no power of expression, nor can I sing and play; and at home Lexie is brilliant and beloved, and Gabriel, the only boy, is beautiful and beloved, and Ruth, the youngest, is a bewitching, dear little thing, likewise beloved. But there is no especial claim of mine to make *me* win love. So I have grown shut up, sad—not

like the others, to whom affection comes as a natural due. What am I saying?" she said, averting her face and clasping her hands. "I tell this to you, a stranger. I have studied drawing by myself ever since I can remember; but one is never a prophet in one's own country, nor a fair judge of one's own aspirations, and I have always been stupid at learning. But by silence the knowledge of failure, of lasting disappointment, may have been hitherto averted. And, oh! I wish, I want, to assure myself if it be self-deceit or presumption that causes me to hope I have found some channel wherein my own true thoughts and hopes may flow. Our people are visionary in as high a degree as they are practical, Miss Charteris. Their distinct and unique life prepares them for beautiful dreams. Sometimes a beautiful dream comes to me, too; and I see myself no longer stupid, dumb, even sulky-looking, as I have been told, but across the glass of fate the reflection of a happy and busy artist falls, to hide the old and well-known blundering Estelle. Do you think it egotistical to speak of these fancies? I never saw you before to-day, Miss Charteris."

“Nor have I seen you, my dear,” said her companion, inexpressibly touched and pleased by the sudden outburst. Confidence charmed Miss Charteris. An air of sympathy and indulgence seemed to surround her, and to invite the frank and willing reliance of the young. And when, as in this instance, this girl, who was such a curious combination of shyness and bravery, of reserve and candour, so simply brought her trouble to the lady who was equally single-minded and innocently open to the mute flattery of Estelle’s choice of a confidante—her heart was gained, her good opinion secured.

“I have taken a fancy to you, Estelle Hofer,” she said, laying her pretty old hand on her arm. On Miss Charteris’s fingers ancient gems glittered; strange rings, in old-fashioned settings,—tablets, as it might be, to the memory of early, long-lost friends; a tress of her mother’s auburn hair, in a sort of small glass box framed in large diamonds; and other queer mementoes of ancestors—of those whose lives were perhaps only known to their younger relatives through the grey pathetic plait or curl which, in its pearl or diamond enclosure, was a definite proof that

the grandfather or uncle of Miss Charteris really had existed in some remote past.

“Let me tell you,” said Miss Charteris, “when an old woman speaks of having taken a fancy to a young one, it means a great deal more than if that sentence were reversed. Yes, yes, child, I can see in your great eyes that you hold a contrary belief. Old ladies, you would say, have their caprices. So, my dear, have young people, and nineteen out of twenty give up their first fascinations, their ardent fancies, sooner than we, who will not part from, but like to cling to, our latter attachments. *We* cannot afford to foster delusions; but Heaven often grants a marvellous power of discernment to advanced years.”

“And does it deprive youth of divination?” exclaimed Estelle. “Dear Miss Charteris, how good you are to say such kind things! But although you are inclined to be hard on youthful protestations, mine cannot be stinted on that account. I knew that I should be fond of you.”

“As for those drawings, my dear, you must permit me to see them. Strange, is it not, and unromantic, for an old lady and a young one to be signing vows of friendship in the

sunshine of such a lovely day? Why, child, in my youth I should have been amazed had I found myself in such a situation."

"I think the situation, as you call it, has at least a romance of its own, equalling moonlight and lovers' vows, aunt Mildred," remarked Cecil, much amused, and suddenly emerging from among the twined trees near which Miss Charteris was strolling. "You must forgive me, aunt Mildred," as she drew herself up. "I did not intend to hear or observe."

"But you both heard and observed," she said sharply.

"Yes," he said placidly, and glancing at Estelle. At the mention of *lovers' vows*, her lips had tightened in a rigid severity very whimsical to him, while the quaint demureness of her demeanour deepened. Such frigid propriety pleased Miss Charteris, and roused Cecil's sense of humour. Estelle neither blushed nor looked self-conscious, yet the presence of both evidences of embarrassment would hardly have been more marked than this extraordinary preciseness.

Estelle was, however, only trying to behave as she thought her father would desire. She

was not accustomed to hear of lovers, or their vows, and her scant experience of novels was almost limited by the works of Thackeray and Dickens.

In all matters of everyday life she was but a novice, and even although she deeply admired Cecil, she was unconscious of what that admiration might enfold.

“When am I to see your drawings, Miss Hofer?” Cecil continued; not unmindful of the fact that Estelle, in her white dress, and with the drapery of her burnous and the gay tints of her scarf, made a striking contrast with the fair English landscape. “I did not see any of your pictures at the Ivy House—where, then, do you keep them?”

“In my room,” she said simply; “and I am afraid you will think I have made too much fuss about them. And, then, no one knows,” she added, turning to Miss Charteris; “no one suspects their existence—not papa, or mamma, or Lexie.”

“What a sweet little creature your sister is, Miss Hofer!” Cecil exclaimed. “A darling child indeed! She reminds me of a joyful bird—some fluttering, fearless, happy thing, full of delight and song.”

“Yes,” said Estelle; but a strange pang seemed to strike her heart. That sign of pain was most usual when anything fatigued or distressed her. But strange as self-examination was to her, now it forced itself on her attention; for why should Cecil’s praise of her sister induce pain? She, too, loved and admired Lexie, and had long understood that she was and always would be first with strangers, as she was with her own family. But Cecil’s remark somehow brought this truth directly before her, with a clearness and insistence that astonished and shocked her.

For could Estelle ever become jealous of the petted, indulged Alexina?

No, it was impossible; and resolutely stifling an odd feeling that was mingled anxiety, regret, and wistfulness, but where envy had no part, she answered—

“Alexina has that best charm—that happy inheritance of perfect content and sweetness.”

Estelle forgot that there were times when this charm was missing altogether from her sister’s character. For example, when little fears of being compelled to go in the

omnibus somewhat marred the loveliness of her face.

Yet neither of her companions had dismissed that occurrence from remembrance, and Miss Charteris and Cecil doubted the perfect content that would ensue on being obliged to give up, instead of attaining her particular wishes.

And in silence Estelle walks beside Cecil, an uneasiness she was unable to define hovering gravely in her thoughts, but with her mind opening to the innumerable graces of the lovely, sunny day. They step into the lavish gold of cowslips, still so lightly laid on the deep emerald velvet of the grass. They move where a thousand exquisite tremulous shadows move, cast by delicate details of stone-work yet standing, of tracery still distinct, of wild flowers bending to the bidding of mournfully sweet breezes across the path, or peeping from some yawning fissure or rough opening of the crumbling remains of Hurst Castle. Now a wavering and most intricate dance of an involved multitude of tree-stems and little leaflets, takes place on Estelle's white dress, and covers it with a wonderful, shadowy pattern, such as no

designer's hand could imitate. Again a strong, soft flood of sunshine bathes the slight figure in a golden tide. Now quaint reflections of jutting ledges, enlarged or contracted into separate grotesque forms, flit across the wide, grassy surface on which she treads, or a sudden wind flutters the ends of the Roman scarf, and insists on reversing its brilliant stripes, as if to show how pretty it is inside out. And again a trail of twisted ivy catches her with a gentle, persistent clasp, from some ruined stairway still solid in its green shelter, in the unbroken, suggestive stillness. Nature had written poetry on every minute twig and leaf and trick of lovely shade and shine.

“Without rhymes,” thought Cecil, with a sigh over several inadequate attempts to explain the fancy and meditation similar views had stirred him to commence. Nature he felt to be the better poet.

The young man was touched profoundly by this smiling noon of April, that seemed to have come as a happy herald of rapturous summer, and in Estelle's silence he found a more sincere sympathy than if she had extolled the singular thrill and fascination the

prospect displayed. And Miss Charteris liked the quiet stroll, without any demand on her attention. She also lost herself in a dreamy enjoyment of the hour, fortunately undisturbed by exuberant eulogium or platitudes from Estelle and Cecil.

“What an exquisite day!” Cecil said at length, and smiled at his own commonplace tribute to the surrounding scenery. “Somehow this hushed and hoary ruin, set in so vast a margin of far-off hills, and lying beneath such a pure blue and golden canopy, checks rather than expands the ability to praise.”

“Yes,” replied Estelle; “and I, who have not travelled, feel it in exactly the same way. The human heart is a cup too small to contain the entire perfection one sees, so it overflows; because no mind can grasp the whole of the numberless miniature beauties that form the separate touches. So, as imitation is out of one’s reach, as one cannot gather by pen or pencil all that one feels, as words or colours fail of description of anything so romantic and imposing, a sort of solace, of soothing to all one’s frets against fate, comes as a reward for that baffled sense

of ambition that all such peace and grandeur arouses."

"Are you ambitious, Miss Hofer?" Cecil inquired, in a tone of surprise.

"I cannot tell," she said, somewhat ashamed of her enthusiasm, and mortified that he had already forgotten her wish of becoming an artist. But, then, it was unjust to assume that he had overheard all her conversation with Miss Charteris. Perhaps he did not attach importance to her hopes of fame—perhaps they were absurd in his sight.

"I think you are ambitious," said Miss Charteris. "I can hear ambition in your voice, and see it in your eyes. My dear, you cannot deceive me. I have made physiognomy one of my favourite pursuits. Don't look abashed, Estelle. May I call you Estelle? Yes. Well, so that it is a noble ambition, why should one be afraid?"

"It is strange," said Cecil, who, of course, knew nothing of Gerard's observations in the omnibus; "that, considering the remarkable talents which distinguish Jews among all other nations, they are not more eager and ambitious. They are so clever in music, and still they forego many of the other arts."

“I think we have genius without perseverance,” said Estelle. “We *used* to excel in science, and astronomy was a particular outlet for veneration—researches full of reverence and piety.”

“And toned with a little superstition?”

“I think we *are* superstitious; but, then, superstition is but the shadow of religion. And all our legends are so mystic and majestic. It is not the same as that vulgar superstition that reads silly tokens, and finds commonplace ghosts in everything.”

“Are ghosts commonplace?” said Cecil, amused and interested by her readiness to vindicate each approach to a criticism that might not be wholly partial. In her anxiety to show cause for her race’s superiority, she became animated, ardent, positive, and paradoxical, at the same time.

It was a kind of jealousy for her nation that was the very essence of a womanly solicitude that at last justice should be rendered to its wrongs. It was an instinct of defence, of gentle and courageous guardianship, of a firm and pathetic protection for all its failures, that Cecil was not slow to read. It was evident that Estelle would deeply take

to heart any phrase falling short of praise of her ancestors or their deeds—that neglected to elevate Jews either in the past or present, or that might hinder their attainment of the highest summit of public opinion. Her solemnity and literal interpretation of his speech and Gerard's, and the nervous yet resolute manner in which she immediately took up arms and prepared for combat—if combat were intended,—seemed very original and single-minded and tender to the young man and the elderly lady. Cecil chose to tease Estelle, to watch the half apprehensive, partly inspired, gaze of the large, fawnlike eyes. It was novel and pleasant to listen to her pleading tone, and to find, from her warm love and patriotism, how, faithfully guarded and graced by a girl's steadfast adherence, this ancient belief that had been his latest interest existed in its young scion.

“I mean that although many ghost stories are dreadfully horrid and peculiar, our superstitions have a direct and definite glow of grandeur, possibility, and awe, that you rarely meet with. Oh, Mr. Haye, do not smile! It is so, really; for, although I have read few novels, the Russian, French, Ger-

man, and English superstitions are quite familiar to me. But our legends are above all others."

"Tell me one," urged Cecil; "it will be something new to listen to a Hebrew tradition here, in this English spot."

"I cannot relate well," said Estelle, passing her trembling hand over her face. "But I can *see* the synagogue of Prague, years and years ago, before tolerance had so smoothed away tyranny, and when numbers of our people were settled in that city; and when Rabbi Joseph, pious, learned, aged, exercised by his wise and absolute rule a sway and a dominion over his congregation, such as we read of in the Book of Judges. It is the Day of Atonement—its noon-time,—and like a ship cleaving the waters, this venerable, white-haired figure, with long beard waving, and *talith* streaming behind him,—with prophetic eyes, brightened by holiness, if sunken by fasting and age,—sails in dignity and majesty through the thronged worshippers with the scrolls of the law held on high in his hands. He prays for his people, he calls on the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to maintain their cause, to

gather their scattered remnant, to make Israel once more honoured and great.

“And as the patriarch implores Divine mercy, tears fall down the cheeks of the suppliants who listen; and as they sit, clad in the garments they shall wear at their burial, motionless, engrossed, the synagogue seems to become more and more full. It is as if the spirits of those dead patriarchs, for the souls of whom this other patriarch has prayed, advance and enter the closely filled synagogue, and by their presence still the sounds of the old man’s tremulous supplication to a breathless hush and awe. The heat becomes stifling, the silent terror of the congregation grows, as Rabbi Joseph’s trembling accents commence the confessional—

“‘Our Father, our King, we have sinned before Thee!’

“And then, in the name of our ancestors, he bids those fearful guests depart—for he sees that his fervent words have summoned the souls of the dead. They glide away as they have entered—that dread, dimly seen band,—and once again, comforted, hopeful, the worshippers resume their prayers.

“Hate and tyranny no longer lie in wait,

for the sharp distress of God's chosen people. The sons of Israel have been graciously aided to win justice and mercy from other nations. But many a pious memory in Prague yet enshrines that unequalled scene of the misty, vanishing forms of the dead, with their mantles shining in a silvery line."

Estelle paused, and the excited colour left her cheek. The manner of her recital impressed Cecil with a conviction that the words she had spoken must have some basis in truth, and he felt indeed that the legend was too definitely pointed by her race's experience of cruelty and oppression to be, as she would have said, "a *common* ghost story."

"You have a great taste for the supernatural, I perceive," he said. "You told us your tale in such a *creepy*, awe-stricken way, I confess you made me shudder."

"No, did I?" she answered, with a furtive glance at his handsome face. "But I believe it utterly—thoroughly; so, I am sure, do several of our people."

"Our people!" repeated Cecil. "How plaintively that phrase rings! It is as touching an expression as that 'ain folk' of the Scotch. So you are superstitious, Miss

Hofer? Every one would not own to the feeling."

"But all the same," she said, with quaint obstinacy, "I believe superstition is shared by all the world. How else does it happen that every country has its particular traditions, which frequently become amalgamated or merged in those of others?"

"Miss Hofer, *may* I ask? What are *your* pet superstitions?"

"Dreams," said Estelle, after a short silence. "To a slow nature, dreams I do believe to be sent and meant as a sort of guide—often, often," she went on with timid rapidity and emphasis. "And then there is a sort of instinct one feels in the day, *almost* the same as a visible touch from heaven, to lead those who are dull of judgment and ability."

"Are you speaking of yourself, my dear?" asked Miss Charteris. "Surely you are mocking Cecil, and punishing his question by a jest."

"No, indeed—indeed I am not," Estelle said earnestly, for to her simplicity this came as a heavy reproach. "It is like a railway, Miss Charteris; and I am a slow train that

nothing could make express, and so I have a few danger-signals granted to me to help me on my road. For instance—I know that this is going away from Mr. Haye's question concerning superstition, and, instead, bringing forward individual fancies—but I do have very singular dreams, of music, and flowers, and painting, before trouble. Most particularly of flowers. I always dream before any sorrow that Alexina and I are together, seeking to pull the most lovely roses, and trying to gather handfuls of great blossoms, such as one never sees in actual life. But we never succeed—when we are almost certain of holding them they elude our grasp; and I know, I am sure, Mr. Haye, that when we are very near those dream-roses we approach grief in a greater or less degree.”

“What an extraordinary idea!” Cecil exclaimed, with some uneasiness. “What a painful interpretation of a pretty dream!”

“But it is a dream of fatigue and peril,” said Estelle, gravely; “and remember, the roses escape our hands.”

“You have an overwrought fancy, Estelle,” said Miss Charteris, kindly. “Of course, if you make this dream a test of disappointment

and sorrow, your dread will hasten its recurrence, and point its signification. And also, my dear, let me tell you, that it may have a quite different meaning from that which you infer. Why should you let it be the prophecy of evil?"

"Because on every occasion it heralds evil," persisted Estelle.

"Well, then, Miss Hofer," said Cecil, gaily, "what terrible calamity will take place when—or if you or your sister ever gather these roses; not while you *may*, but when you *must*?"

"Either Lexie or I will die, I suppose," said Estelle; and her answer bore so strongly the stamp of genuine sincerity, few as the words were, spoken in the tranquil sweetness of the quiet landscape, they sounded more like a well-ascertained fact than a fanciful foreboding.

"Nonsense, my love," said Miss Charteris, rousing herself from a short reverie. "I will not have you believe in such things. Why, child, I vow you make me wonder who trained you, and how you manage to be as clever as you are, with a mind fed on poetic visions, and nourished by overdrawn humility and

restless aspiration. What does your mother say to all this? Well, I do not mean to scold you,"—as tears rose quickly to the young girl's eyes; not, however, at blame from Miss Charteris, but because the thought of having hidden her real disposition from her parents frequently puzzled her by its apparent deceit. "Here, let us leave discussion and just enjoy this view, without troubling ourselves for keys to the problems God only solves."

As Miss Charteris finished, she stroked Estelle's arm, and that encouraging, caressing pressure conveyed new cheerfulness to her mind, and atoned for a sentence that hinted of impatience. They had arrived at the ruined chapel, where the great silence surrounding the mossy solitude was strangely interrupted by a sort of vibrating, monotonous, unutterably melancholy sound that adapted its music to the lonely place.

Estelle involuntarily drew closer to her companions, and looked at Cecil, as if not venturing to inquire the reason of this whirring, sweet echo, that might have been a recapitulation of the buried Normans' exploits, or a wordless, weird history always continuing, in the unbroken serenity of space, and being

related to an audience of ancient, moss-grown trees and waving ferns, and riven, yawning openings in the uneven ground.

Cecil was amused and flattered by that unconscious act of Estelle's. It pleased him to see her ready to abide by his decision; and although he wished to torment her by fresh fancies, rather than to allay the unspoken fears of her mutely questioning countenance, he forbore the exercise of a faculty for teasing in which he took some pride, and half laughing at her submission to his opinion, half fascinated by it, he said—

“Do not look so terrified, Miss Hofer. Nothing here deserves such a mystified expression. Yes, I hear that sound, and so does aunt Mildred; but it is perfectly natural, and can be accounted for by the simplest reason, that a saw-mill is not far from Hurst Castle.”

“A saw-mill!” said Estelle. Her face fell, so that Cecil and Miss Charteris could not control their laughter.

“It is such a pretty echo, to come from a saw-mill,” said Estelle, in explanation for her regret that it was not a contribution of the sighs or struggles of some nearly forgotten Sir Ralph, or Sir Richard de Vere.

“You are too self-distrustful,” said Cecil, in remorse; “far too gentle, really, Miss Hofer. We should apologise for our laughter, but you see we were unable to help it. We could not truthfully affirm that anything more romantic was its source.”

“It is very soft and strange,” she answered thoughtfully; “and all this quiet loveliness is so thoroughly enhanced by that melancholy, musical, long-sustained droning noise. Can it be a saw-mill, after all? How odd that the strong practical need and use of a saw-mill should give the finishing touch to this picture, and perfect, instead of destroy, this complete harmony and tranquillity! It is like the addition of that eloquence we missed; the utterance of that poem we all found ourselves incapable of writing.”

“Yes, indeed,” said Miss Charteris. “I understand you, my dear, and quite agree with you;” and they proceeded to the broad, low flight of stone stairs, imbedded in a wild, tangled growth of vegetation. This led to a long, prim, terraced walk, at the end of which the sunny, cheerful kitchen garden extended, in contrast to the grey solemnity of the tottering walls of Hurst. Beyond the terrace

the far-off, sparkling sea spread—a smiling expanse of dancing waves, and wonders of light and joy.

“Here I must rest,” said Miss Charteris, sitting down on a garden bench on the terrace. “Go on, my dear, go to the end of the view with my nephew Cecil, and have a peep at the sea. Nonsense!—I will not have you stay by me. Why, you are not going out of sight;” for Estelle urged to remain. “Why, I do believe we have seen nearly as much as my nieces and their party. Perhaps we may all meet here, for there is nothing especial to claim attention, I presume, after the terrace.”

Cecil and Estelle therefore prolonged their walk, but without conversation. Soon the limits of the terrace were reached, and before them stretched the imposing glory of the sea, while the hazy irregularity of the banqueting hall of Hurst was yet discernible in the wooded distance they had left. Which was nearer—the tantalizing, far-away sea, or that beautiful, broken outline—irregular, charming, and appearing as if drawn with the most delicate grace of design against the pure sky?

“The sea looks quite close, does it not?”

Estelle said. She was leaning against the ancient sun-dial, her slim fingers laced together; and as he had done already many times that day, her companion felt in fullest force the subtle combination of that picturesque figure, with its distinct oriental traits, standing among the remains of the lofty, cool, grey castle. He was not an artist, but he was sensible of the artistic interest Estelle's appearance lent to the terraced walk, because it was a touch of a unique, not of an out-of-place singularity that was impressed on the old-world aspect of the castle falling to ruins, in the transparent atmosphere, by this foreign girl.

Cecil was not exactly a poet, but he wished to be, and "The White Doe of Rylstone" came to his memory, while Estelle stood by the sun-dial, with a fantastic appositeness.

"What harmonious, pensive changes,
Wait upon her as she ranges!"

he murmured, and noticed the curious completeness and yet contradiction of her characteristic appearance by the sun-dial.

Voices in the distance roused Cecil from his dream. Gertrude, Gerard, and Lexie came

forward, reaching the terrace by another path. The sort of desolate grace surrounding the scenery gained in beauty by the figure, so foreign, and yet so thoroughly in keeping with the grey and grassy terrace, of Estelle leaning on the sun-dial with clasped hands and rapt gaze.

Gertrude and Helen, who would willingly have denied any praise to her or Lexie in their newly awakened anxiety for their brother, were compelled to own that special charm; for even if Estelle were not charming herself, her appearance bestowed originality, and brought a novel character to the view.

“Is it not lovely, heavenly, here?” Alexina exclaimed. “Oh, who believes in trouble, trial, or nonsense like that? I always have been happy, and intend to be. If it were otherwise, I could not, nor would I live.”

“You appear designed for joy alone,” said Gerard.

“And I hope the ‘nonsense,’ as you feelingly describe it, of trial, or care, may indeed be far from you. May you rejoice for an unlimited period in the legitimate sense of carelessness and gaiety!” said Cecil.

“Thanks,” said Lexie, glancing from

beneath her beautiful long lashes at both speakers. "You are laughing at me, I can see, but people *are* better for having their own way. How much happier am I than if it were my fate to battle against circumstance!"

"People who are not in the habit of giving up their way grow very selfish," said Gertrude sententiously: "and how ill-prepared for the needful afflictions of life must be the mind that has grown in self-indulgence!"

"So it must," Lexie cordially assented. "It must be dreadful for that spoiled nature that forbore the questionable habit of looking out for its sorrows in advance. Still, I cannot see the wisdom of shading off present joy by touches of foreboding. '*C'est aujourd'hui!*' and it is for joy."

Cecil smiled on the radiant girl, and during the rest of the day amused himself by alternately teasing and flattering her. Estelle looked on silently, and wondered what had added to her sister's brilliancy, and what particular happy thoughts had deepened the rose tints of her fair cheek, and given sweeter music to her ringing voice.

Again that unaccountable sadness clouded

her ; and she asked herself how it came to pass that Cecil first sought her companionship, and then that of Lexie.

For Estelle was very ignorant of the world ; but for each of its newly learnt lessons an especial sting of pain came to mark its application to her experience. She always would study in difficulty, she reflected. It was a whimsical arrangement to which childhood should have accustomed her. And now, in difficulty, in pain, she was struggling to find a solution of Cecil's variable conduct.

Cecil thought Lexie the most charming of children ; and just to prove whether any individuality lay beneath that calm exterior, and to assert his power of judging for himself in all matters, he contrived to increase Alexina's favourable estimate of her own attractions, for the gratification of perceiving whether Estelle really cared about their effect on him.

The lovely day traversed its way to twilight by many a beautiful change, of deepening shadows, of shine, of bird-songs hushed off to weary twitter, of glitter of sunlight softened by the grey mantle of evening.

Estelle returned as she came, in spite of

Cecil's endeavours to change the mode of conveyance; and it was Lexie who, lying back in the open carriage, watched the clear starlight, and dreamt her little dreams of happiness undisturbed. She watched the solemn, wide-spread sky, where every star was on duty, and the little silver crescent of the moon presided over the whole starry assembly—so full of peace, so fraught with delicacy, so radiant with beauty, that it seemed as if earth were but a part of heaven. By peeps alone Estelle observed the same splendid scene, but great content had crept into her mind. Cecil was opposite, and Cecil's aunt had promised to help her in her study of art. How that promise was to be fulfilled Estelle forbore to ask herself; but she trusted the mild countenance of Miss Charteris, and surely, when she knew her parents, some path might be found by which her aim would be attained.

Alexina looked at the stars, and thought of Philip. Estelle tried to read in their tranquil light some whisper of her future fame. Now and then Cecil bent forward to make some remark, roused by the lovely landscape, and now and then she ventured

on the utterance of a few words of praise. And when the long drive was over, and she entered the dim and ancient Ivy House, she could hardly tell whether the foregone hours had contained more of pain or most of joy.

CHAPTER VII.

PHILIP FLORIAN.

"HE has come home!" Ruth exclaimed, dashing into the hall, closely followed by Gabriel. "He has brought Estelle violet velvet slippers, done in and out with gold thread, like angels. They will not fit her, for Gabriel and I can put both our feet in; but he says it is the custom of the country that they do not fit. That country, that Morocco country, would not suit you, Miss Lexie. What a temper you have when things do not fit you here, where it is not the custom for them to *unfit*! What would you do there?"

"Go away, monkey, Where is Philip?" Lexie asked, turning her head away.

"Why, in there," said Gabriel; and he pointed to the dark dining-room, where,

against the high-carved head of Phœbus Apollo, another tall and very handsome human head leant. Philip resembled an Arabian, being tall, thin, and dark, with melancholy, sweet brown eyes, and a bronzed and sunburnt countenance. That thin and lithe form seemed clothed by mistake in European garments that hung loosely on slender, agile limbs. That thoughtful, serious countenance, with its occasional smile, seemed strangely set amongst English accessories. But Philip, notwithstanding his varied travels, disdained any foreign conceits of attire, and delighted in the appearance and manners of an English gentleman.

As his cousins advanced, his features lighted up with joy. To Estelle he spoke first, but although to her his greeting was affectionate, it was on Alexina that his gaze was bent.

As for Lexie herself, her eyes were down-cast, her face composed to an unnatural gravity. Only an exquisite colour appeared to tremble on her cheek, and a very close observer might have detected a little smile of intense happiness that she tried to hide by hanging her head.

“ Well, Philip,” she said joyfully, and her quivering voice betrayed her thorough content. “ So you are here ? ”

“ Yes, Lexie ; ” and with perfect composure he stooped and kissed her.

Some lines from Browning’s noble poem of “ Saul ” came to Estelle’s remembrance as she saw the little scene, and she repeated, half aloud—

“ Said Abner, At last thou art come ! Ere I tell, ere thou speak,
 Kiss my cheek, wish me well !—Then I wish’d it,
 and did kiss his cheek—
 (Yet now my heart leaps, O beloved ! God’s child
 with His dew
 On thy gracious gold hair, and those lilies still
 living and blue,
 Just broken to twine round thy harpstrings, as if
 no wild heat
 Were now raging to torture the desert !) ”

“ Is it me whom you mean ? ” Alexina exclaimed, blushing with pleasure. “ What a dear creature you are, Estelle ! Did you write that, in your head, on *me* ? Have I really gracious gold hair ? ”

“ No,” said Ruth, joining in the conversation eagerly. “ You know you have not, Lexie. It is reddish to us. *You* may call it

gold, but Estelle does not, and no one in *our* family would. Only you do like to flatter yourself, don't you, Lexie?"

"Never mind Ruth," said Philip, for Lexie's fair forehead was knit into a frown.

"I wish," she said impatiently, "that you would not kiss me before the children, and that Ruth would be quiet and go to bed."

"But why should I not kiss you?" asked Philip, calmly; "you never objected before."

Alexina again coloured furiously.

"And what has kept you away so long?"

"My partner was ill," said the grave young man, still more solemnly.

"Your partner! Have you been only to one ball? Could you only obtain a single partner to undergo your dancing? And if she were ill, must that delay you? I shall never forget how you tore my first ball-dress."

"I know you will not, Lexie," he said, with a strange regret. "But here, however, you wilfully mistake. I have formally commenced business, and have a partner who does not frequent balls."

"Oh, business!" Lexie repeated scornfully; "that means trade. I did think, Philip, it

would have been a profession. Although you have not been exactly brought up to one, surely you could *get into* it? Oh, if you had been a physician, to cure the terrible ills of humanity, or a clergyman, to pray for their alleviation! You did not care about my opinion, or I would have advised you to study for one or the other aim."

"Both being too high for me," he replied, with a sigh. "Cannot you congratulate me, Lexie?"

"Oh, a hundred times. I do rejoice that you should have gained the summit of your happiness. We look for *fame* here," and she laid her hand caressingly on her brother's sleeve.

A flush rose to Philip's dark face.

"Oh, Lexie, you are telling stories. You called him thoroughly stupid, and what is more, you said he would always be so," interrupted the candid Ruth. "How can you expect him to be famous after that?"

"I never was clever, Alexina, as you well know," Philip replied. "Yet all cannot be artists and authors, as you would wish them."

"Well, but I did not imagine *you* could," said Lexie, pertly.

“Commerce, too, is grand, Lexie. A rich man has a great deal in his power.”

“Oh, Philip, have you only brought me a stale aphorism from your journey?”

“I have brought you slippers besides, Lexie, and this.” He threw a wide and graceful *hâique* over her shoulders. It was made of gold-threaded white muslin, and enveloped her slight form completely. She looked like a pretty bride, peeping shyly from her veil, and her gratification in the gift as usual showed itself in a vivid blush.

“This, too, is yours, Alexina, and these;” and he fastened on her wrists curious carved bracelets of ivory and sandal-wood, and snapped the clasp of a coral necklace round her throat, while in her hand he placed a carved card-case.

Estelle thought of the meeting of Isaac and Rebecca, as Lexie peeped through the folds of the clear veil, and wound it round her head. Mrs. Hofer entered the room, and although she was not accustomed to compare one fact with another, but usually accepted scenes and circumstances without comment, she, too, found her thoughts straying to that far-off time, when the fortunate lover loaded his chosen maiden with jewels.

“Forget what I do not wish remembered,” Lexie whispered rapidly, pushing away her *hâique*. “Thanks, dear Philip, for your pretty things; and if you keep a shop—you *may*—only do not have ‘Florian and Co.’ above the door. You can prosecute your studies behind the counter just the same.”

Philip’s face lighted up with admiration of this dearest cousin, this bright and joyous Lexie, who alternately vexed and pleased him. Such a glance meant love, as well as admiration, and Estelle and Mrs. Hofer read it thus; but Alexina only anxiously remembered that Philip preferred, or seemed to prefer, talking to Estelle, and she was doubtful and uneasy. To conceal these feelings, she assumed a liveliness that was far from natural just then; for she was tired, and the happiness of seeing Philip was counterbalanced by a solicitude of appearing reasonable and intelligent in his sight.

“Philip has gone into business,” Ruth commenced suddenly. “He went *into* it,” she continued, in a meditative tone. “Where is it, Philip dear, and what is it?”

“Ruth speaks as if it were a riddle or charade,” Estelle said. “And so you are really a merchant, Philip?”

“Yes;” and he looked wistfully at Lexie, who leant her elbows on the table, and drummed on its surface with her long fingers. Any one else might have made this an awkward position, but, with preoccupied air and beautiful face, she could but be languid and listless.

“You are tired, Lexie,” said Mrs. Hofer; “you tell me nothing of your day. Did you like it? You commenced it so early, dear; you must have been half-way through it, in anticipation and by early rising, before you set out.”

“Ah, but early as I was, Estelle was up, mamma. She was doing something very particular in her room hours before I was out of my last dream. She will astonish us all hereafter, I do believe,” said Lexie, mischievously, enjoying her sister’s confusion. “She is practising for something, I am sure. Perhaps for the law, as she is so silent about her affairs—and yet so artful that, when I go into her cell in the roof, there is nothing to prove her industry in any direction.”

“I do not understand it, I must confess,” said Mrs. Hofer uneasily. “Estelle is so

reserved and secret that I never know what to expect."

"Not that she should be qualifying herself for a barrister, certainly," said Philip, smiling. "Lexie's little fancies carry her far from the truth. Estelle is not in the habit of making confidences, but she can be trusted not to do anything so terrible as that of becoming a legitimate *advocate* of woman's rights."

"That was almost a joke, Philip!" Lexie exclaimed. "'Very, very near,' as Ruth says when we play hide-and-seek. But Estelle has made a new acquaintance, who is charmed with her. Miss Charteris, mamma, the aunt of Cecil Haye. She is a most delightful old lady—oh, years younger in reality than her nieces, who are quite stiff and cross lately. But Miss Charteris has taken quite a fancy for Estelle. She is coming to see *you*, mamma; not because you are Mrs. Hofer, but on account of your being a relation of Estelle's."

Mrs. Hofer looked pleased.

"I am glad to hear of anything that promises Estelle a little novelty. You, Alexina, easily find it, but somehow Estelle escapes it."

"Estelle, however, finds variety where

Lexie never seeks it," Philip remarked. "In a walk she sees beautiful things, for which I do not even search."

"Oh yes," said Lexie; "like 'eyes and no eyes' in some old stupid goody book by the man who wrote 'Sandford and Merton.' Of course she is a delightful companion."

"Of course," said Philip.

"And so is Mr. Haye, and so is Mr. Holden," Lexie continued. "We were all delightful companions to-day, although we have not travelled—at least, Mr. Holden has. Mamma, fancy! he has been in the East! and in the other east—of London—where the poorer people dwell, where, he says, almost every house is full of Jews. He told me, Estelle, that he said something in the omnibus that vexed you; but it was unintentional, for that in the narrow streets gems of tender household scenes, and picturesque poverty, and deep meaning, relieved the squalor and dirt of the background. Oh, he told me many things concerning Palestine and those places; some of which I had heard, some of which I did not want to hear. But, mamma, when he spoke of the grand and beautiful way wherein our religion had made

itself manifest through the persecution and constant tyranny of other nations, something seemed to come up in my throat and choke me. Something seemed to tell me I had also to witness to the worth of that proved faith by my own deeds, and my heart failed—I felt worthless.”

“You *are* worthless,” said Gabriel. “You do nothing useful, so you have no deeds to relate. That was what made you feel ill, Lexie.”

“Her conscience jumped up in her throat,” explained Ruth; “and you were better when it went back in its place—were you not, Lexie? Mine was like that when I took the jam, and when you and Estelle bought me my birthday book. I thought I did not deserve it. You do not deserve Philip’s gifts, either, Lexie. Estelle does the deeds, as you call them. She teaches us, and mends our things. But you are the nicest very often, when you play tunes and sing.”

“Oh, do sing, Alexina?” Philip asked. “What a long, long time since I heard you!”

But the spirit of defiance and teasing now asserted itself in his little cousin’s disposition.

She would not sing, and gloom settled on

Philip's features. She would not talk, nor would she allow Estelle to speak without ridicule; and when Alexina chose, few excelled her in the art of daunting or vexing others.

Philip sat in utter silence after a while, revolving the disappointment of finding her so fickle and mocking. For she derided his opening essay in business; she laughed at his struggles, she checked the plans that had brought him joy in the devising. She did not care about his return, nor would she grieve that Manchester would henceforth be his home.

Poor, anxious, heavily laden mind, restless and thoughtful in the night hours! The material comforts of the world, things one could wear or could see, rather than readable or artistic joys, were the worthiest boons and pleasures in his opinion. Wealth was certainly worth striving for. So, too, Alexina thought; but with her, money was subordinate to its joyful uses, while with Philip it was something to be put above use. To save, and not to spend; to respect so deeply that much thought (too much, according to Lexie) should be devoted to its safe keeping as well as to its expenditure.

When the house was shut, when a deep hush had filled the ancient rooms, so gay and cheerful with young voices and ringing laughter in the day time, Philip lay wakeful.

“She does not mind,” he thought. “No doubt she rests quietly, never caring for the misery she causes. Charming, naughty little Lexie! How can my uncle permit his daughters to mix with these strangers!—for Estelle has the power of concealing feelings that are more enthusiastic than her friends guess. It is very incautious to allow them to see so much of people who can never actually be anything to them beyond acquaintance. Already Alexina thinks too highly of Mr. Hays; she sang when he was here last week, and yet now she would not sing for me.”

Philip was a little unjust, for Lexie was really fatigued. But it amused her to make him believe that she was unwilling as well, and she was by no means one to relinquish anything that promised her mirth.

And so, thinking sadly of his disappointment, Philip pondered and tried to arrange placable and soft decrees of fate, until the delicate dawn stole into the room, and gave grace and dignity to the commonplace details

of full day. Then he rose, and with the morning twilight a prayer ascended to heaven, such as he had always been accustomed to offer at this early time. He had a simple, earnest disposition—not greatly bent on progress or improvement, but one satisfied to accept daily life as it came. He was not clever, but he loved music, and one of his chief pleasures consisted in playing the violin—that exquisite and penetrating instrument, that utters a twofold echo of pain and sweetness. Philip was satisfied with playing moderately well; he had not the faintest desire of excelling, nor did he covet the proficiency Alexina would insist upon.

Sometimes he had forgotten the wide difference of character between himself and Lexie—not so much in point of tastes, but in their strength. He had talked to her, and there were times when he had been certain that she suspected and rejoiced in his attachment to herself. When Lexie chilled him by that determined mocking by which she so frequently misled people into the error that she was entirely heedless and careless, Estelle tried to prove the latent excellence that always prevented the continuance of jests

all understood to be painful. Estelle was no apologist—that mournful and terrible quality of being general pleader, which entails more mischief than can be reckoned on, was not hers. She was often silent when he recounted instances of Lexie's wilfulness; but when he had come to the end of the beloved little cousin's whims, and felt rather annoyed with himself, and remorseful for his tale-telling, Estelle would then remind him of events wherein she had distinguished herself and taken others by surprise.

Philip was the only child of Dr. Hofer's sister, and from his earliest youth he had been an orphan. He loved, and rested, in domestic life; he liked calm, peaceful days, and had no objection to do exactly as others—his forefathers—had done, just because it was their example, and not his own plan, that he must follow. In the minutest matters he carried out every portion of the laws and ceremonies of his ancestors; for he could do no better, he told himself. He was not impelled, as Lexie was, by emotional admiration or awe; neither did he feel as Estelle, consistently, yet timidly, that by individuals the mighty edifice of faith must

be supported and upheld, and that it devolves on each member of a community to sustain it by his own strength. Philip Florian neither wondered nor reasoned about such matters, but took his religion just with the same acquiescence that he had accepted the fact that he did not, and never would, shine. He could not originate and alter; he could not better what was already done. It worried and puzzled him when Estelle and Lexie spoke with youthful enthusiasm of reforms, and praised the next minute the stern and rigid beauties of their belief. He grew angry to hear strangers discuss the differences of Jewish doctrine, and he felt a certain proud dislike when the singularities of his race were commented on. It was a good thing, he considered, that few Jews were authors, and none were novelists. They would be sure of offending their co-religionists; and if those of other nations wanted to hear of customs and habits and peculiarities, they should remain in ignorance, as far as he was concerned.

“Why can they not leave us alone?” he said, when Estelle showed him a thoughtful and appreciative article written on modern

Judaism, in one of the best papers. "We do not desire praise; and now oppression is declining, we have all we want."

"Oh — but, Philip, that is so negative, and such a forlorn way of meting out the barest justice. I long for Jews to be respected and admired, as if distinction of creed no longer existed—as if their own acts had broken down barriers, and placed them on the same level with all good and intelligent men."

"That is a very dangerous idea, Estelle. When we break down barriers we never know what safeguards we remove, or what evils we allow to enter."

"You are so cautious," Lexie chimed in. "We are not talking of children, who have high guards and broad nursery fenders to prevent their playing with fire, but of grown people, who know how much heat they can bear. I do condemn that stupid shrinking from inquiry. We are very interesting to everybody; it is a sort of reaction after being hated without reason. *Now* the world wishes to see the scattered remnants of a holy people who have endured so long and bravely; and I tell you, Philip, I will not

remain a child—to stand in my corner where I was sent by public opinion ; but on the first opportunity I shall come out and vindicate myself—*ourselves*—and repeat that I have suffered from an unjust punishment.”

“ Very well, Lexie. For my own part I am satisfied to know that we have, and to the end of time *must* suffer, through the errors of the ignorant. But ”—and he threw back his head with a proud gesture—“ I am able to suffer anything but inquisitive speeches and condescending comments.”

So the three differed, and in the fresh morning a painful sense of disparity seemed to forbid Philip to entertain hopes that Alexina might be won.

But he was wrong in thinking he was the only sleepless one that dawn. A restless golden head tossed on its pillow, and in the quiet night Alexina upbraided herself with far more severity than was ever shown towards her for obstinacy and caprice. Tears wetted the thick tangles of her abundant hair, that had loosened from its little silk net with her tossing.

“ Dear Philip ! ” she mused ; “ how kind, how patient he is !—how meek and unpre-

tending—and manly as well as tender-hearted! He saved me when the fire broke out in our house; and then, when I wept for it, he went back through the blinding smoke and saved my canary. Oh, poor Charlie! you were better worth saving. And now I have vexed you, Philip, you will get to love Estelle the best—I know it, I feel it—and then what will be left for me? Philip,” she continued, in her eager vindication of all his good qualities, “is never out of temper; he cannot resent, he hardly seems to feel an injury. What if he *is* not especially talented? I am not, either—except, perhaps, with my voice, and that I will not use when I feel cross. What can it be that makes me choose subjects to vex him, when I know perfectly well he considers it odd that I should speak of Mr. Haye as *Cecil*?—and in spite of this, as if it were not enough, I feel sure I shall mention Mr. Holden as *Gerard* to-morrow. There must be something radically wicked in my constitution.”

Here Alexina took up a long tress of her hair, and thoughtfully watched the light through its soft waves. The dawn stole in and edged the golden curl with a tender halo,

and sent a sort of serene charm to the little figure, with its dark blue eyes open in thoughtful wakefulness.

“I never should wonder,” she thought, “nor should I feel even a passing pang of surprise, if Estelle were to develop into the cleverest Hofer all at once. I am often convinced that Philip holds that opinion now. I suppose some people might think me vain, or even jealous, but I cannot deny that I always regarded myself as the prettiest and the wittiest, ever since old Esther told mamma I was the flower of the flock. Poor mamma! she has so little taste. She considers that tiresome little Ruth of hers the flower, I know; and I do try to prove her mistake. I wonder what Esty does so early? Oh, I will see; it will just prevent me from dwelling too much on my faults.”

CHAPTER VIII.

ESTELLE'S SECRET.

WITH this resolution and a deep sigh, Lexie drew on the large oriental violet slippers, heavy with gold embroidery.

"I wish you werè blue," she said, kicking one off with energetic dissatisfaction. "Stelle's are of violet velvet, and Philip need not so decidedly mark our equality when we are utterly different."

A small mouse crept from its hole—a mouse well known to Alexina, and petted by her.

"Five o'clock," she said, as the cathedral clock struck. "I never knew mice were such early risers. Come and see my slippers, then. Talk of the busy bee! Why, you and I—and perhaps Estelle—are examples to bees and ants, and such things!

‘How doth the little, busy mouse, arise each morning
hour,
And wander through the sleepy house, for bread of
wheaten flour!
How skilfully she finds her way, how fast she makes
her bites,
And eats enough to last her day (not taking in her
nights)!
In works of labour, or of theft, I would be busy too,’
(I am sure, though, I would not. I hate work),
‘And haste to finish up all left, or hid in Lexie’s
shoe.’

Considering the extreme youth of the day, that is not bad,” she said; and folding a shawl round her head, and putting on her dressing-gown, she cautiously ascended the top stairs, and stood at Estelle’s door.

“Mont Blanc,” she said. “Oh, Miss Hofer, how can you choose a garret? Were I eldest I would have the best room. However, now the summit is gained, make ready, my little mysterious, for an early visitor.”

Lexie stooped her bright head, and painfully tried to obtain a vision of Estelle through the keyhole. She was an easy moralist, and held that among relatives the qualities of honour and reticence were super-

fluous. She could dimly discern Estelle standing, but her occupation was hidden from Lexie's inquisitive and draughty stare. She shook the door-handle softly. The temptation to startle her studious and secretive sister by a gruff cry of imitation, designed for alarm, was resisted. On the whole, Alexina judged it best to be plaintive, and she said, in an utterly wretched tone, "Estelle, do not be frightened; it is I, dear. Unlock your door, and let me in, please."

Such a miserable whisper might startle Estelle, but it appealed to her feelings. The door was speedily opened, and Alexina demurely entered.

"I could not sleep, Esty," she explained, gazing curiously round the attic, with its bare walls. "I have been awake for hours. It struck four when I woke, and now it is already five. How late everybody is this morning! That is the worst of needless early rising: you get so inclined to judge others severely for lying still. I think I will wake Ruth, and make her believe she is going out to spend the day."

"Do not be so absurd, Lexie," Estelle answered. "I think I can guess what cause

made you wakeful. You regretted your behaviour to Philip."

"I!" repeated Alexina, growing crimson, and speaking with an immense assumption of innocence, for it was her chief wish to keep Estelle in ignorance of her feeling for her cousin. "Indeed I do not. Why should I? Philip is nothing particular to me, and his ideas need not regulate my behaviour."

"Lexie, Lexie," Estelle continued, with great earnestness, "do, dear, be warned in time. I know you better than you know yourself, and understand more truly than you will own, that Philip and his judgment *are* of consequence to you. Do not speak of Mr. Haye by his first name; it is such bad taste. And do sing when Philip wishes. Why, Lexie, if I had such a charming voice, how proud, how grateful I would be, to please others by its music!"

Estelle, who was rarely demonstrative, took her sister's hands, and kissed her fair, open forehead.

"Now," said Alexina, "you keep saying do, and do, and I reply with do not. Do not be a tragic puss, Estelle, and worry me with your lectures. Do not remind me of my

duties to Philip; they only exist in your imagination. Do not annoy me by forbidding me to say Cecil Haye, for it is a pretty name, and I shall take good care that papa does not hear me—and it is most likely I shall say Gerard Holden, when papa and mamma are not in the room. As to appointing Philip for my standard—oh, you do mistake! I think much more of Cecil, who has had an Oxford education, and mixed in society, and who writes verses, and who admires me!”

She arrived at this climax triumphantly, and throwing off the grey shawl from her sunny curls, danced about the room in the velvet slippers that were out of all proportion to her small feet.

“Esty shall never guess that I like Philip,” was the resolution of her stubborn heart, in spite of its ache. “She may believe I am cruel, and callous, and everything; but she shall not believe *that*, until I know myself whether he really prefers me to her.”

Estelle had turned away. Her face was very pale, but it was as if she read a familiar tale, and had known long, long before, that Cecil would admire Lexie—that Lexie would love Cecil. It was with acute pain that she

listened to the wild speech, for in her entire ignorance of the truth, Estelle felt certain that, in some unforeseen way, fate would tangle her sister's future, and then what would happen to the little, scoffing, light-hearted Lexie? For herself, what did it matter? A sentiment of self-contempt filled her, as she thought of the importance she had attached to Cecil's manners to herself. Yesterday—could it actually only have happened yesterday? It was years and years since. To her ideas it now belonged to the dreamy past—to a long-ago period, when she had been so foolish, so conceited, as to deceive herself.

Puzzled as Estelle was, she was not unmindful of the indulged girl, whose speech had brought her such a revelation.

“You will catch cold, Lexie. Put on that shawl, please. You do not wish to be ill for the holydays, and to lose your voice with getting a cough? I am so sorry you think about Mr. Haye, because what will papa say? You know his opinion of great intimacy with friends out of our faith.”

“Estelle, how you do jump at a conclusion! Nobody is thinking of telling papa. What

nonsense! Only be assured, once for all, I do like to talk to Mr. Haye (I mean Cecil), and he likes talking to me. And now, as I have given you my valuable confidence, return the boon, and favour me with yours. Tell me, Estelle, how is it that you get up at this unusual hour? What is it you study? I promise not to break faith, and repeat it to a single soul. Why, Estelle, your own, your only sister deserves your trust."

Alexina fixed her violet eyes on Estelle's countenance with a most beseeching expression, as if to wring an answer, and all the time her mind was busily occupied with the hope of perceiving some indication of the nature of Estelle's industry, without showing too decided a wish for its gratification. Suddenly she caught a glimpse of something that at once riveted her attention.

"I burn, Estelle," she laughed, and rushed to a corner of the attic where a pile of papers had fallen. Quickly Alexina lifted and looked at them.

"Gabriel," she murmured, after a pause full of anxiety to the young artist. "Just his monkeyish smile and impertinent curls; and Ruth's saucy, considering stare, and pome-

granate mouth. And Grünaugen, the cat, sniffing at the lilies in the wilderness; and, oh, dearest Estelle, myself at Hurst, leaning by the old grey moss-grown terrace! Did you really make these admirable drawings and never mention them, and let us believe that you do not possess any talent? Of what were you afraid, that you kept silence so long? Oh, Estelle, papa will be prouder of you than of me, who wished to be the Crichton of the Hofers, and to excel in all. And to know that no one taught you; that such a gift has received such slight help, and that you shrank from asking any one for assistance in your pursuit! Deceitful, darling Estelle!”

Alexina regarded her with such awe and respect, that Estelle felt amused by traits so foreign to her character, and laughed. The secret was surprised, and what was more natural than that Lexie should have discovered it? At first she was vexed, and alarmed, and annoyed, lest Lexie might fail in discretion, and repeat the marvellous tale of her studies without permission.

But in her sister's rapt attitude there was a guarantee of faith and honour that Estelle rightly interpreted.

“Lexie,” said Estelle, while her voice was low with agitation, “you have found out for what I rise before others are stirring. But it was not open of you, not in the least frank, to reach the object of your curiosity in this circuitous way.”

“It *was* a circuitous way,” she admitted, “and you are far from frank yourself. Climbing up to a garret is a circuitous route; and oh, Estelle, how bare it is! Where are your pictures?”

“Mamma thought their designs might provoke disagreeable and personal discussions, so I had to take them down. It has spoiled all the charm of the attic.”

“Oh, it is a most charming place without them!” Lexie exclaimed, scornfully. “What a studio for an artist such as you intend to be, and are on the road to become!”

“Lexie,” said her sister with a grateful smile, “do you really mean that, or are you jesting?”

“I am in sober earnest. Oh, Estelle, let me speak; let me have the pleasure of informing mamma and papa what a little genius dwells in their roof. Let us go and tell everybody, and then it will make them so delighted; and

this attic may be shown now and hereafter as the studio of *the* famous Hofer."

"You are so ridiculous, Lexie. I never positively know whether you are in fun, or whether you really mean what you say. It would certainly have a very dramatic and startling effect if you were to awake the household and repeat such wonderful nonsense." Estelle spoke rather impatiently; for the impossibility of getting her sister to be serious was a chill and vexation, so suddenly after her first glowing words.

"Estelle," resumed Lexie, contemplating the drawing of Hurst terrace with a steady and solemn thoughtfulness, "I wish that you would believe me now, at all events. As a rule, I acknowledge that some remarks of mine require marginal notes or a key, but not always. No one can go on telling untruths for ever. Oh, I do mean, dear, that you have a splendid gift, far surpassing any that I possess. Does Philip know that you draw?"

"I never told him, Lexie."

"Estelle, as you have such artistic instincts and good judgment—say, do you admire mahogany-coloured hair, and great frightened

eyes, and a sort of pale olive complexion, and a tall, thin figure?"

"No, Lexie, I cannot say that I do."

"Does Philip, do you think?"

"How *can* I answer for Philip?"

"Because he likes you, does he not?"

"Indeed, I hope so, Lexie. So that was my flattered portrait you were sketching and demanding praise for—or was it contempt?"

"Never mind, Estelle," said Alexina, ashamed of herself and hanging her head. "I wish he gave up that wholesale way of making presents. It reminds one of trade. What has he brought for papa?"

"An *abayes* of two of the most exquisite shades of green silk."

"What is that, Estelle? Cannot girls wear it?"

"No; certainly not. It is a large garment nearly resembling a shepherd's frock—that is, as far as the yoke goes. A wide strip of lovely embroidery ornaments the shoulders, and the sleeves are wide and graceful."

"I am sure," said Alexina, regretfully, "a lady could wear it."

"My dear Lexie, it is just like a silken great-coat, or a priest's dalmatica."

“Why, Estelle, a minute ago you said it was a shepherd’s frock. I would much prefer it to these,” and she pointed, in a disparaging way, to the slippers. “Philip makes such a point of giving papa the prettiest things. Dressing him up, too, like that! Don’t imagine he will have me to walk with him in his ‘silk attire.’ I do not want a crowd after us.”

“It is only for a curiosity, Alexina. Of course, papa would not wear it. It is for his room.”

“To stand on one of those tall wooden things that they stretch cloaks on in a shop, I suppose? It is a very ill-judged gift.”

For some time after these melancholy and discontented remarks, Lexie sat reflectively silent. Notwithstanding her peevishness, Estelle pitied her, for a pensive Alexina was a being utterly unknown in the Ivy House. Thought was burdensome to Lexie; in revolving so many subjects for consideration, the golden head grew heavy, and at last she fell asleep. Estelle wrapped her up carefully, for neither she nor any of the family ever forgot Lexie’s childish delicacy. As for Lexie herself, it would but be fair to add that

she never permitted it to be forgotten when it obtained her a privilege or indulgence.

In the afternoon Estelle sat at work in the dining-room. She had entreated Alexina to say nothing of her drawings at present. Miss Charteris would decide on their worth; and if, after all, they turned out to be but inferior productions, then the words would fall more quietly without Lexie's flourish. She was working, and Lexie was playing and singing the glorious "Pro peccatis," from Rossini's "Stabat Mater." Philip was busily employed in writing, but now and then he would raise his head and fix on the beautiful player a regard quite pathetic in its wistful admiration, one that almost penetrated Lexie's soul, in spite of her caprice. To Estelle her sister's music always revealed the unexpressed wishes that had grown and blossomed amidst her reserve. The work in her hands advanced mechanically, while her mind roamed over a hundred possibilities—of memories of poetry, of heroism, of great and gracious deeds, not constantly crowned with success, but fair even in failure. Gabriel and Ruth were engaged in their wonted animated quarrels in the garden, while Mrs. Hofer was

actively engrossed with putting finishing touches to the freshened rooms.

Ruth's little bitten gloves fell from Estelle's fingers as the carriage from Haye Place drew up at the gate. She could see Miss Charteris, Helen, and Cecil, as they alighted, and her most prominent desire was to run from the room.

"Et flagellis subditum," Lexie sang on. She also heard the arrival. A fresh audience in no way daunted her, but, on the contrary, inspired her with courage and comfort.

Cecil, lingering on the threshold, took in each detail of the apartment and its occupants, as before, when he waited outside the school-room. Estelle, pale and agitated; Lexie, with her slender, childlike figure and *riante* features, more sparkling, more radiant, more bewitching, beneath the influence of the music she sang; and the majestic, melancholy Philip, who seemed set in an atmosphere of his own, tinged with equal mournfulness and silence. To Cecil those three strikingly original characters and countenances were like exotics, brought by chance to an English balcony. How the cold air would chill and pale them! how, in

the keen wind of a strange experience, they would languish and tremble! Here, in the old-world, carved, familiar home, they were at once in contrast and accordance. Yet, to his poetic and sympathetic intuition, the full comprehension of the difficulties existing in the vast, unknown life, away from the shadows of the quiet town, suddenly made itself manifest. For Estelle, of an alien race, sensitive, shy, and ambitious, trouble surely lay in wait, unless she continued her secluded existence, and dwelt for ever apart from the throng of the world. Cecil foreboded no danger to himself from these speculations on the future of a young lady who was not related to him. He saw not that the extraordinary mixture of curiosity and impatience he experienced at Philip's presence in the Ivy House strongly resembled jealousy. He was perfectly content to know that a strong and vivid attraction towards Estelle kept his mind agreeably occupied. He never paused to inquire of himself what motives urged him to wish her to be uneasy when he teased Alexina, or to be encouraged and pleased when he persistently sought her conversation; or whether he was drifting into more

than friendliness. Estelle was so shy, and Lexie was so exalted, and Philip so much disturbed at the entrance of the guests, that all felt relieved when Mrs. Hofer came in—calm, smiling, and tranquil, and always self-possessed and at ease. Under her step-mother's authority, Alexina forbore the utterance of various wild speeches that she delighted in, and Estelle took courage, and Philip remembered that his aunt had a perfect right to entertain friends, while he had no right to object.

Miss Charteris at once became interested in the pleasant, youthful-looking matron, with soft blue eyes, and chestnut hair just beginning to silver, and the lines of tender cares and anxiety beginning to be imprinted on a clear, still pretty complexion. There was nothing very distinctive about Mrs. Hofer's appearance—she was gentle, ladylike, and placid; but she completed the family picture, and her kindly manners and strong benevolence pleased the old lady.

“I want so much to see Estelle's drawings,” Miss Charteris said, after a pause that Alexina's singing had filled. “I can see that she is a little averse from their exhibition;

but she must emulate her sister, and consider that the use of talent is proved by its ready ability to give pleasure."

"But Estelle cannot draw," answered Mrs. Hofer, smiling. "Many fall into the mistake of assuming that because Alexina plays and sings so well, her sister must, by a direct consequence, when there are only two girls, draw and paint. But although all do not possess cleverness (and mine do not divide the arts or genius), one can go through the world very well without exactly shining. Estelle is quite my right hand, and even if she has no sketches to win praise, her needlework might gain attention." Here her mother nodded indulgently at Estelle.

"But she *has* sketches, to win not alone faint praise—very faint, as you speak it, mamma,—but to call for admiration and claim it. Estelle is far too retiring, Miss Charteris, to act as her own showman, of drawings, or anything for you to appreciate; but they are here."

Lexie's graceful arms here poised quite above her sister's reach a collection of paintings in water-colour, of pen-and-ink drawings, and beautifully executed, free, yet soft land-

scapes in crayon, that she had gathered during a second, hurried, stolen visit to the narrow room in the red-tiled roof. It cost Alexina some effort thus to produce evidences of a gift that she could never hope to share; but her cheek grew hot as she plainly told herself it must be unnatural envy of her own sister that caused such a base idea to dwell in her mind. It was not, however, anything quite so bad as envy that at first produced the dislike of admitting the novel notion that Estelle was her superior in any point. Fear lest Philip might care for Estelle's drawings beyond Alexina's songs lay at the root; and now the feeling was overcome, Lexie had conquered herself, and was eager to convince every one of the worth of her sister's studies.

So the *every one* of the Ivy House moved to the table; Mrs. Hofer almost believing Alexina's love of jesting was leading her to mock Estelle, for how or where could *she* draw? And when she saw them one by one produced, she could not believe her step-daughter the artist. Were those heads really of her designing? Had she made likenesses so faithful of Ruthie and Gabriel? Was that studious face of Dr. Hofer actually the loving

portraiture of his child? The dreaming lilies of the wilderness; the grim, gently ugly form and yellow eyes of Grūnaugen, the children's tabby darling—had she painted them each, without instruction, without encouragement, all in secret? And there was the old custom of Friday evening, just as it happened night after night, as she had seen it honoured from childhood,—the silver lamp swinging, the pathetic, beautiful group earnestly watching. There, too, were excellent copies of Francia's sorrowful martyrdom, of Raffaele's cartoons, of the dark-tinted photographs banished from the attic, prohibited from Estelle's study by Mrs. Hofer's own desire.

First, anger rose in the usually tranquil soul. It was wrong, painful, unnatural, that Esty should be so reserved, so proud, so reticent. Why should she have been afraid? Then a softer emotion drove the unaccustomed bitterness away, and in its place came reasonable and indulgent excuses. If Mrs. Hofer resented this sudden surprise, and felt hurt that the knowledge of her step-daughter's talent should come upon her in the presence of comparative strangers, and if her gratification were marred by that strange want of

confidence, she could judge clearly, and soon found sufficient pleading for poor misunderstood Estelle. Surely, had the girl been blessed with her own mother's guidance, she would have found out a way of winning the expression of those aspirations so carefully cherished and hidden. Her own mother would have followed Estelle in one of her long absences; she would have insisted on some explanation of her early rising. She would have drawn her from her solitary fancies and have been repaid by clinging and joyful reliance. Instead of finding, as now, that she was but one among several applauding strangers, she might have been the chosen and genial recipient of her girl's ardent visions; first and chief in exhibiting fresh drawings—not seeing them first shown by another.

Her own mother would surely have understood that some truer motive than mere fondness of decoration prompted her wish of keeping her photographs. For Estelle always had been a pious maiden, loving her religion and faithfully obeying its most extreme observances. Even when she had striven to cast off the rigid fetters of rabbinical law, and had felt that some minor commands

inclined towards bigotry, and that one that forbids the kindling of a fire on the Sabbath was somewhat arbitrary and excessive, and a morbid exaggeration in its special application, she had remembered that no good result could be obtained by her rebellion at a small custom that pleased both parents in its continuance, and had gone to bed again without a candle, rather than give offence. She had never forgotten that she was but a child in her father's house, and that ill-breeding, as well as disrespect, would be proved by any actual severance from household laws and conventionalities. All this Mrs. Hofer now thought of, and felt that she had been rather hard on her daughter, and that before she had entirely banished the photographs she might have induced Estelle to explain their appearance.

Sometimes an inexplicable power of insight forces a marvellous knowledge from one heart to another. Now that the long-delayed, long-hoped-for, and dreaded moment had arrived that Estelle heard herself pronounced a true artist,—now that in the flattering silence she read as much as in the outspoken encomiums,—her spirit seemed drawn to her step-mother's

by a magnetic force ; and instead of enjoying a rapture of complete content, she found that she was occupied in dwelling far more on the chill Mrs. Hofer might receive from the late tale of her secret ability for drawing, than from the worth of the drawings themselves. Estelle found that after all it was not for Miss Charteris', or Cecil's, or Helen's opinion that she chiefly cared.

The beautiful quality of filial and parental affection, so marked and peculiar a characteristic of the Jewish nation, had struck its deep roots into the very centre of the Hofer family. Even if the proofs of that affection might consist in a somewhat severe restraint—at least, in the instance of Estelle,—still it was there, to be relied on, and clung to, and trusted in. And as for Lexie and the little ones, novels were perhaps the only means of amusement that Dr. Hofer strictly withheld ; and the impunity with which Alexina and even Ruth transgressed that rule, showed that he was not truly harsh. It was only to Estelle, who puzzled them, that severity or lack of indulgence had ever been considered needful by her parents ; and now her loving, warm nature turned to both—to all her

relatives—by an impulse of atoning for, instead of rebelling against, the error of judgment that had decreed her to be stupid and a dreamer. She cast a glance, equally imploring and remorseful, on Mrs. Hofer.

“I did not mean to hurt or offend you, mamma,” she said, leaving the window, and placing her hand entreatingly on her mother’s sleeve. “I was always afraid of speaking, in case it might only be a false idea that I followed—some will-o’-the-wisp to rouse contempt. Besides, even when I did say anything of wishing to study art, papa laughed, you know, and that I could not bear; and I hoped that perhaps one day I might surprise and please you together. But, mamma, it was not I who thought of shutting you away from any plan of mine, or of excluding you from a share of my intentions. But somehow you did not care to understand or be convinced that I could do anything except a little mending; so I was forced on silence, lest I might earn scorn.”

“Ah, Estelle! your apology is something of a reproach! But henceforth misunderstanding must be banished. You know, dear, I am nothing of a critic, but there is an

element of love and tenderness in the subject of some of your sketches that attracts me, even beyond their excellent execution. Why, Estelle, to paint that soft turn of Ruth's head, and her innocent, wondering expression, you must have almost a maternal instinct. It is not alone that your talent gives me delight, or that your silence on the subject of your ambition has vexed me a little—whether I deserved that silence or not,—but that fresh traits of your disposition disclose themselves with your pictures. It pleases me that my daughter loves her faith, and her little brother and sister so sincerely.”

Long, long afterwards Estelle dwelt with fond remembrance on the simple words. Too true to be partial, too few to fade from memory quickly, those praises of Mrs. Hofer's were sweeter than any applause of friends or acquaintance; not like the flattery of the world, the favourable notice of the highly educated—only the grateful outcome of the mother's feelings, the gratified comment of the sensible and sunny mind, that ruled its small kingdom of home both wisely and well. They accompanied her in her often lonely difficulties, and bestowed strength

when hope and courage failed, and some doubt of earthly stability crept in among her first fair visions.

Helen Haye was thoroughly impressed by the sight of Estelle's work. She was not, then, merely a girl of a rare and peculiar type, unaccomplished, and perhaps dangerously attractive, just because of her appearance and ignorance of life, but by right of original ability. Helen fully understood the value of talent; and this, indeed, must be genius of a lofty sort, to produce such effects without cultivation. Cecil and Miss Charteris turned the drawings over in profound stillness, broken now and then by Alexina's eager exclamations, and naïve comments, and demands for admiration.

"Is not this lovely? See, Miss Haye; look, Philip! Exactly like the sun-dial sunk in moss, and *me*, thinking about it. I have quite a grey, meditative look on my face—like the sundial; it infected me probably. Estelle, it was your fancy, because I never think at all. Still, there is the thoughtful look, which I dare say I may have when I am not thinking. And Grünaugen—sweet thief—with such an unconscious, beaming,

creamy smile, as if he *never* stole things! Who are the girls in the "Sabbath Lamp," Estelle? You and I, of course; and the old man, is that for Philip?—for he has an aged style with him. He sets one imagining he was born for an old man, and wondering why he was not old before he was young. And that is our darling dame of the Ivy House; tipping up because you are not *too* tall—are you, mamma dear?—to reach the lamp. Well, Miss Charteris, are not they pretty? You know, and so does Mr. Hays, because you have been up the Rigi and everywhere."

"My love, do not fancy for a minute that I have been up the Rigi. I wished to ascend, but the wish remained with me at the hotel, while Cecil and my nieces made the ascent. And there is not any romance in going up a mountain by train, so I consoled myself that my climbing days were over; and so I have not been everywhere, as you insist. Still, I have known many and many an artist in my time, and often have I spent morning after morning studying, in a sort of amateur fashion, in the galleries abroad. And I vow that these are drawn by an artist;" and she placed her hand em-

phatically on the sketch of the ivy-mantled ruins, and Lexie's bright figure, and the drawing of the Sabbath eve. "Is it not so, nephew? And Mr. Florian, you, I am assured, will agree that your cousin is naturally most lavishly gifted."

"And your father does not know, then?" Philip said to Estelle. His mind was so engrossed by this fact, that he paid no attention to Miss Charteris. "How could you tell strangers first, Esty!" he added, in a reproachful undertone. "Poor aunt Lucy! see how pained she seemed; and my uncle will be annoyed, surely. You know that I can but see the commonplace and practical aspect of events. This is a sort of climax, Estelle, to a long course of blunders. You have not been appreciated, but your parents will feel your power as a punishment, coming so suddenly upon them."

"Don't scold Estelle!" Lexie exclaimed; for she had quickly caught and seized the import of the grave words. "Just, too, when everybody praises her. *I* knew all about it," she continued, unscrupulously. ("There is no need to say I found it out for myself, and only this morning.") "Why,

Philip, girls are not like men, who go talking of all their intentions. *We* know how to keep secrets."

"Estelle shall have the screens," Mrs. Hofer silently decided. "Poor child! I may have been too harsh to her. Lexie is more tiresome and self-willed outwardly; but, after all, Estelle's wilfulness merges in a decision of character that can work and wait for its way. Philip is vexed; but, then, he has puzzling moods, and he is too shy of new friends."

"I, too, regard you in the light of an impostor," said Helen, with sharp playfulness. She understood the meaning of Philip's whisper, and felt displeased that Estelle's talents should provoke further discussion. "Why, Miss Hofer, you must have a turn for the stage, I do think. This scene is so dramatic. Every member of your family has been more or less in ignorance of the genius that has flourished beneath this roof; and now it is displayed and positively amazes us. Surprises are not always pleasant. Are disclosures ever proportionate to mysteries? are they of so much importance—of such interest? I do think, Miss Hofer, among your other unknown accomplishments, you number

that of dramatic representation. Would not you like to have gone on the stage?"

"Yes," answered Estelle, to the astonishment of all. Yet it was not Helen that she was answering; rather, it was to some inner consciousness that she addressed herself—some urgent impulse of her own heart; to something that Lexie's singing would rouse, that her quiet dreams would weave, that bid her seek to utter human woe, human joy—the mingled pain and pathos of all humanity—in some distinct and passionate manner of her own that should appeal to crowds. Historic art would be an interpretation of all her repressed eloquence, whereby she might have expressed that which Heaven had implanted in her artistic, restless soul. She replied more to this unspoken craving than to Helen, and her voice was dreamy and tremulous.

"You would have made a splendid actress," thought Cecil; and then aloud, "Dramatic art is a sort of key that unlocks a hundred doors of sympathy. The belief that one is appealing to a mixed assembly—that by one voice, one inspiration, hundreds can be moved, touched, soothed, elevated, is and

must be an immense goal to that sort of ambition. I often think, Miss Hofer, how grand it is for a good actress to sum up the individuals of her audience. Some weary lady of fashion, not sufficiently tired of the world, or yet too proud to deny sympathy with its scenes, feels once more a gentle interest or tender sorrow in the outward life that still proceeds, notwithstanding its disappointments. Some poor dressmaker or shop-girl sees for once her dreams over stitching, or her fancies above the counter, realized suddenly. The yearning faith of youth glances over tricks of tinsel and tawdry trappings, and finds solace and fresh spirit in one of those gifted creatures who can put self aside and represent trouble, trial, pain surmounted, and act the finest lessons, and play as if she were inspired by some acute instinct that never deceives nor daunts. Good acting is the perfection of a certain creative power."

"I should be very sorry to see my cousin act," said Philip, warmly. "Why, Estelle, you and Lexie have scarcely ever been inside a theatre! And then, a country theatre cannot give you the slightest idea of theatrical

talent. You cannot judge from that vague, intangible way of regarding dramatic art. In its particular applications it is, it must be, a most difficult, disagreeable method for women to gain a livelihood."

"Yes; Philip is right," said Mrs. Hofer, vexed at the turn the conversation had taken. "Estelle, I cannot feel it consistent with your general timidity that you own to a desire of acting, and advocate its grandeur."

"I did not quite desire it, mamma. But I was only thinking of dramatic art in exactly the same manner as Mr. Haye expressed the benefits it conferred."

Estelle said this innocently enough, but Helen looked with some meaning at Cecil to observe how he would take such an avowal. He coloured slightly, and bent more intently over the drawings in his hand; and Helen told herself that he was—he ought to be—annoyed and confused by such a childish remark. But Cecil was not always what he ought to be, according to his sister's judgment, and therefore felt no annoyance. At present Estelle was herself in ignorance of how closely reverence for the worth of Cecil's opinions was associated in her mind with

admiration of the speaker. At present, also, Cecil was unaware of the ease and facility with which Estelle's wishes were becoming the highest, most practical medium for translating those fair ideals of his that had flitted like clouds occasionally across the brilliant sky of his summer-day existence.

"It is out of the question for you to be an actress," repeated Mrs. Hofer, bewildered by Estelle's frankness and her lately revealed talent, and confused that a girl who used to stand in the background, subordinate in the crowd of her daily associations, should now assert herself and utter words that altogether changed Mrs. Hofer's early notion of her character.

Alexina laughed.

"Dear mamma, you persist in her wish long after Estelle is silent. She cannot be everything, and we are all certain she is meant for an artist. That is the question—how she is to study, and when she is to begin, and where she is to go, and of what school she is to become a disciple."

"Lexie, you do run on so! Your father must be consulted, of course. Go and see if he is in his study," said Mrs. Hofer, taking every phrase in its strictly literal sense.

“No, Lexie, do not, please,” exclaimed Estelle, with perfect good temper. “Miss Haye is quite right as to this being a scene with too much applause. It would not charm papa to be called away, as if it were a matter of importance.”

“Pray do not speak in that tone of humility, Estelle. It is, of course, of importance that your studies should be properly directed. I think, however, you have not lost any time, and I must ask Mrs. Hofer to let me consult with her on the best plan for their continuation,” said Miss Charteris.

And then, to Helen’s relief, the engrossing matter of Estelle’s proficiency was allowed to drop. Philip rather ungraciously showed some of his foreign treasures to the guests—the amber beads, the curiously worked Moorish belts of velvet and gold, the melon-seed purses decked with scarlet, and the hanging lamps he had brought from Tangiers. In the small, dark, but lofty room where his possessions were packed, where gold-threaded muslins, and silken caftans, and heavy burnouses were piled amongst oriental china, and dark, yet gorgeous rugs and table-covers, a delicate little canary sang in the

dim light. He sang, from the dome of his smart and elegant wicker-work cage, a gentle and exquisite warble—so plaintive, so sweet and melancholy, that the song impressed Estelle's sensitive mind with many images and parables. Philip had brought him from Madeira—he had landed there for two hours; but for whom was it brought?

“A canary for me!” decided Alexina eagerly.

A lovely colour suffused her face, she clasped her hands, sprang to the corner where the fanciful cage was placed. Perhaps others beside Estelle traced a similitude between her bright, joyous ways, that lightened the old house and defied its oppression, and the delicate little minstrel of the sombre room packed close with merchandise.

“For whom did you bring it?” she repeated, while Philip was thinking the bird might be the soulless symbol of Alexina, and Lexie might appear as the immortal semblance of the bird. “For me, is it not? You did intend it as an addition to my poor stock of treasures?” she proceeded anxiously, wholly indifferent to the presence of strangers, and bent on carrying her point.

“No,” said Philip, smiling in delight that

Alexina should condescend to implore *him*; pleased with the sense of happy power that her request gave him, and delaying to grant it only because it was such a rare pleasure to hear her beg from him at all. "I think I meant it for Ruth."

"But I know you did not," Lexie continued, in the sweet rapid voice he could never resist; and even Helen forgot her exaggerated anxiety, and the late vexation she had nourished, in appreciation and sympathy with the slight, pretty creature, as she stood on the tips of her little feet to coax the longed-for gift from the tall, grave cousin. Cecil could not forbear a smile of admiration, and, in her unconscious mirth, she returned it, as Philip saw and noted with an intensity of offence mournfully exceeding the due magnitude of a smile. With a new and extraordinary jealousy he persuaded himself that Alexina was mocking him, and that her natural gaiety and sweetness were assumed to charm new acquaintances. A deep colour flew also to his dark cheek. He bit his lip and held himself erect, and as Lexie touched his wrist with her coaxing white fingers, he steeled his heart for the first time against her, and their thrilling soft touch.

"No," he repeated in a chilly voice, and with one hand he gently but effectually prevented Alexina from the capture of her prize; "it is not for you, but for Ruth."

"For Ruth! But what does she want with a bird? And such a little beauty too! A sparrow is enough for her. Philip, you know it is for me. You went on shore at Malta to find it; and now do not jest too much, but give it up."

Her blue eyes met his dark ones, and in Alexina's glance could be plainly read an entreaty almost childish in its supplication. She cared no longer for the bird, if Philip had brought it for her little sister; but was he so cruel, so dull, as to shame her with a refusal before Cecil and Helen! Alexina had securely counted on receiving and obtaining that gift, as easily as others. Now, for some inexplicable cause, Philip was actually angry. She read the signs of wrath in his trembling hand, and his dark eyes were more frank than her blue ones, and sooner understood. Philip, who was never in a passion! And now that he should be angry without apparent reason, and with Lexie, too! How strange! She could not explain it, but the

fear of being repelled or mortified before strangers filled her with a sort of painful trepidation such as she had never known before. Her high spirits were not frequently appalled; but if Philip were to persist in his blunder of displeasure, and abash her, as she expressed it, in her rash, impatient way, she never would forgive him. Helen Haye began to understand all this from Lexie's changing colour and quivering lip, and to grow interested in the issue of the battle.

"It is for Ruth," Philip said once more; and Alexina became very pale.

"It would please her more than a sparrow," she said; "but it is cruel to keep birds in a cage, after all—and she shall not have what you deny me," she added, in an undertone that Philip alone heard. She stooped her bright head, and in an instant the door was unfastened, the primrose-coloured, graceful little feathered prisoner fluttered near the ceiling, hovered with a burst of song near Estelle's shoulder, soared up, and then out through the open window, far off among the spring-gemmed trees, and was gone.

With the canary's escape something else—unseen, but not the less real—left the dark

closet, resembling the brave, beautiful, indomitable ball of feathers that was animated and kept joyous by its boon of melody. Alexina's light-heartedness and easy joy had fled. The fact that Philip had refused her, remained to check her, and burnt in her proud heart, and she resolutely determined to withhold forgiveness if it were sought. The daring act frightened her, notwithstanding. It was a desperate and thoughtless, even a cruel method of showing offended dignity. What would the little canary do, unprotected in the chill English spring, apart from the shield of its wicker-work habitation? Lexie's childlike feelings pictured its misery, nestling among the cold new leaves in the infrequent and variable sunbeams of a capricious April. But it was Philip's fault; and by a powerful effort she restrained the rebellious anger, that by-and-by would be certain of overflowing. Now it must be overcome; and in exaggerated defiance of all the pain she felt, and the remorse that she and Philip should positively quarrel, she determined to hide her thoughts, to control their expression, and to prove herself indifferent.

“That was a brave act,” whispered Philip,

with a sarcasm impetuous wilful Lexie thoroughly comprehended. "Utterly worthy of you."

His face was pale also, but the glowing eyes frightened his little cousin more than she would own. She shrank back, and then, summoning a sort of help in elaborate coolness, she laughed.

"I wonder if your canary knows the route to Malta?" she retorted, carelessly.

Cecil, observant, and but half understanding, asked himself whether she really were the thoughtless child she appeared, or a hasty, fickle girl, who knew how to give pain, if she could not feel it. Estelle was grieved at a demonstration of anger completely unlike that Lexie who loved and fondled Grünaugen, the quaint, solemn cat, of exactly her own age; Lexie, who had a singular success in the rearing of birds and animals; who had remained up during the length of a night when Bear, the great brown retriever who slept at her door, was ill. How could so tender a heart be unmindful of the hardships of that small foreigner, exposed to the rigour of an English climate!

It puzzled Estelle, who now possessed

no key to the right reading of her sister's disposition; and she was fated to be more perplexed.

Lexie was not shy; but her frank, fearless manner concealed a really modest, but self-willed, character. She delighted in notice, but never absolutely courted it. She was not actually vain either, and praise was not so indispensable to her as to her sensitive sister. Lexie could manage to live in tolerable comfort when some people blamed her. But, then, they must not be people who had petted and spoiled her; over whom she had ruled; who had acknowledged, and obeyed, and indulged, the imperious little beauty.

Philip never thwarted her, and that he now should deny her power over him, disregard her coaxing, and show himself altogether in a new and disagreeable light, was unbearable. Lexie was reckless, utterly unconscious of the fact that Philip was already repenting of his unsuccessful jest, perfectly ignorant that the bird had been meant for her from the first, but that he found it rarely sweet to be implored for it.

And so they all went into the garden, where Alexina declared choicer treasures

than his merchandise could be discovered, and where they were in a tangle of cross purposes, as intricate as any that the wilderness could display.

“‘Here’s flowers for you—the marigold, that goes to bed i’ the sun,’” said Lexie, handing a cluster of blossoms to Cecil. Sadness lay in her eyes, but not in her voice.

“I suppose you guess what a charming Perdita you would make?” he answered, smiling at the pretty, saucy gesture.

CHAPTER IX.

IN THE GARDEN.

“PERHAPS Estelle will sketch me as Perdita,” Lexie remarked; “she has taken me as an unconscious model already—or Jessica. Don’t you think, Mr. Haye, that character more applicable to me than any other of Shakespeare’s heroines? There is a fitness in it, and I know Miss Haye considers it odd for us to care about anything beyond or beside our own actual experience of our mode of life. That is so strange to me. Christians are interested in our nation, but many think it extraordinary that we should be interested in theirs. Estelle and I are liberal, and love our neighbours as ourselves. So does mamma, but she is in awe of my father—quite needlessly, for we all agree in main points. I

wonder how he would look as Shylock, dressed in the yellow conical cap, once, and in some enlightened countries still, the delicate and highly ornamental distinction insisted on as the characteristic head-gear of the Israelite. We might have a charade, which would be entirely in keeping with us, and amuse Miss Haye and Helen, and satisfy them of our self-absorption. We used to be known by our colours, like ensigns. John Churchill without his glory, or an Ethiopian at a fair apart from his banjo! *Then we could* be remarked in a crowd. Fancy yourself, Philip, in a yellow cap! I *could* be Jessica," said Lexie, pensively. "I could be as filial as Jessica" (she was not exactly a model of obedience), "and quite different from myself, and merciful and devoted as Portia was."

"Then are not you naturally capable of devotion?" asked Cecil, who thought the last sentence the only one requiring comment in his little companion's rambling talk.

"Oh, I don't know. I suppose devotion must come naturally. Who can acquire it? But there is nothing to be especially devoted to, or about, since Jessica's days." Here Alexina's soft eyes were cast forlornly on the

ground, as if to discover some worthy and new source of devotion. "I believe I could draw just as well as Estelle if I tried. Do not you think so too?"

"Of course I do. And write novels, and deliver lectures on vanity!"

"Oh, not the last, Mr. Haye," she replied; for Lexie was one very slow to perceive a jest at her own expense. "We leave lectures to mamma, who, however, is only rather more gentle than her usual gentleness when she is vexed. But I did commence a novel once; only it became so mixed up and involved. The heroine's hair, instead of waving, *wavered*, for I altered the colour three times; and then the seasons grew tangled."

"Like the heroine's locks?"

"Well—but I made an autumn day come in spring, and one morning was summer, and the same evening there was the description of a snow-storm. The month was really July. The unities, I think people call them, or the possibilities, were confused. And then one of the characters was so fond of drowning and coming to life again. That incident was slightly overdone, certainly. It was a sort of romance, I suppose; because you could hardly

call it a tale of real life, Mr. Haye, could you, when a man is nearly drowned five times, and still continues being strong and heroic? And then the languid, second heroine was accustomed to all sorts of decline and consumption, and illnesses that mamma insists render it imperative to have your hair constantly cut. My girl's was longer and longer after each trial of sickness."

"Perhaps she wore a cushion, something like you put in your plait."

"That *I* put in my plait!" repeated Alexina, opening her eyes to their widest extent, in the excess of her indignation. "Why, do you suppose I wear *false* hair!"

"I can hardly believe it to be all your own."

Lexie was so much hurt at this imputation that, with the impulsiveness that distinguished her, now deepened and increased by a reckless desire to annoy Philip, she said, "You can see for yourself if it is real;" and she began to unplait the thick golden cloud, that soon covered her shoulders.

"It is all real, and all gold," Cecil said, as he ventured very gently to take up one silky, shining tress. "How lovely!" And he looked

admiringly on the childlike upturned face, with its innocent demureness.

But Philip, who was doing the honours of the garden to Helen, also looked on, and with many mixed feelings besides admiration. How Lexie was changing, or perhaps only just now developing, into a vain, cold-hearted, wilful girl! She had not loved, she never would love him, as he had sometimes believed, notwithstanding her variable behaviour. He clenched his hand, as if to express by the action that heart-wrung bitterness and disappointment for which at present there was no other expression. He resolved to ascertain his fate, and determined that, if she would taunt and torment him, and defy his wishes, he would separate himself entirely from the beloved home, the peaceful, uneventful domestic life, so dear to him as a goal at the end of his frequent journeys.

Helen noticed his pale, wrathful countenance, and appreciated the self-restraint that enabled him to be as gravely courteous as before.

“Lexie is very emphatic,” she said. “She seems to be entertaining herself extremely well, however. Is Cecil going to dress her

hair, or is she offering him a lock of it? or why is she unplaiting it in the open air in that excited manner, I wonder? Your pretty little cousin is somewhat heedless, Mr. Florian, and extraordinarily childish."

"She is but a child," answered Philip, calmly, greatly annoyed at this remark.

He would neither attempt to explain nor defend her conduct to this stranger, who appeared quite ready to find fault and blame her. Alexina was still the dear, favourite cousin whose conduct needed no apology; the same darling child he had amused and with whom he had played during her tedious early battles against weakness, and whom he had aided in her struggles for strength.

"She seems absolutely ignorant of the world," Helen resumed; "almost absurdly careless and undisciplined. You must excuse apparent curiosity, Mr. Florian; but I find it so remarkable that Dr. Hofer should have settled here, in this obscure and quiet spot, apart from his own friends and co-religionists. Alexina says there are very few Jews here besides Dr. Hofer's household, and the synagogue is a small building, incapable of containing many members. How dull for

his daughters! They have no opportunities of intercourse with the world or their own people. It is an injury to his children."

"My uncle has travelled a great deal in his youth; and while his children are so young—and indeed when they grow older—they are just as well off here as they might be in London. They are carefully trained, and kept from much evil as well as pleasure."

"To me such training resembles fetters. Are they always to be children? And for such a talented dreamer as Dr. Hofer—you must forgive me again, Mr. Florian—to hide himself year after year in this place, shows a strange want of experience of all that the world confers—all that one naturally desires. Little Ruth told me her father was not a doctor of medicine, but of philology. I know Germans are lavish of the title; but, with all his knowledge and science, it strikes me as queer to bury himself and his daughters."

Philip glanced uneasily at her cold, handsome face, and then said—

"As I told you, Miss Hays, my uncle has ceased to care practically for worldly distinctions. He is very unworldly, contented,

and visionary. Pray do not seek to disturb the routine of Estelle and Lexie's life by hints of far-off gaiety. They, too, are content."

"And you desire to keep them so," thought Helen. "There may indeed be dangers for both outside this dark old house. I begin to understand you, Mr. Florian. You wish to preserve their simplicity and ignorance as a refreshment and solace after your several travels. Very selfish of you, I must say, and very tyrannical. But, now, which cousin in particular needs this care? It cannot be Lexie, because you held yourself so bravely just now; or was that sudden paleness really due to her pertness? Can it be Estelle, with her inscrutable, melancholy eyes? Oh, if it might but be *that* cousin, how delightful, how safe, for Gertrude and Cecil and me!"

"Estelle has a very attractive countenance," she said aloud; "and what a gift, what a talent for drawing! It came on us all, more or less, as a surprise. You seemed to feel her silence, though, even more than her cleverness."

"She would have done better to have confided in her parents," said Philip, calmly.

“Her appearance is very striking, Mr. Florian.”

“Yes,” he assented. “I suppose many would agree with you in that opinion.”

“Oh, I should like to shake you!” thought Helen, “phlegmatic, measured creature! It cannot be Estelle! Surely no lover would be so dogmatic and indifferent as you!”

“Although Estelle is far from being strictly handsome, some people would rate the expression of her face higher than her sister’s,” she resumed, watching her companion cautiously.

Philip bit his lip; but he was brought to bay. That Estelle should surpass her sister was not to be allowed—such an assertion required no reply.

“Oh, for myself,” Helen continued, cheered by her success, convinced that she was approaching the solution of her puzzle, and therefore indulging in some additional warmth of phrase, “I consider there can be no question of Lexie’s loveliness. She outshines Estelle without a doubt, as she would outshine most girls. There is something oddly impertinent and very endearing in her at times—not quite spiritual, but nearly so. Her eyes are

too mocking and saucy for pathos, perhaps ; but if it be possible that one can have a saucy *and* pathetic look, Lexie has it."

Philip threw off his reserve immediately. Helen's plan for satisfying herself of his affection for either cousin, so transparent and plainly read by any one who was not as engrossed and anxious, was unsuspected by him. He accused himself of injustice, in his simplicity, and condemned the latent jealousy that asserted itself so quickly, that took up arms hastily where and whenever Alexina was concerned. But he joined too cordially in her praises to content Helen.

"She does not excel Estelle in everything," he said slowly, hoping to be contradicted once more. "Hers is a different nature—most surely designed for happiness, if one can ever be intended to attain it."

"And Estelle," asked Helen, impatiently,—"to what do you consign her, if Alexina is meant for joy? Surely she is not to be left to sorrow?"

Philip regarded Estelle standing rather apart from the others—silent, wistful, unnoticed, waiting while Miss Charteris enjoyed herself in the narration of anecdotes, all

springing from the flowers she held, and diverging from the particular lily the young girl had gathered for her, to various lilies that Miss Charteris had planted that had gained prizes, blossoming and perishing in her youth. Estelle was hardly conscious of the earnestness with which she watched Cecil and Lexie, and of the force of those feelings that her wistful eyes interpreted. She was pained, hurt, and shocked at Lexie's wildness and ignorance of conventionality; or rather, she regretted the reckless rashness and remorse that prompted Lexie to be gay, and regardless of consequences. How could Cecil, who was older and experienced, encourage her, and let her untwist her hair, and rattle on without a check?

Philip did not fail in penetration, when Lexie was not the subject of consideration. He read accurately the signs of distress in that lonely figure—the one left out in the sunny garden, where were four young and cheerful people. With more of pity and sympathy than a practical sense of the fitness of things, he did not regard Estelle as the eldest daughter obviously intending to pay the greatest attention to the oldest guest

present, but took these few minutes as an example of her past life and all that her sad gaze seemed to prophesy.

“I should not care to forebode,” he said, after a pause. “Yet it may be that my cousin may have to be tested by sacrifice. Some are unworthy of giving up. From others, Heaven exacts self-renunciation, self-denial, as its greatest boon and reward.”

“Oh dear,” pondered Helen, “*can* it be Estelle, after all!” And then aloud, “I would prefer being Alexina, then, Mr. Florian; but we really must be going. I *hope* the canary will return,” she added mischievously, as she shook hands with Philip, “and that we shall see you at Haye Place, with your cousins, some day.” (“Oh,” in a voiceless parenthesis, “if I had courage to inquire which was *the* cousin of the two, they would be welcome *any* day. If he would only choose Estelle!—and I believe it is she whom he loves.”) Then she joined her brother, and they left the Ivy House.

“What could you have been talking of to Mr. Florian, my dear?” asked Miss Charteris. “You were a little angry, were not you, Helen?”

"Oh no, aunt Mildred. But he is such a grave, prosaic youth, in spite of his lofty stature, and sad, handsome face."

"Helen, Helen, take care," laughed her brother. "Are *you* growing enthusiastic?"

"No, Cecil; I leave that to you," she retorted coldly. "Mr. Florian was not best pleased with Miss Lexie's hoydenish and exceedingly demonstrative behaviour."

"You are severe, Helen. No one—no unprejudiced spectator could call that charming little thing hoydenish."

"Then I must consent to being prejudiced, Cecil, I suppose; for even if you regard her as a child only, she is an untaught and daring child. But at sixteen and a half, she ought to be different. Estelle is far more ladylike and retiring."

Alas for Helen's scheme for discovering the state of Cecil's mind! His pleasure showed in the eager, unqualified assent.

"You are quite right," he exclaimed warmly. "Miss Hofer is a gem in the setting of that quaint and dismal mansion."

"So her cousin considers," rejoined Helen, repenting of her carelessness immediately. "He loves her, I can see. You should hear

him extol her drawings," she said, forgetting facts.

"He did not strike me as being greatly impressed at their exhibition. He was certainly half angry with her for her secrecy," said Cecil; and then, unable to repress the sarcasm, he added, "*Your* generous appreciation doubtless proved their worth to him. As an after thought it dawned on Mr. Florian's somewhat sluggish understanding that there might possibly be something in the genius that worked such results against indifference, an intense individual anxiety, and in those occasional snatches of leisure granted from teaching the children, etc."

"Poor Estelle!" said Miss Charteris, "she is too sensitive perhaps. And yet Mrs. Hofer seems a sweet woman—more like the eldest sister, than the girls' step-mother. It was a pity that she could not assist her to the consummation of her wish, however; but I shall. I shall see Dr. Hofer, and propose a plan whereby the child may make up for lost time."

"You are truly good, aunt Mildred," Cecil said warmly.

"Yes, that is all very well," smiled the mild old lady; "but do not spoil that pretty Alexina, Master Cecil. You will make her think too much of herself. She is disposed to vanity, I fear."

"It is a harmless sort of vanity. But have you noticed the eagerness of both sisters to vindicate their race, even from unspoken aspersion? Whenever I talk to the younger, she voluntarily commences half satiric, half earnest explanations of the reason that her nation never merited, but nobly endured, the persecutions of past times," Cecil said, skilfully diverting the conversation from Estelle. "It is sometimes amusing, and sometimes really touching, to notice the fervent patriotism of such a mere child as Alexina, who has hardly broken the monotony of a most monotonous and dull existence."

"A satirical patriot!" echoed Helen, not in the least deceived. "Somehow the title fails to reflect added lustre on Miss Lexie's gold hair. By the way, Cecil, were you asking her for a tress in the garden?"

"That would have been foolish indeed," said Miss Charteris, as Cecil reddened; and vexed that she had vexed this only nephew

and favourite, she added, "The girl is a child, and a very charming and pretty creature. A most interesting family altogether. Not wealthy, by any means. And see, Helen! the old aunt can make mistakes as well as her niece. I always believed all Jews were rich. At the Ivy House there is no pretension, and every article shows signs of wear and use, and taste too."

"Especially the Bohemian vases, and the shell-rabbit from Seaport, on the mantel-piece of the darkest spot known as the drawing-room," said Helen, in an ironic tone.

"Ah, my dear, you are rather hard on trifles. Mrs. Hofer told me one of the numerous poor people she had helped gave her these ornaments out of gratitude."

Cecil laughed.

"And so in a manner compelled her to give them the place of honour! How changeable and fickle you are, Helen! Who could believe you to be the same girl who raved of the Hofers a month ago? Gerard, whose opinion is so revered by you, thinks your first raptures much more worthy of attention than this second revised chapter of your fancies."

Helen was unable to answer. It was impossible to deny that the current of her feelings had been disturbed; but she and Gertrude would be the sole sufferers, she believed, without a thought of the girl she had flattered. Gertrude and Helen hoped their brother would not marry; and if he should, he ought for their sakes to choose some fashionable, wealthy girl—not an obscure foreigner, who apparently would have to earn her living.

Estelle was not rich, and far from being brilliant; without position or beauty, or distinction of any sort to soften the chief disparity of such a match. A shy, timid, dark-eyed girl, of the respectable middle-class—one who would call forth no praise, no admiration, no prestige. She dressed like other girls, only in poorer materials. She was not gorgeous, or decidedly and beautifully eastern. Helen could picture that shrinking, silent maiden introduced in London as the wife of her only brother. Helen's fears sped rapidly forwards to this conclusion. She was not capable of entertaining broad views, and for this she was scarcely to blame. When she and her sister were at school in

Norfolk, the single representative of a once mighty nation had appeared to them in the guise of a venerable old man, to whom the kindly governess gave a small weekly allowance, without troubling herself with inquiries. The girls, with that peculiar wit, the special attribute of early youth, that delights in personalities, constantly varied the appellation of this poor pensioner. His actual name was of no consequence to them, or to any one,—he was alone in the world, and he made no objection to being called Isaac of York, Mesopotamia, the ten tribes, the wandering Jew, Solomon, or Mount Hermon.

The last grew to be the most favoured. The unfortunate Mr. Mount Hermon bore his romantic and undeserved title meekly, appeared week after week at the school gate with undeviating regularity, and endured his lonely days in his little apartment with a piety that was bravery as well. He lived without complaint. But a rigorous season arrived, and he crawled feebly through the snow for the last time.

“Would not you take the old man’s money next week?” the governess asked Gertrude.

“You are fond of visiting the poor, you say ; here is an opportunity.”

“Oh no, thank you. I should not care about taking the Jew’s allowance.”

Poor, miscalled Mr. Mount Hermon had nearly unravelled the long toil and privation of his seventy years. For once his sunken eyes glowed, his white head was raised.

“When we Hebrews bestow charity we know and care for no difference of creed,” he answered. “We do not stigmatize the objects of our compassion by the form of their faith. We do not say the Catholic, the Wesleyan, the Methodist, if any particular sect or denomination crave relief.”

“You should have remembered courtesy, and the reverence due to age,” the governess remarked with some sternness, as the bent figure passed out through the snow.

“*I* was not the first to call him different names,” urged Gertrude, with hot cheeks.

“Your schoolfellows are heedless, and yet they are kind ; but heedlessness is not one of your faults. This should be a lesson to you to forbear from wounding the feelings of others by coldness.”

That was the last day of the almsgiving.

The next week, the aged regular pensioner had left the trials of earth for ever; but Gertrude's pride was hurt by the double reproof, and although Helen was more amiable, she was led by her sister's example, and if she pitied Jews she had vague notions of the cause of her pity, and scorned them as well.

When they came to Haye Place, a certain desire of atoning for former harshness impelled Gertrude to foster a sort of curiosity and friendship for Estelle and Lexie. It roused and interested her to find that they could speak and behave like other young ladies. She had not thought it possible, and wondered if they were true types of their people. But it was not Helen's fault that she was ignorant of Jewish history. She had been content to own the existence of Israelites without caring in the least about them. Once in town, when a strange kind of Sunday hush filled some of the thoroughfares, she was informed that it was the day of atonement. She heard that a large part of the population of London had left business, pleasure, leisure, to pray in their synagogues. She heard that the quiet pervading some neighbourhoods was caused by the fact of the influence and

importance so large a section of the community exercised on the remainder. Hundreds were withdrawn by the solemn mandate of a religious ceremony, and their absence was distinctly felt. Gerard Holden told her more of their laws and habits than she had discovered in the Bible or ancient history, and so she gradually lost her former contempt for them, and half against her will allowed a little respect to enter and abide in her mind.

But Cecil must not think of loving Estelle. It was very unfortunate that she could draw. Gertrude and Helen felt this as an aggravation of fate. Apart from her drawings and her large, beautiful eyes, Estelle might be easily put down and overlooked. But those magnificent eyes and delicate paintings were stubborn facts not to be forgotten at present. With these she could not be commonplace.

Miss Charteris saw that for some unsuspected reason, Helen was disposed to be irritable, and she forbore further allusion to the Hofers. Her nieces were nearly strangers to her: they had lived at their guardian's house until four years ago, when Gertrude came of age; then they had travelled and paid long visits; and now that Cecil had

returned from India, they considered themselves settled at Haye Place.

If Cecil must be so silly as to marry, there was Juliet Fairfax, of equal rank, of more than equal wealth, without anything tiresome, or talented, or mystical, or enigmatical about her. Gertrude and Helen really liked this friend of their school-days, and would have consented to welcome her as a sister with some cordiality. But perhaps the cordiality would never be demanded ; and the extreme uncertainty of obtaining just what one wants in the world, provided such gloomy cogitation and speculation, that Helen beheld the fair landscape as if no April haze, but a November fog, were the atmosphere of the homeward drive.

CHAPTER X.

AN ANCIENT ANNIVERSARY.

ALEXINA lingered in the now empty garden in a solitary fashion. All her bright spirits were subdued, her gaiety had fled. She looked for the canary in a purposeless, but desperate way. He must have flown somewhere in fun. No canary could be meant to bring sorrow on Lexie. He must be hidden in that hedge, or he had doubtless gone to sleep at the foot of that tree; or he had met another bird, and they were twittering about the odd climate of England, or exchanging gossip of foreign doings and country manners. Judging from her own inclination for gossip, he might be delayed, but that he *would* return she was convinced.

“Nasty little thing!” she mused, gazing up into the blue sky, where fleecy golden

clouds floated, as if the canary were sure to be perched somewhere near the sun. "He flew away to get me into trouble. He was in a hurry to go out. I have no doubt Ruth would have let him free, sooner or later." For Lexie was just as far as ever from knowing that Philip only intended to tease her. He was always grave. Why should he suddenly leave off being serious? It did not occur to her that he might possibly be more light-hearted generally, if her own conduct were less inconsistent. "Where *have* you gone, you disagreeable little monster?" and she gazed down into the depths of a stream that lay just beyond the Ivy House. "Perhaps he has plunged in, or killed himself, or bathed himself, or tried to fetch up a fish."

She knelt beside the stream, and taking off her hat to fan her flushed face, continued her fantastic search. The water reflected her lovely, innocent countenance; but although various odd contributions worthy of an aquarium kicked and struggled therein, and ate one another, the little canary was not to be found in its shallow clearness.

"How can anybody be really displeased with me?" Lexie murmured. "I do not look

wicked, or vexatious. On the contrary, there is something quite meek and disarming in my appearance. Let me cultivate it, before I hear mamma's discourse on the evil doings of the day. As for Philip——” Here a very despondent, pained sigh broke her voice.

“As for Philip, Lexie, what have you to say about him?” and two hands were lightly laid on her shoulders. “What are you doing here, talking to the river about your friends?”

“Telling it that I cannot bear you!” she exclaimed, springing to her feet, and forgetting the culture of her meek expression, in her anger. “Had not you the sense to feel that I never wanted your stupid bird, that I cared not in the least if you gave all your silks and nonsensical stuffs and miserable canaries to Ruth, but that I *did* care for your refusal before those strangers? You have humiliated me, not by denying the thing that I entreated, but by persisting before others, who would be glad—yes, delighted, Philip—to witness my defeat in anything that I set myself to possess.”

“Alexina, have I not cause of complaint, too? Strangers—you call your new acquaintance strangers! How, then, did it come to

pass that you allowed Mr. Haye to untwist your hair? You are wild, and often carried away by your love of mirth; but until now, I never thought you could flirt."

Lexie blushed scarlet, and answered passionately, "*You* may say what you choose, of course. I am not going to excuse myself to you. What authority have you over me, Philip Florian, that you preach, and worry, and moralize?"

"None, Lexie," he said, so sorrowfully, that the wilful, warm heart was full of remorse directly; "but you rush headlong into danger, and I have been used to save you."

"Yes; how generous to remind me! What a pity you did not put me back in the fire! You might, if you had guessed how I should grow up."

"Your conscience will test the truth of that taunt, Lexie; it needs no denial of mine. But after to-day it will rest with yourself if I exercise the privilege of friendship, relationship—love, Lexie! How could you, trained in simplicity, constantly in the companionship of such gently reserved and reticent women as your mother and sister—how could you forget, in an access of gaiety,

the rearing you have received? I must, I will speak to you while I can. Miss Hays noticed your manners, Estelle looked unhappy. Mr. Hays amuses himself with you. Is it likely that a man of the world thinks of the obscure Jewish family for an hour after he has left the Ivy House? I wish you had never seen these people. Could it be you, Lexie—the tender, sympathetic girl who sat up all night with her sick linnnet, wrapped in a shawl, with her old dog resting his weary, faithful, blind head against her knee without complaint, in spite of her own delicacy,—oh, can it be the same Lexie that pushed the poor canary from his comfortable cage out into the chill of the changeable day, only because she was jealous, only because she was too hasty to see that if she were altered, her stupid, blundering cousin was unchanged? Why, Lexie, it is no secret that I love you, that I have always loved you. You cannot pretend to doubt it. I ask you now to love me a little in return; to believe in my ability to shield you—slight, fragile, beautiful as you are—from the storms and troubles of life. I am assured that your father and mother will consent. Is it not because I care for you beyond any one, that

for your own sake I beg of you to be quieter and more reserved when you see Mr. Hays? Tell me, dear, will you give me the right to protect you hereafter? Will you marry me?"

But Lexie turned away with a sudden sob. "Could it be for Cecil?" Philip wondered.

"No, I will not!" she exclaimed.

If Philip's lectures had been more judicious, if he had wisely stopped at the recapitulation of her early virtues, all might have been well. Alexina's easily melted heart was all but overcome at the mention of her old pets. But it was unbearable to hear him insist on her fault of manner, to reiterate the fact of Cecil's indifference to her, when she was wholly indifferent to Cecil. He was jealous, and Lexie found a settled exultation surmount her mingled feelings at the conviction that he *could* be jealous, that she had the power of stirring and exciting the latent strength that lurked in his usually calm, unruffled nature. Let him believe that her heart had wandered from its foregone allegiance. If he were so soon misled, what did it matter? He must be dull if he did not see that with Cecil she was but half in earnest; whereas she was quite firm in her resolve of vexing and teasing

Philip, and of rousing his anxiety by such an elaborate artifice that it lost her his good opinion.

“Marry you,” she repeated, “to be tutored, and disciplined, and lectured for ever! No, Philip. I hate you for your harshness before those people.”

“So be it, Lexie,” he replied, dropping the reluctant hands he had taken in his, and turning very white. “Recollect, however, that one like Cecil Hays does not spend his time in visiting people in our situation. He accepts his acquaintance with us as something novel—not engrossing, not to be entwined with the important aims, the former associations of the days before he saw you. Do you suppose he will remain in the country idle, unemployed, and content to occupy his hours with morning visits?” continued the young man, whose ignorance of the life led by an English country gentleman was only surpassed by that of Alexina. “No. But it amuses him to look at Estelle’s drawings; to hear you sing—you are never too tired to sing to visitors, Lexie;—to listen to two talented Jewish girls speaking of their bright hopes; to find that the Hofers are neither

frivolous nor fond of dress; to hear them discuss this one's ability for an artist life, and that one's fancy for acting."

"You would know pretty well how to take the character of Othello yourself, Philip," exclaimed Lexie. "How can you care for such a monster as you judge me to be? But you do not require a wife—it is a docile disciple, an awe-struck pupil that you want; and if you wait for Ruth, she may please you and reward your dreary sermons by-and-by. But whether or no, Philip Florian, if you wait for ever and ever, you will never marry me."

With a mocking laugh Lexie caught up her hat, and ran off into the house—half conscious of the blow her scornful words had dealt, half callous to their effect, but triumphant, exultant, abashed, and defiant—in a whirl of anger and happiness. She had given her cousin that bitter answer without the least idea that he would regard it as final. Alexina's few summers had proved her power of winning affection, of absorbing love; but whether she possessed the sweeter and feminine capacity for returning in any measure that which the wild freaks of her wayward disposition called forth, remained for time to develop.

Between Estelle and Alexina an unspoken bond existed—a kind of compact that compelled the elder sister to shield the little one's errors and escapades ; therefore Lexie easily dismissed the fear that Mrs. Hofer might be told of her wilfulness, and spent the afternoon in tolerable comfort, playing until twilight stole into the dining-room, and the sunless, sad, later hours of the day merged in shadows. Therewith the tumult of her feelings subsided, and she stole upstairs dejected, chilled by the influence of the time, and astonished that the sound of the piano had not called Philip as usual to her side. She went to Estelle, certain of finding her in the attic, and vexed at the tranquillity with which she continued her studies.

“How cool of you, Estelle, to prosecute your art just as if nothing had been said in your praise !”

“That is all the more reason, surely, Lexie.”

“Nonsense. Rest on your laurels for a while, and tell me, is it not very hard that we do not go to concerts and balls and pay visits, as other girls do in the world? Papa wants to bury us, Estelle, before we are

actually grown up. He will only stare when you tell him you will be an artist. I know that dreamy, misty stare, that means nothing."

"Lexie, how can you?" said her sister, aware that she must humour the perversity that had invited its pain. "And, oh! how foolish you are to risk your future happiness by such thoughtless conduct! Philip loves you."

"So he told me," said Lexie; "and he preached and scolded like anything that is authoritative and annoying and disagreeable all at once. But I laughed at him; and he must be conceited to disturb himself with my welfare after that—for who would care for him beside Cecil?"

Estelle withheld the longed-for contradiction, and Alexina roamed downstairs again listlessly, meeting Mrs. Hofer at last, and greeting her with the eagerness an especially idle child displays on meeting a playmate.

"What a darling you are, poking about after your hoards and things!" she exclaimed, fondly passing her arm round her step-mother's shoulders. "What are you thinking of now?—jam, the butcher's bill, the Passover arrangements?"

“No, Lexie. For once I am blaming myself for having been too partial to one little daughter to be thoroughly just to the other. How wonderful it seems to me that Estelle’s head and hand should have planned and wrought such beautiful pictures!”

“Yes,” was the hesitating answer. “But you forget Estelle’s drawings are silent evidences of a silent gift. With all my native modesty, mamma, my singing must sound. You could not shut your ears to the proof of my talent, even if you would. I am innately sober, and fond of quiet; but, as a compensation for this defect, I am forced to make a noise against my will. So this introduction leads up to one important fact. You never did wrong, mamma, and you never will. Estelle could have confided in you as I do.”

“Lexie, is all this flattery designed to check a reproof by its sweetness?”

“Which I would not deceive you, dear, it is. You were looking out of the window when we were in the garden. There was a horrid little frown on your nice smooth forehead. Was that for me?”

“Alexina, how could you allow Mr. Haye

to draw out your hair to its length? Like Absalom, with his gold-weighted scented locks, I fear you will find your vanity its own punishment."

Lexie's head drooped.

"I guessed there was something on your mind, mamma, but I hoped it might not be my sins. I was but showing the garden, and he said I would make a good Perdita; and then I did a little of her part, and pulled up some of the—

‘ Daffodils,

That come before the swallow dares, and take
The winds of March with beauty; violets, dim,
But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes—— ’”

“ And then you pulled out your plaits, to match the colour of thé daffodils, I suppose? Lexie, if you were older and wiser, I might call such an act coquettish. But it is an odious word, and I used to delight in your simplicity. Mr. Haye is kind, and amiable, and clever; but you must not cause me to regret I allowed you to make his acquaintance.”

“ *You* are very simple-minded,” Alexina reflected; and then aloud, “ Do not make any

fuss over me, mamma ; but my head aches. I shall not have any dinner, but just go to my room."

"Because you vexed me, Lexie?"

"Oh no, mamma," she said lightly. "You can call me coquettish, or what you will; and, in fact, you are more privileged than Philip to be angry and to remonstrate."

"Then he disapproved of what he saw?"

"It is not for him to disapprove," said Lexie, angrily. "Ask Ruth to come up before she goes to bed, mamma, and let me hear what my father says to Esty's secret. What! are those screens for me?"

"No, dear. Esty took such a fancy for them. I meant them for her hereafter, but she shall have them now."

"Because she can draw," said Lexie. "And is the bracelet for me, because I can sing?"

And with a hasty kiss she ran up the staircase.

The truth was that Philip's depth of reproach blunted Lexie's perception to the force of Mrs. Hofer's. He had prepared her mind to receive that; but she could not meet him just yet, for with all her pretended bravery, Alexina was a coward. In the quiet of her

room she found an outlet for her self-reproach. She uttered the grief in tears for which no phrases could be chosen. She thought alternately of Philip, and her own too tardy remorse for vexing him; she thought of the cageless canary, of Cecil and his sisters. Lexie was unused to tears; they fatigued and weakened her; they were an indulgence she could not afford. But when Ruth came up she blew out the candles, hoping by that means to avert the watchful gaze, ever on the alert.

Yet Ruth's wisdom was not to be baffled.

"I have some tea for you, Lexie, but you cannot drink it in the dark. You blew the candles out because you have been crying. I know the reason. Did mamma say you were to go without your dinner? What have you been doing wrong? If you are sorry, and really intend to do better," she continued, with a judicial air, "and tell *me*, I will beg you off."

"Ruth, you naughty little creature, how dare you say such things? Tell me all about Esty and papa—and was Philip pleased?—and leave off worrying about me."

Lexie's tones were unnaturally mild, but

she wished to conciliate her little sister, and so was compelled to lay down her pride.

“Sit down, Ruthie, and tell me everything. My head aches, and there is a china figure on the toilette table you can have for yourself. I do not think I shall live to a great age, Ruth. This is such a queer world.”

“Poor Lexie! Can you remember another world, Lexie?”

“Not just at present. Now give me the tea and the biscuits. If you spill either you will be dreadfully awkward. Suppose you were blind, Ruth; you would have to feel all about in the dark. So you must be careful. It is very kind of me, when I have a *dreadful* headache,” said Lexie, emphatically, “to concern myself with your future.”

“Yes,” said Ruth; greatly impressed. “I hope you will not die, Lexie; and I shall be glad of the china figure, and I hope I shall not be blind either. Does everybody practise for complaints that may come? Are you playing at missing your dinner in case papa should be poor and you would be forced to go without? Well, Lexie, you need not shake me to hurry me for your news. You cannot be so very ill.”

“ You are just like a bitter truthful tonic, and which requires frequent shaking, Ruthie. But never mind, it was only to stir you to narrative. Now, *what* did papa say ? ”

“ Oh, he placed his hand on Estelle’s head, and asked who helped her, and how she acquired the taste for drawing. And she said because she could not sing she was forced to be eloquent in some way, to show the beauty of the world, and to put either in words or sketches her love of loveliness. And then he said, ‘ A true artist ; ’ and then he looked straight over her, as if she were not standing before him. Then he kissed her, Lexie, and spoke to himself. ‘ A well-skilled hand, a warm and affectionate heart that can wait and work in silence—my dear child Estelle ! ’ Ah, Lexie, she grew pretty, as if a fairy had touched her. Why did you hide alone ? And then Philip kissed her, and mamma held out two old-fashioned screens. Mamma said, ‘ I have not a great deal to give Esty, but these belonged to my grandmother, and I am proud of my girl, and desire to please her, and they are hers. ’ And papa took off an old ring—it fits two of my fingers and two of Gabriel’s—and he slid

it on hers, and said, 'Estelle Mary, this was your dear mother's, after whom you are named. You may wear it in peace, for you are a good child.' Oh, Lexie, there was a real tear on papa's face, and Estelle threw her arms round him and sobbed with joy. Are you crying, Lexie? Do you want to take back the china figure?" added Ruth, after a pause, for her experience of Lexie had taught her misgivings.

Alexina was perfectly able to realize this touching and simple scene. In that great world for which she longed, what was there to equal the simplicity, the safe home-keeping, the anxious, firm guardianship of her youth? Estelle had reached her ideal in something of the same fashion as her forefathers, she thought, with the tinge of exaggeration that deepened the tints of the domestic picture she had witnessed. Ah, why indeed had she been absent? How was it that she wounded herself when she only tried to wound Philip?

"Philip is going abroad again directly after the holy-days. He intends to be a travelling partner—I think that was the name of the profession," Ruth resumed with great dignity. "The other man can live in Man-

chester, he told papa. But Philip was very pale and melancholy, and Gabriel asked, 'Are you afraid of the sea, cousin?' and Philip smiled so unhappily, and answered, 'No, cousin; but I am afraid of something else.' Lexie, do *you* know what Philip fears? Is it anything very dreadful? Why, you do cry to-night at everything I say! Shall I tell Philip you are afraid of it too?"

"Ruth," whispered Lexie, laying her tear-wet cheek on her little sister's, "I will give you my watch—it can be made to go for an hour a day, if you save up your money to have it put in order—if you promise—if you vow not to say a word to Philip, not to any one, that I cried a little."

"A little, Lexie? Why, you have been howling in the dark quite loudly. What is 'vow?' Is it not very wicked to teach me to swear? Of course I will promise, without your watch. You may not die; and then, you often ask for a gift to be returned when things go wrong, and you recover."

"Gift, indeed!" said Alexina; "and in German *gift* means poison. My gifts mean poison, I believe. What pleasure do they

bring to any? Did no one miss me, Ruth?"

"Oh yes. Esty looked grave when she heard your head ached, and papa said your place seemed obtrusively empty, and Philip——"

"Well, go on."

"You are so impatient, Lexie. I said 'and Philip' because there was nothing else left to say. That finished it; for Philip did not speak. Oh, pray don't cry. Let me hush you to sleep, dear!"

Ruth drew the golden head closely to her in the dark. She was perplexed and alarmed, but she had not much respect for Lexie, who was only an elder and more indulged child than herself, according to her views. She needed coaxing, and in a quaint, tender manner, the little girl tried to coax her. But Alexina, despite her fitful moods of sharpness, had a thorough belief in the truth and rectitude of the child. She relied on Ruth, and was sure that, if she were puzzled, she was sincere. Some bright circumstance would be certain to happen, some practical and poetical occurrence would reveal her whimsical attachment to Philip, and compel

him to alter his plans, and turn the tangled course of events.

So Lexie slept peacefully, and Estelle lay awake, pondering over the day that had revealed so much, that differed from the usual hushed monotony, and that stood out from a background of unbroken sameness.

The following evening ushered in the feast of the Passover, in commemoration of the stealthy, solemn departure of thousands of bondmen from their cruel servitude in Egypt. Across the high window of the little country synagogue the budding trees waved and threw their branches in a rhythmical, regular sweetness, so unutterably peaceful, so fraught with repose, and suggestive of cessation from all the weary impositions that man's restless desire of power enforces, that Estelle's imagination, her vivid picturing of that weary march through the desert, were lulled into a sense of security.

Alexina, seated beside her in the high gallery appropriated to the wives and daughters of the worshippers, strained her bright eyes to seek Philip below. There he stood, his tall figure wrapped in its *talith*, the white silken mantle of worship bordered and

fringed with blue; and near him was the stooping form of Dr. Hofer, holding Gabriel's little hand.

There, too, to the great surprise of Estelle, was Cecil, his fair complexion and European characteristics strangely in contrast with the surrounding congregation, whose generally aquiline features and glowing eyes were mournful or vivacious, but always dark and intense. Philip also saw Cecil; but as he leant against a pillar, with arms folded in the picturesque garment of prayer, he was both careless and unconscious of the anxious glance that sought him, and that discerned no other in the little crowd. Cecil had visited the synagogue, to the extreme annoyance of his sisters, who could find nothing interesting in a meeting that the two Hofers would certainly join.

Gerard had seen so many of the observances of the Israelites, that, as Helen and Gertrude did not care to go with Cecil, he remained at Haye Place. But Miss Charteris had been strongly impelled by her nephew's influence, and trotted off alone, coming in rather late and much fluttered, and so conscientiously desirous of not wounding any

one's feelings, so bent on avoiding remark or attention, that the prayer-book quietly handed by Estelle was permitted to fall with a needless noise from her unsteady fingers.

"Thank you, thank you, my dear."

She took the vacant seat beside Estelle, and during the short service tried to follow the sonorous and majestic sounds of a language of which she was wholly ignorant. Besides the two Hofers, few ladies occupied the gallery, many of the little community being busily employed at home with the preparation of the solemn rites connected with the Passover. To Cecil below and Miss Charteris above, this separation of the congregation appeared a strange, unnatural remnant of eastern habits, morbidly suggestive of past oriental manners, hardly sanctioned by latter European civilization. And yet in the Greek Church the ladies likewise sit withdrawn, while those of the Anglican creed often remain in distinct seats, although they worship without quite so marked an arrangement as that of the Jewish synagogue. Since the destruction of the Temple no aid of musical instruments, no splendid display of gold and silver, no brazen

pedestals, carved and wreathed, and magnificent in adornment, mark how dear and beloved is that sanctuary dedicated to his Creator by the Hebrew. The clouds of incense, the echoes of psaltery and harp—all, all are gone; and comparatively scant and spare is the ceremony that indicates the thought and earnestness bestowed on the plan, and spent on the erection of a fitting palace of praise, watched by an army of priests. The grandeur of the Catholic ceremonial nearly approaches that ornate and poetic form of adoration of which Jews are deprived, and whereon the Hebrew historian dwells with an emphasis and reiteration such as show the delight of his task. Sacrifices, insisted on in the earlier centuries, were not the only part of a grand and splendid institution. They might be the visible expression of the worshipper's mingled emotions; but the delicate aids of music and song helped that mystic yet thoroughly heartfelt formula, and the songs of degrees, sung by ascending and descending priests on the steps of the altar, were another tribute to the influence of all beauty of sound or sight on a cherished creed.

In this small country synagogue, built but a mile or two from the grey and aged cathedral rich in various designs of marble and wood, Estelle—and perhaps Cecil—thought of the mournful changes that had shorn a royal and haughty race of its former glory; of the reverses that had scattered a nation, chosen by God, not as the most petted and indulged among His other children, but as an exponent of His most merciful laws and ordinances; of the struggles to preserve some signs of foregone splendour in their fettered mode of life.

There was the ark, behind its purple curtain, containing the scrolls of the law. There stood the silver basin and jug, used by the officiating minister, and emblematic of cleanliness, the sole remnant of countless valuable vessels once used in the service of the Temple. Enforced simplicity of adornment, and the old love of the Israelite for magnificence and colour, here were pathetically mingled, or rather each could be discerned by a thoughtful spectator, as if battling against the overwhelming pressure of the other; while fate compelled a puritanical meagreness in a poor and limited congregation, and in-

sisted on controlling that native delight in decoration and grace of form or hue that assert themselves above the misfortunes that have kept the Jews a long-suffering as well as an oppressed race, and hindered them of their birthright. There is nothing now beyond the close observance of their long-cherished ordinances to link the Jews together—to preserve them as that peculiar and powerful people selected for the mighty tests of patience and suffering,—unless, indeed, the spirituality of a spiritual faith should tower over prejudice, and stand nobly aside from the contact of worldly aims, which are far from being enjoined by the Mosaic code. This code is sometimes aspersed by the ignorant as being deficient in tenderness and mercy, whereas its gentle and merciful ideas carry out the spontaneous feelings of love and forbearance implanted naturally in all humanity. That law that, in its severe justice awarded a rigorous punishment, exact and similar in detail to the proportion of a crime committed, could also decree that if a garment were given as a security for debt, it was to be returned before sunset—“for the raiment was for the debtor’s skin!”—to protect him from the dews and damp of the night.

Justice was to be supplemented by compassion! The sombre tapestry, whereon tales of stern equity could be traced, was to be interwoven and lightened by the bright and lavish embroidery of one golden thread of mercy, that traced a pure and beautiful record of its own throughout the ages.

The prayers were soon finished, for the actual ceremonial of the Passover was to be celebrated in the homes of the congregants.

Cecil and the Hofers met at the synagogue door, but a fear of intrusion—a sense of the strongly defined line drawn between the two creeds—infused a new element of stiffness into the customary greetings. With Cecil this all at once approached shyness; and with Estelle it deepened to a nervous reluctance to awake from her old sweet dreams, and come forth into the chill, clear atmosphere of reality, where plain facts must be confronted. The synagogue that represented every tenet of her faith was merely a solemn spectacle to him; and the loving heart sank, while over her sensitive disposition a cloud fell, as she framed the vain wish that all the world could agree, and seek heaven by the same path, and gain it without too many opposing arguments.

But Alexina's sole anxiety was that Philip should talk to her, for even the sternest remarks he might utter would be preferable to this studied silence. She forgot her waywardness; she could not believe that he remembered anything she intended to be consigned to oblivion, and her astonishment at perceiving that he could be angry and offended with her, was only increased by the continuance of such a state of mind; and the keenness of her proud remorse took an additional pang as she dwelt on his approaching departure. Thus Lexie grew strangely quiet, and after her first vain and most desperate efforts to win his forgiveness by rash jests, and a demeanour of elaborate indifference, she appeared to accept his mood as changeless.

The silver lamp with its long chains, and seven wicks typical of the seven days of the week, shed its soft radiance above the table where the family assembled to do honour to the anniversary of the birth of their nation, almost equally with its redemption. Estelle and Dr. Hofer saw, with the eyes of the visionary and the poet, the loosening of the insupportable fetters, the wild rush of

the stubborn and stricken souls towards the sweet boon of liberty, the longing after those beloved and peaceful days of agricultural pursuits in the warm, cedar-scented air of their fair territories. The father and daughter could hear, through the dim vistas of vanished years, the clank of the chains, the toiling feet that marched back and forth with the tale of bricks in the sultry sun, as they built the countless palaces of their tyrant. And Mrs. Hofer, also, could picture more vividly than any horror of persecution or annal of bondage, or detail of barbaric splendour, the pity and grief wrought by the plagues in Egyptian households, and her gentle maternal sympathy spared some sorrow for the Egyptian mothers who mourned the loss of their firstborn many thousand years ago.

Philip allowed all the imagination he possessed to wander in surmises concerning Lexie's possible prototype in those far-off days; while Lexie mused on the hardships of the desert march, and felt that it might have been enlivened by jokes had she formed one of the multitude, and questioned whether her ancestors suffered with more poignancy than their descendant on being compelled to

give up their will, and if their simple dances and thanksgivings satisfied their taste for pleasure, and what delight it might have been, had she lived at that period, to prove her bravery and unselfishness to Philip, and how they two would have steadily trodden side by side, surmounting all difficulties together. And then, when she fell or fainted,—she continued, quickly coming to the end of speculations on the length of time her bravery was likely to last, and soon relinquishing love of endurance,—he would have cared for her and lifted her up, and have carried her over the rugged places, and soothed and cheered his delicate Lexie, and always have given her the best gifts.

“We could not have quarrelled in the desert,” mused Lexie; “we should have been stoned, or something horrid, and my education would have led up, by then natural phases, to a familiar acquaintance with stoning and a fear of its particular application, and a dislike of its results.”

Had Ruth and Gabriel been asked what special curiosity was awakened in the quaint references their fancy might make to this holyday and its incidents, they would have

answered as they truly considered, that the plague of frogs filled their little heads with a hundred surmises attractively terrible.

Ruth's wide-eyed, innocent gaze already beheld frogs in her plate, struggling and kicking frogs in her pocket, a frog neatly folded in the leaves of her detested French exercise; frogs calmly asleep on her pillow, trying on her boots, rushing over her dolls, croaking with a ghastly cough when she, too, went to bed and disturbed their repose; active frogs who ran into her cup of milk, and probably drowned themselves in a crowded and lingering fashion; slow frogs who trotted on the back of her chair and reached a desired goal in her thickest curl; young frogs who fought and sprawled; old frogs who might die anywhere and with unpleasant suddenness.

Gabriel thought of playing as a frog, with frogs; of drying varied specimens for his museum; of a perfect harvest of practical jokes connected with them; of the extraordinary vivacity a horde and incursion of frogs would have conferred on the monotony of school life, and Estelle's amateur attempts at coaching; of frog patterns on the walls; of frogs carpeting the carpet; of frogs sitting on

the ceiling, coming in at the door, tumbling out of the window;—frogs of the family, who were permitted, like many other family plagues, a certain latitude. Their English life supplied a background to such an infliction, and formed a basis for their fancy to work on; and although the two well understood the force and significance of the memorial of their fathers' yoke of bondage and servitude, the mission of these untold, lively creatures formed the chief theme of their cogitations.

There was a dish of bitter herbs, commemorating the bitterness of that foregone tyranny; a hard-boiled egg, and the shank-bone of a lamb to remind the liberated people of the paschal lamb—the last midnight meal,—taken, in despite and in sight of the Egyptians, who chose a lamb as an idol, and sacrificed before them; and the unleavened cakes, eaten in remembrance of the haste with which the fugitive Israelite prepared the meal and water and salt of the daily bread, from which the leaven was absent through stress of hurry. A glass of raisin wine, sweet, and pressed from the purest fruit, and, like all the provisions of the week, totally free from the yeasty spirit that caused fermentation, was placed before

each. The damask cloth was of the finest ; the old, carefully kept china, was a relic of better times ; the cut-glass was heavy and bright ; and everything testified to the honour willingly accorded to the feast.

Dr. Hofer stood up, and read from the little book containing the sternly simple description of the departure from the land of slavery. And as he read, the reverses and speedy change from royalty to captivity struck him afresh with a sense of discipline and retribution.

After the first short extract from the narrative, after pointing to the "bread of affliction," Gabriel, as the youngest of the company, resumed the thread of the ancient tale.

With heightened colour, and in a clear tone, trembling with the unaccustomed honour of being allowed to speak unaccompanied by Ruth, he took his small part in the service.

"Wherefore," he asked from the book in his hands, "is this night distinguished from all other nights ? On all other nights we may eat either leavened or unleavened bread, but on this night only unleavened bread ; on

all other nights we may eat any species of herbs, but on this night only bitter herbs; on all other nights we do not dip in the wine even once, but on this night twice; on all other nights we may eat either sitting or leaning, but on this night we all lean" (to denote the ease and joy of liberation).

Gabriel translated this, word by word, from the Hebrew. Estelle had instructed him, and many were the anxious fears lest her wild pupil might blunder. But he went on, sure of success; and smiles of gratification rewarded him, while he glanced triumphantly at Ruth, as if to assure her that in all things she could not excel him, and to remind her that here was an opportunity of excelling with which she could have nothing to do.

Thus the narration of the memorial of that past bondage that has left its long remembrance as a shadow across Judaism went on. After all the formalities, and after all the customs, were rigidly observed, the Father, who brought His people with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm over seas and deserts, was extolled by a selection of those eloquent and grateful psalms known as the *Hallel*, or collection of praises.

It was the eve of the Sabbath besides, and so one ceremony deepened the earnestness of the other ; and when it ended, a fresh bond of affection appeared to have joined the family together—always excepting Philip and his favourite cousin. For Lexie, little rose-colour illusions of the amount of forbearance any behaviour of hers would naturally call forth, were dimming and fading before the settled coldness and gravity of the young man.

“My pussey,” said her father, fondly, “you are very silent and quiet. Are you not well?”

“I am in the *best* health,” said Alexina, emphatically, rousing herself to reply, as Philip involuntarily looked at her. “I hardly ever felt so robust. The bitter herbs and things are like tonics; and I am rejoicing that, if ever I was a slave, I am one no longer. And then, papa, you say that this year we celebrate the festival here, but on the next anniversary we hope to be in Jerusalem. So do I. Mr. Haye’s cousin Gerard has seen that vine-clad fortress of our nation. Is not that sentence like some of Estelle’s, papa? Do you know that Miss Charteris wishes her to go and stay with her and study art?”

A deeper shade of gloom darkened Philip's countenance.

"But that could not come to pass," Dr. Hofer said, seriously.

"Estelle, you are too young to travel with aliens. You could not possibly preserve your own particular belief. You are too timid, and too ignorant. I hope your heart is not set on this?"

But a great cry of unuttered rebellion rose to Estelle's throat, and seemed almost to choke her. She fought with the conviction that just as this one chance of assistance had been offered, it would be refused; that after the excitement that she could do anything well had subsided, she was to fall back on her old unfulfilled wishes, her struggles without instruction,—her often tame and unprofitable studies rendered doubly dull if that one hope were withdrawn. No one beside herself thought very much of painting. No one understood among her relations, or cared to understand, her rapture in colour, her satisfaction in graceful and harmonious lines; or knew how, when those skilled fingers were busily at work, they grew restless while her head wove designs for fresh pictures.

“Papa,” she said, in a voice that vainly strove for steadiness, “surely you can trust me in the world? Miss Charteris is a lady of a thoroughly delicate mind, and thoughtful of the welfare of all in her charge. She would not interfere with me. Papa”—clasping her hands,—“I should see Venice; think of that. I should see Lake Constance. Do you think those fair scenes would blot out this of home?”

She gazed around the panelled walls, on the dear faces of the children, and then continued, with urgent entreaty, “I might even see Prague, papa. Oh, think of that! And when, after a year, I should return an artist, Gabriel’s education need cause you no solicitude—he should be my boy. And if in mere matters of rabbinical law I might transgress—for who can promise or guard against the necessary inroad of circumstances in foreign lands,—I would not eat really forbidden things, or travel on Saturday. Surely, papa, those strict precepts are but the extreme bulwarks to prevent the minor treasures of spiritual faith from attacks. Shall I give up art only for chimeras of custom? There are synagogues everywhere, and I need not follow

any other example than that I have known and loved from childhood. I should still pray, still perform the usual observances, abide by one ritual, respect and honour old things."

"Hush, hush, Estelle! You speak too thoughtlessly. You are an enthusiast, Estelle; yet I am no fanatic. Do I desire to deprive you of real advantages? But listen, Estelle. You may or may not succeed as an artist. If you should, I know you would carry out your impulses—always unselfish ones—and help the little ones. I believe, too, you would try to do the bidding of the ancient faith of your fathers. But who can control events, as you say? And then there is that young man at Haye Place—agreeable, clever, and amiable; you would see him, you would see many like him. What Jews would you meet?"

"But, dear Franz," said Mrs. Hofer, remembering the scene in the garden, and only desirous of affording Estelle some pleasure, "he never looks at Estelle, or speaks much to her, or in any way notices her beyond the rest. He is kind and polite to us all."

Alas for such a simple sentence—so well meant, and so widely apart from the truth! Estelle felt a sickening humiliation overpower her, for she had judged Cecil as her own especial friend, and these words just proved her self-deceit and error. Philip felt his fears regarding Lexie verified, for she coloured, and stole a furtive glance from beneath her long lashes at Dr. Hofer, while she was impatient of that placid want of penetration, and gentle desire of appeasing every one, that marked her step-mother's judgment, and now led them all to play at a game of cross-purposes, made more lively by Estelle's ambition and her own coquetry.

"I knew how it would be," Estelle resumed, with an agonized feeling of disappointment that prevented her caring for the result of her speech. "At first papa was pleased to find I was not quite without ability for some one thing. Now he is tired of me again."

"Papa," Lexie exclaimed, "what is it you fear Estelle will do? She is nineteen; she is able to weigh the superiority of her gift over occurrences of minor importance. She has a conscience. There, Esty, pray do

not look so tragically miserable, but accept a drink-offering, and take this cup of tea, and cheer up."

"Esty, Lexie, you make me seem a tyrant," said Dr. Hofer, not unmoved by the sorrow of his elder daughter.

"Yes, papa," said Lexie, "that is exactly what we wish you to feel. Try and improve, Dr. Hofer, and do not forbid poor Estelle's wanderings, although she has no chance of becoming a desert pilgrim. My only astonishment is that Miss Charteris should choose such a sad little creature as a companion. She forgot my voice requires cultivation, and that I cannot live without appreciation."

"Estelle," her father said, after a short pause of earnest consideration, "let the matter rest for the present. Your intentions are excellent, and the talent entrusted to you by your Creator has a claim on me as well as on you. But although Alexina has an exalted idea of the duties of genius above religion, you will find it will not increase your happiness to slight them. Wait until this week has passed, and then when you have well thought over it, you shall tell me. if you wish to leave us for a year, and if you

can trust yourself to overcome the temptations of life apart from our guardianship. In the mean time, I shall not refuse, and your own choice shall guide you."

"Oh, papa, you are very good to me," Estelle replied, affected to tears by this glimpse of hope. "But I love the Ivy House, and you, and mamma, and the children; and if I go I shall miss home so intensely, all, each of you will be photographed on my mind, and remembrance cannot fade."

"But photographs fade," said Ruth. "Papa, please do not talk any more of going away. Philip is going, Esty is going, are you going too?"

Alexina grew pale at the little girl's remark, and Dr. Hofer sighed. His wife looked at him with affectionate solicitude as she heard the sigh; and the greyness, the stooping, the gauntness of his appearance suddenly filled her mind with a foreboding very unusual to her cheerful disposition.

"It is not like other holydays," Ruth continued fretfully. "Lexie never wanted to go to Jerusalem, and Esty did not mention Venice last year. We liked the garden then,

and sometimes the fields. I do not feel discontented now, papa ; but Philip does, and so do the girls, and Gabriel says he would like to see the Red Sea."

"And you are discontented," argued Gabriel. "Papa, she is longing to say some verses Esty taught her, because she was jealous of my repetition of that short part in the service."

"We are quite ready," said Philip, and a smile of amusement came slowly to his grave face. "Is my cousin Estelle a poet? Did she write your verses for you, Ruthie?"

"Yes," said Ruth, candidly; "and the Hays Place person saw them, I know, for he said, 'Something tells me you can write.' But that is nonsense. *Something* could not have told him, but *somebody* might, and it was Esty."

"You mistake, Ruth," said Estelle. "They were only made for you, and no one else has heard them."

"Only for me," repeated Ruth; and Gabriel saw his former expression of triumph repaid by the look she now directed towards him. "Listen, mamma, and all of you, please. It is from Exodus.

‘Certainly I will be with thee.’
 Think of that promise, timid one,
 When through the pearly mist we see
 The radiance of the rising sun ;
 When the dark fog of winter’s day
 Is lifted ; when spring flowers peep
 Beneath the hastening step of May,
 And earth awakes from deathlike sleep.

No warrior he, that hero brave,
 By whom this promise first was heard—
 The leader chosen from all, to save
 Alone, by force of God’s own word ;
 No wealthy owner of wide land,
 Or ruler clad in royal dress
 Was this, who brought the toilworn band
 Through perils of the wilderness.

Tempted at first to hesitate,
 He weighs the trouble, trial, doubt,
 The years to work, to urge, to wait,
 Before three million slaves pass out
 From Egypt’s bondage, and he prays
 That God would choose a worthier hand
 To lead, a steadier eye to gaze
 By faith towards the promised land.

One doubt of self, one silent pause,
 The Pharaoh’s cruelty to fear ;
 Thoughts of the grandeur of the cause,
 To his indignant spirit dear ;

The mighty hindrance, suffering, need,
And danger of the enterprise ;
The multitude that he must lead ;—
All pass before his wistful eyes.

And will they really follow him,
Through painful paths and sultry ways ?
And oh, how vague, far off, and dim,
Success appears in that long gaze !
The patriot heart awakes and glows
Beneath the waving cedar-tree ;
With these sweet words his courage grows—
'Certainly I will be with thee.'

Thus to my darling, fearful child,
Afraid to sleep since it grew dark,
I talk'd of heroes, and of mild,
Inspired, majestic Joan of Arc ;
Of Spartan boys, of martyr lives,
Of Esther's courage, and at last
Of all those bondmen and their wives,
The steadfast pilgrims of the past.

And now the glance of terror fades,
The little, awe-struck face is still,
Because we know our Father aids
Weak instruments who work His will ;
Because we learn from holy page
This history, bright in trust and worth,
Of one, at eighty years of age,
Who left a lesson for the earth.

Remember this great patriarch—
The risk, the anguish borne for years,
The murmuring crowd,—then in the dark
Be brave, and check the coward's tears;
Think of a promise, true, Divine,
The miracle wrought at the sea;
Rest on the words, your staff and mine,—
'Certainly I will be with thee.'

END OF VOL. I.

YORK STREET, COVENT GARDEN,

May, 1877.

A
CLASSIFIED CATALOGUE
OF
SELECTED WORKS

PUBLISHED BY
GEORGE BELL AND SONS.

CONTENTS:

Travel and Archæology	1	Poetry and Drama	11
Biography—History	2, 4	Law and Reference	14
Philosophy	5	Natural History	15
Theology	6	Art and Ornament	16
Standard Prose	10	Young People	18

TRAVEL AND ARCHÆOLOGY.

ANCIENT ATHENS; its History, Topography, and Remains. By T. H. DYER, LL.D. Super-royal 8vo. copiously Illustrated. 1*l.* 5*s.*

'Dr. Dyer's volume will be a work of reference to the student of Greek History and literature, of the greatest interest and value.'—*Spectator.*

DESERT OF THE EXODUS. Journeys on Foot in the Wilderness of the Forty Years' Wanderings, undertaken in connexion with the Ordnance Survey of Sinai and the Palestine Exploration Fund. By E. H. PALMER, M.A., Lord Almoner's Professor of Arabic, and Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge. With Maps and numerous Illustrations. 2 vols. 8vo. 1*l.* 8*s.*

'A work which the biblical student will highly prize for the strong light which it sheds upon a most important portion of Scripture history, but which cannot be read without interest and delight by every one who is capable of taking an intelligent interest in manners and customs widely removed from our own.'—*Saturday Review.*

HISTORY OF EGYPT. From the Earliest Times till its Conquest by the Arabs, A.D. 640. By S. SHARPE. With numerous Illustrations, Maps, &c. 6th Edition. 2 vols. post 8vo. 10*s.*

NINEVEH AND ITS PALACES. By J. BONOMI, F.R.S.L. New Edition, revised and considerably enlarged. With upwards of 300 Engravings. Post 8vo. 5s.

HISTORY OF POMPEII: its Buildings and Antiquities. An Account of the City, with full description of the Remains and Recent Excavations, and also an Itinerary for Visitors. By T. H. DYER, LL.D. With nearly 300 Wood Engravings, a large Map, and a Plan of the Forum. 4th Edition, bringing the work down to 1874. Post 8vo. 7s. 6d.

ROME AND THE CAMPAGNA. A Historical and Topographical Description of the Site, Buildings, and Neighbourhood of ancient Rome. By the Rev. R. BURN, late Fellow and Tutor of Trinity College, Cambridge. With 85 Engravings by JEWITT, and numerous Maps and Plans. An Appendix and additional Plan illustrating recent Excavations have lately been added. Demy 4to. 3l. 3s.

BIOGRAPHY.

BARBAULD (MRS.) A Memoir of, including Letters and Notices of her Family and Friends. By her great-niece, ANNA LETITIA LE BRETON. With Portrait. Demy 12mo. 5s.

BOSWELL'S JOHNSON, and **JOHNSONIANA.** Including his Tour to the Hebrides, Tour in Wales, &c. Edited, with large Additions and Notes, by the Rt. Hon. J. W. CROKER. The second and most complete Copyright Edition, with upwards of 40 Engravings on Steel. Post 8vo. 5 vols. 20s.

BRYAN. A Biographical and Critical Dictionary of Painters and Engravers. With a List of Ciphers, Monograms, and Marks. By M. BRYAN. A New Edition by G. STANLEY. Imp. 8vo. 2l. 2s.

— **A SUPPLEMENT of RECENT and LIVING PAINTERS.** By H. OTTLEY. Imp. 8vo. 12s.

COLERIDGE (S. T.) *Biographia Literaria,* and two Lay Sermons. Post 8vo. 3s. 6d.

COOPER (THOMPSON). A New Biographical Dictionary. By T. COOPER, F.S.A. 1 vol. 8vo. 12s.

FOSTER (JOHN), *The Life of.* 2 vols. post 8vo. 3s. 6d. each.

GOETHE, *Autobiography of (Wahrheit und Dichtung aus Meinem Leben).* 2 vols. post 8vo. 3s. 6d. each.

GOETHE. *Conversations with Eckermann and Soret.* Post 8vo. 3s. 6d.

- GOLDSMITH (O.)** The Life of. By WASHINGTON IRVING.
Post 8vo. 3s. 6d.
- IRVING (W.)** Life and Letters. By his Nephew, P. E.
IRVING. In 2 vols. post 8vo. 3s. 6d. each.
- LUTHER**, Michelet's Life of. Translated by W. HAZLITT.
Post 8vo. 3s. 6d.
- MAHOMET AND HIS SUCCESSORS.** By WASHINGTON
IRVING. Post 8vo. 3s. 6d.
- MICHAEL ANGELO AND RAPHAEL**, their Lives
and Works. By DUPPA and QUATREMERE DE QUINCY. With 13
Engravings on Steel. Post 8vo. 5s.
- NELSON**, The Life of. By R. SOUTHEY. With additional
Notes and numerous Illustrations. Post 8vo. 5s.
- RICHTER (J. P. F.)** Autobiography and short Memoir, with
the *Levana*. Post 8vo. 3s. 6d.
- WASHINGTON**, The Life of. By W. IRVING. With
Portrait. In 4 vols. post 8vo. 3s. 6d. each.
- WELLINGTON**, The Life of. By AN OLD SOLDIER, from
the materials of Maxwell. Eighteen Engravings. Post 8vo. 5s.
- WESLEY (JOHN)**, The Life of. By R. SOUTHEY. New
and Complete Edition. With Portrait. Post 8vo. 6s.

By the late Sir A. Helps, K.C.B.

- BRASSEY (T.)** The Life and Labours of the late. With
Illustrations. 5th Edition, 10s. 6d.
- HERNANDO CORTES**, The Life of, and The CON-
QUEST OF MEXICO. 2 vols. Crown 8vo. 15s.
- COLUMBUS**, The Life of. The Discoverer of America.
5th Edition. Crown 8vo. 6s.
- PIZARRO**, The Life of. With Some Account of his Associates
in the Conquest of Peru. 2nd Edition. Crown 8vo. 6s.
- LAS CASAS**, The Life of, the Apostle of the Indies. 3rd
Edition. Crown 8vo. 6s.

HISTORY.

KINGS OF ROME, History of the. By T. DYER, LL.D.
With a Prefatory Dissertation on the Sources and Evidences of
Early Roman History. Demy 8vo. 16s.

'It will mark or help to mark an era in the history of the subject to which it is devoted. It is one of the most decided as well as one of the ablest results of the reaction which is now in progress against the influence of Niebuhr.'—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

DECLINE OF THE ROMAN REPUBLIC. From
the Destruction of Carthage to the Consulship of Julius Cæsar. By
GEORGE LONG, M.A. 5 vols. 8vo. 14s. per vol.

'If any one can guide us through the almost inextricable mazes of this labyrinth, it is Mr. Long. As a chronicler, he possesses all the requisite knowledge, and what is nearly, if not quite as important, the necessary caution. He never attempts to explain that which is hopelessly corrupt or obscure; he does not confound twilight with daylight; he warns the reader repeatedly that he is standing on shaking ground; he has no framework of theory into which he presses his facts.'—*Saturday Review*.

LIFE OF THE EMPEROR KARL THE GREAT.
Translated from the contemporary HISTORY OF EGINHARD, with
Notes and Chapters on Eginhard—the Franks—Karl—and the
Breaking-up of the Empire. With a Map. By WILLIAM GLAISTER,
M.A., B.C.L., University College, Oxford. Crown 8vo. 4s. 6d.

**HISTORY OF ENGLAND, during the Early and
Middle Ages.** By C. H. PEARSON, M.A., Fellow of Oriel College,
Oxford. New Edition, much enlarged. Vol. I. 8vo. 16s. Vol. II.
8vo. 14s.

**HISTORICAL MAPS OF ENGLAND during the first
Thirteen Centuries.** With Explanatory Essays and Indices. By
C. H. PEARSON, M.A. Imp. folio. 2nd Edition. 31s. 6d.

THE BARONS' WAR. Including the Battles of Lewes and
Evesham. By W. H. BLAAUW, Esq., M.A. 2nd Edition, with
Additions and Corrections by C. H. PEARSON, M.A. Demy 8vo.
10s. 6d.

**QUEENS OF ENGLAND, from the Norman Conquest to
the Reign of Queen Anne.** By AGNES STRICKLAND. Revised
Edition. In 6 vols. post 8vo. cloth gilt, 5s. 6d. per vol.

MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS, The Life of. By A.
STRICKLAND. 2 vols. post 8vo. cloth gilt, 11s.

PHILOSOPHY.

ELEMENTS OF THOUGHT. By ISAAC TAYLOR.
Post 8vo. 4s.

HOME EDUCATION. By the same Author. Fcap. 8vo. 5s.

ELEMENTS OF MORALITY, including Polity. By
W. WHEWELL, D.D. 4th Edition. In 1 vol. 8vo. 15s.

MORAL PHILOSOPHY. Lectures on the History of, in
England. By W. WHEWELL, D.D. Crown 8vo. 8s.

EXPLORATIO PHILOSOPHICA. Rough Notes on
Modern Intellectual Science. Part I. By the late J. GROTE, B.D.
8vo. 9s.

UTILITARIAN PHILOSOPHY. An Examination of
the. By the late J. GROTE, B.D. Edited by J. B. MAYOR, M.A.,
late Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge. 8vo. 12s.

A TREATISE ON THE MORAL IDEALS. By the late
J. GROTE, B.D. Edited by J. B. MAYOR. 8vo. 12s.

MANUAL OF HUMAN CULTURE. By M. A.
GARVEY, LL.B. Crown 8vo. 7s. 6d.

LOCKE. PHILOSOPHICAL WORKS, containing an Essay
on the Human Understanding, &c., with Notes and Index by
J. A. ST. JOHN. Portrait. In 2 vols. Post 8vo. 7s.

INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT OF EUROPE.
A History of the. By J. W. DRAPER, M.D., LL.D. 2 vols. Post
8vo. 10s.

**PHILOSOPHICAL TREATISE ON THE
NATURE AND CONSTITUTION OF MAN.** By G. HARRIS.
2 vols. demy 8vo. cloth, 28s.

COMTE'S PHILOSOPHY OF THE SCIENCES. Edited
by G. H. LEWES. Post 8vo. 5s.

KANT. CRITIQUE OF PURE REASON. Translated by
J. M. D. MEIKLEJOHN. Post 8vo. 5s.

**HEGEL. LECTURES ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF
HISTORY.** Translated by J. SIBREE, M.A. Post 8vo. 5s.

THEOLOGY.

ARTICLES OF RELIGION, History of the. To which is added a Series of Documents from A.D. 1536 to A.D. 1615. Together with Illustrations from contemporary sources. By the late C. HARDWICK, M.A., Archdeacon of Ely. 3rd Edition. Revised by the Rev. F. PROCTER, M.A., Author of 'A History of the Book of Common Prayer,' with additional matter. Post 8vo. 5s.

THE CREEDS, History of. By J. RAWSON LUMBY, M.A., Tyrwhitt's Hebrew Scholar, Crosse Divinity Scholar. Crown 8vo. 7s. 6d.

PEARSON (BP.) ON THE CREED. Carefully printed from an Early Edition. With Analysis and Index. Edited by E. WALFORD, M.A. Post 8vo. 5s.

COMMON PRAYER. Historical and Explanatory Treatise on the Book of. By W. G. HUMPHRY, B.D., Prebendary of St. Paul's and Vicar of St. Martin-in-the-Fields. 5th Edition, revised and enlarged. Fcap. 8vo. 4s. 6d.

COMMON PRAYER, Rational Illustrations of the Book of. By C. WHEATLY, M.A. Post 8vo. 3s. 6d.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT. By F. BLEEK. Translated from the German by G. H. VENABLES, under the supervision of the Rev. E. VENABLES. In 2 vols. 10s.

COMPANION TO THE GREEK TESTAMENT. For the use of Theological Students and the Upper Forms in Schools. By A. C. BARRETT, M.A., Caius College. 3rd Edition, enlarged and improved. Fcap. 8vo. 5s.

By F. H. Scrivener, D.C.L., Prebendary of Exeter.

NOVUM TESTAMENTUM GRÆCUM, TEXTUS STEPHANICI, 1550. Accedunt variae lectiones editionum Bezae, Elzeviri, Lachmanni, Tischendorfii, et Tregellesii. 16mo. 4s. 6d. With wide Margin for Notes, 4to. 12s.

A PLAIN INTRODUCTION TO THE CRITICISM OF THE NEW TESTAMENT. With 40 Facsimiles from Ancient Manuscripts. Containing also an Account of the Egyptian Versions by Canon LIGHTFOOT, D.D. For the Use of Biblical Students. New Edition. Demy 8vo. 16s.

SIX LECTURES ON THE TEXT OF THE NEW TESTAMENT and the ancient Manuscripts which contain it. Chiefly addressed to those who do not read Greek. With facsimiles from MSS. &c. Crown 8vo. 6s.

BOOK OF PSALMS; a New Translation, with Introductions and Notes, Critical and Explanatory. By the Rev. J. J. STEWART PEROWNE, D.D., Canon Residentiary of Llandaff, and Hulsean Professor of Divinity, Cambridge. 8vo. Vol. I, 3rd Edition, 18s. Vol. II, 3rd Edition, 16s. An abridged Edition for Schools and Private Students. Crown 8vo. 10s. 6d.

A COMMENTARY ON THE GOSPELS AND EPISTLES for the Sundays and other Holy Days of the Christian Year. By the Rev. W. DENTON, A.M., Worcester College, Oxford, and Incumbent of St. Bartholomew's, Cripplegate. In 5 vols. 18s. each.

A COMMENTARY ON THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES. In 2 vols. Vol. I, 18s. Vol. II, 14s.

These Commentaries originated in Notes collected by the compiler to aid in the composition of expository sermons. They are derived from all available sources, and especially from the wide but little-known field of theological comment found in the 'Schoolmen' of the Middle Ages. The special nature of the sources from which they have been derived, ought to make them indispensable to all who wish to expound the Holy Scriptures with as much understanding as may be obtained by extraneous help.

BIBLE-ENGLISH. Chapters on Words and Phrases in the Authorized Version of the Holy Scriptures and the Book of Common Prayer, no longer in common use; illustrated from contemporaneous writers. By the Rev. T. LEWIS O. DAVIES, M.A., Vicar of St. Mary Extra, Southampton. Small crown 8vo. 5s.

'Everyone who takes an interest in the history of the English Language, and indeed everyone who is not absolutely inattentive to the words spoken around him, may turn to Mr. Davies's little book with the certainty of finding both useful information and agreeable entertainment in its pages.'—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

LIFE OF JESUS CHRIST; in its Historical Connection and Development. By A. NEANDER. From the 4th German Edition. Post 8vo. 3s. 6d.

LIFE AND EPISTLES OF ST. PAUL. By T. LEWIN, Esq., M.A., F.S.A., Trinity College, Oxford, Barrister-at-Law, Author of 'Fasti Sacri,' 'Siege of Jerusalem,' 'Cæsar's Invasion,' 'Treatise on Trusts,' &c. With upwards of 350 Illustrations finely engraved on Wood, Maps, Plans, &c. In 2 vols. 3rd Edition, revised. Demy 4to. 2l. 2s.

'Nothing but a careful inspection of the work itself can give the reader an adequate idea of the thoroughness with which Mr. Lewin has carried out his plan—a plan which may be described as the giving of all information possibly attainable about every person or place connected directly or even indirectly with St. Paul.'—*Spectator*.

FASTI SACRI; or, a Key to the Chronology of the New Testament. By the same Author. 4to. 21s.

ANALOGY OF RELIGION, Natural and Revealed, and Sermons with Notes. By Bp. BUTLER. Post 8vo. 3s. 6d.

HOLY LIVING AND DYING. By Bp. JEREMY TAYLOR.

With portrait. Post 8vo. 3s. 6d.

THOMAS A KEMPIS. On the Imitation of Christ. A New Translation. By the Rt. Rev. H. GOODWIN, Bishop of Carlisle. 3rd Edition. With fine Steel Engraving after Guido, 5s.; without the Engraving, 3s. 6d. Cheap Edition, 1s. cloth; 6d. sewed.

For Confirmation Candidates.

THE CHURCH TEACHER'S MANUAL OF CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTION. Being the Church Catechism expanded and explained in Question and Answer, for the use of Clergymen, Parents, and Teachers. By the Rev. M. F. SADLER. 16th Thousand. Fcap. 8vo. 2s. 6d.

'It is impossible to overrate the service to religious instruction achieved by this compact and yet pregnant volume. . . . We owe many boons to Mr. Sadler, whose sermons and theological lectures and treatises have wrought much good in matters of faith. This Catechetical Manual is second to none of such.'—*English Churchman.*

CATECHETICAL HINTS AND HELPS. A Manual for Parents and Teachers on giving Instruction in the Catechism of the Church of England. 3rd Edition, revised and enlarged. Fcap. 8vo. 2s. 6d.

'Perhaps the most thoroughly *practical* little book on its subject we have ever seen. Its explanations, its paraphrases, its questions, and the mass of information contained in its appendices, are not merely invaluable in themselves, but they are *the* information actually wanted for the purpose of the teaching contemplated. We do not wonder at its being in its third edition.'—*Literary Churchman.*

THE WINTON CHURCH CATECHIST. Questions and Answers on the Teaching of the Church Catechism. 32mo. cloth, 3s. Also in Four Parts, 6d. or 9d. each.

LIFE AFTER CONFIRMATION. By J. S. BLUNT. 18mo. 1s.

CONFIRMATION DAY. Being a Book of Instruction for Young Persons how they ought to spend that solemn day. By the Rt. Rev. H. GOODWIN, D.D., Bp. of Carlisle. 8th Thousand. 2d., or 2s for 3s. 6d.

By the Rev. M. F. Sadler, Rector of Honiton.

THE ONE OFFERING; a Treatise on the Sacrificial Nature of the Eucharist. Fcap. 8vo. cloth, 3rd Edition, 2s. 6d.

'A treatise of singular clearness and force, which gives us what we did not really possess till it appeared.'—*Church Times.*

'It is by far the most useful, trustworthy, and accurate book we have seen upon the subject.'—*Literary Churchman.*

'The subject of the Holy Eucharist is ably and fully treated, and in a candid spirit, by Mr. Sadler in these pages.'—*English Churchman.*

THE LOST GOSPEL AND ITS CONTENTS;

or, the Author of 'Supernatural Religion' Refuted by Himself. By Rev. M. F. SADLER, Rector of Honiton. Demy 8vo. 7s. 6d.

'Mr. Sadler seems to us particularly successful in exposing the hasty and unsound reasoning which has been applied to the Fourth Gospel.'—Mr. W. Sanday. (*In the Academy.*)

THE SACRAMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY; or,

Testimony of the Scripture to the Teaching of the Church on Holy Baptism. Fcap. 8vo. cloth, 2s. 6d. Also, Cheap Edition, 6th Edition, fcap. 8vo. sewed, 6d.

'An exceedingly valuable repertory of arguments on the questions it refers to.'—*English Churchman.*

CHURCH DOCTRINE—BIBLE TRUTH. Fcap. 8vo.

18th Thousand, 3s. 6d.

'Some writers have the gift of speaking the right word at the right time, and the Rev. M. F. Sadler is pre-eminently one of them. "Church Doctrine—Bible Truth," is full of wholesome truths fit for these times. . . . He has power of putting his meaning in a forcible and intelligible way, which will, we trust, enable his valuable work to effect that which it is well calculated to effect, viz. to meet with an appropriate and crushing reply one of the most dangerous mis-beliefs of the time.'—*Guardian.*

THE SECOND ADAM AND THE NEW BIRTH;

or, the Doctrine of Baptism as contained in Holy Scripture. Fcap. 8vo. 6th Edition, price 4s. 6d.

'The most striking peculiarity of this useful little work is that its author argues almost exclusively from the Bible. We commend it most earnestly to clergy and laity, as containing in a small compass, and at a trifling cost, a body of sound and Scriptural doctrine respecting the New Birth, which cannot be too widely circulated.'—*Guardian.*

PARISH SERMONS. Trinity to Advent. Fcap. 8vo. 2nd

Edition, 6s.

PLAIN SPEAKING ON DEEP TRUTHS. Sermons

preached at St. Paul's Church, Bedford. Fcap. 8vo. 4th Edition, 6s.

ABUNDANT LIFE, and other Sermons. Fcap. 8vo. 6s.**THE COMMUNICANT'S MANUAL;** being a Book of

Self-examination, Prayer, Praise, and Thanksgiving. 7th Thousand. Royal 32mo. roan, gilt edges, price 2s.; cloth, 1s. 6d. Cheap Edition, for distribution, 25th Thousand, 8d. A larger Edition, on fine paper, and Rubrics. Fcap. 8vo. 2s. 6d.; morocco, 8s. 6d.

SCRIPTURE TRUTHS. A Series of Ten Plain, Popular

Tracts upon subjects now universally under discussion. 9d. per set, sold separately. No. 1. Reasons for Infant Baptism. 2. On Eucharistic Worship. 3. On the Priesthood of the Christian Ministry. 4. On Confirmation. 5. Reasons for receiving the Holy Communion. 6. On the Doctrine of the Holy Communion. 7. On Baptism and Conversion. 8. Some Objections to receiving the Holy Communion considered. 9. On the First Truths of the Christian Faith. 10. On Faith and Justification.

STANDARD PROSE WORKS.

- ADDISON.** Works. With Notes by Bishop HURD, and numerous unpublished Letters. With Portrait and eight steel Engravings. 6 vols. cloth, gilt, post 8vo. 4s. each.
- BACON'S (LORD) ESSAYS AND HISTORICAL WORKS,** with Introduction and Notes by J. DEVEY, M.A. Post 8vo. 3s. 6d.
- BURKE.** Works. In 8 vols. post 8vo. cloth, gilt, 4s. each.
- COLERIDGE (S. T.) THE FRIEND.** A Series of Essays on Morals, Politics, and Religion. Post 8vo. 3s. 6d.
- COLERIDGE (S. T.) BIOGRAPHIA LITERARIA,** and Two Lay Sermons. Post 8vo. 3s. 6d.
- CRAIK (G. L.) THE PURSUIT OF KNOWLEDGE UNDER DIFFICULTIES.** Illustrated. Post 8vo. 5s.
- EMERSON (R. W.) WORKS,** comprising Essays, Lectures, Poems, and Orations. In 2 vols. post 8vo. 3s. 6d. each.
- FIELDING (H.) TOM JONES,** the History of a Foundling. ROSCOE'S Edition revised. With Illustrations by G. CRUIKSHANK. In 2 vols. 7s.
- FIELDING (H.) JOSEPH ANDREWS,** and ROSCOE'S Biography of the Author revised. With Illustrations by G. CRUIKSHANK. Post 8vo. 3s. 6d.
- FIELDING (H.) AMELIA.** ROSCOE'S Edition revised. With CRUIKSHANK'S Illustrations. Post 8vo. 5s.
- HAZLITT'S (W.) TABLE-TALK.** Essays on Men and Manners. Post 8vo. 3s. 6d.
- IRVING (W.) WORKS.** In 11 vols. Post 8vo. 3s. 6d. each. [See also p. 3.]
- LAMB (C.) ESSAYS OF ELIA AND ELIANA.** New Edition, post 8vo. 3s. 6d.
- LUTHER (M.) TABLE-TALK.** Translated by W. HAZLITT With Life and Portrait. Post 8vo. 3s. 6d.
- MANZONI (ALESSANDRO). THE BETROTHED** (I promessi Sposi). The only complete English translation. With numerous Woodcuts, 5s.
- PEPYS'S DIARY.** With Life and Notes by Richard Lord BRAYBROOKE. 4 vols. post 8vo. cloth, gilt, 5s. 6d. per vol.
- PROUT (FATHER) RELIQUES.** New Edition, revised and largely augmented. Twenty-one spirited Etchings by MACLISE. One vol. 7s. 6d.

RICHTER (J. P. F.). AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND LEVANA. Translated. Post 8vo. 3s. 6d.

— **FLOWER, FRUIT, AND THORN PIECES.** Translated by ALEX. EWING. Post 8vo. 3s. 6d.

WALTON. THE COMPLETE ANGLER. Edited by E. JESSE. With an account of Fishing Stations, &c., by H. G. BOHN. Upwards 203 Engravings. Post 8vo. 5s.; or with 26 additional page Illustrations on Steel, 7s. 6d.

POETRY AND DRAMA.

SHAKESPEARE. Edited by S. W. SINGER. With a Life by W. W. LLOYD. Uniform with the Aldine Edition of the Poets. 10 vols. 2s. 6d. each. In half morocco, 5s.

CRITICAL ESSAYS ON THE PLAYS. By W. W. LLOYD. In one volume. Uniform with the above, 2s. 6d.; in half morocco, 5s.

SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS AND POEMS. With Notes and Life by CHARLES KNIGHT, and 40 Engravings on Wood by HARVEY. Royal 8vo. cloth, 10s. 6d.

— (VALPY'S Cabinet Pictorial Edition), with Glossarial Notes, Digests, &c., and 171 Outline Plates. 15 vols. Fcap. 8vo. 2l. 5s.

— (Pocket Volume Edition). Comprising all his Plays and Poems. Edited from the First Folio Edition by T. KEIGHTLEY. 13 vols. royal 32mo. in a cloth box, price 21s.

SHAKESPEARE. DRAMATIC ART OF The History and Character of the Plays. By Dr. ULRICI. Translated by L. D. SCHMITZ. 2 vols. post 8vo. 3s. 6d. each.

GREENE, MARLOWE, and BEN JONSON. Poems of. Edited by ROBERT BELL. 1 vol. post 8vo. 3s. 6d.

PERCY'S RELIQUES OF ANCIENT ENGLISH POETRY. Reprinted from the Original Edition, and Edited by J. V. PRICHARD. In 2 vols. 7s.

MILTON'S (J.) POETICAL WORKS. With Memoir and Notes, and 120 Engravings. In 2 vols. post 8vo. 5s. each.

GOLDSMITH. POEMS. Illustrated. 16mo. 2s. 6d.

SHERIDAN'S DRAMATIC WORKS. With Short Life, by G. C. S., and Portrait. Post 8vo. 3s. 6d.

ALFIERI. The Tragedies of. In English Verse. Edited by E. A. BOWRING, C.B. 2 vols. post 8vo. 7s.

CAMOENS' LUSIAD. MICKLE'S Translation revised. Post 8vo. 3s. 6d.

DANTE. THE DIVINE COMEDY. Translated by the Rev. H. F. CARY. Post 8vo. 3s. 6d.

This and the following one are the only editions containing the author's last corrections and emendations.

— The Popular Edition, neatly Printed in Double Columns. Royal 8vo. sewed, 1s. 6d.; cloth, 2s. 6d.

— Translated into English Verse by J. C. WRIGHT, M.A. With Portrait and 34 Engravings on Steel, after Flaxman. 5th Edition, post 8vo. 5s.

PETRARCH. SONNETS, TRIUMPHS, AND OTHER POEMS. Translated into English Verse. With Campbell's Life of the Poet. Illustrated. Post 8vo. 5s.

MOLIÈRE. DRAMATIC WORKS. In prose. Translated by C. H. WALL. In 3 vols. post 8vo. 3s. 6d. each.

Translated by E. A. Bowring, C.B.

POEMS OF GOETHE. 2nd Edition (including Hermann and Dorothea). Post 8vo. 3s. 6d.

POEMS OF SCHILLER. 2nd Edition. Post 8vo. 3s. 6d.

POEMS OF HEINE. 2nd Edition. Post 8vo. 5s.

By Professor Conington, M.A.

HORACE'S ODES AND CARMEN SÆCULARE. Translated into English Verse. 7th Edition. Fcap. 8vo. 5s. 6d.

— **SATIRES AND EPISTLES.** Translated into English Verse. 3rd Edition. 6s. 6d.

By C. S. Calverley.

VERSES AND TRANSLATIONS. 5th Edition. Fcap. 8vo. 5s.

FLY LEAVES. 6th Edition. Fcap. 8vo. 3s. 6d.

TRANSLATIONS INTO ENGLISH AND LATIN. Crown 8vo. 7s. 6d.

THEOCRITUS, into English Verse. Crown 8vo. 7s. 6d.

By Adelaide Anne Procter.

LEGENDS AND LYRICS. Illustrated Edition, with
Portrait, and Introduction by CHARLES DICKENS. 4th Thous. 21s.

— First Series. Introduction by CHARLES DICKENS, and
Portrait of the Author. 29th Thousand. Fcap. 8vo. 6s.

— Second Series. 23rd Thousand. Fcap. 8vo. 5s.

ENGLISH SONGS AND LYRICS. By BARRY CORN-
WALL. New Edition. Fcap. 8vo. 6s.

SONGS, BALLADS, AND STORIES. By W.
ALLINGHAM. Crown 8vo. gilt edges, 10s. 6d.

ALDINE SERIES OF THE BRITISH POETS.

The Editors of the various authors in this Series have in all cases endeavoured to make the collections of Poems as complete as possible, and in many instances copyright Poems are to be found in these editions which are not in any other. Each volume is carefully edited, with Notes where necessary for the elucidation of the Text, and a Memoir. A Portrait also is added in all cases where an authentic one is accessible. The volumes are printed on toned paper in fcap. 8vo. size, and neatly bound in cloth gilt, price 5s. each.

* * A Cheap Reprint of this Series, neat cloth, 1s. 6d. per volume.

AKENSIDE.
BEATTIE.
BURNS. 3 vols.
BUTLER. 2 vols.
CHAUCER. 6 vols.
CHURCHILL. 2 vols.
COLLINS.
COWPER, including his Trans-
lations. 3 vols.
DRYDEN. 5 vols.
FALCONER.
GOLDSMITH.
GRAY.

KIRKE WHITE.
MILTON. 3 vols.
PARNELL.
POPE. 3 vols.
PRIOR. 2 vols.
SHAKESPEARE'S POEMS.
SPENSER. 5 vols.
SURREY.
SWIFT. 3 vols.
THOMSON. 2 vols.
WYATT.
YOUNG. 2 vols.

The following volumes of a New Series have been issued, 5s. each.

CHATTERTON. 2 vols.
CAMPBELL.
WILLIAM BLAKE.
ROGERS.

THE COURTLY POETS, from
RALEIGH to WOTTON.
GEORGE HERBERT
KEATS.

REFERENCE.

STUDENTS' GUIDE to the University of Cambridge.
3rd Edition, revised and corrected. Fcap. 8vo. 6s. 6d.

KING'S INTEREST TABLES. 25th Edition. 7s. 6d.

KENT'S COMMENTARY on International Law. Revised, with additional Notes and Cases, by J. T. ABDY, LL.D.
8vo. 16s.

THE EPIGRAMMATISTS. Selections from the Epigrammatic Literature of Ancient, Mediæval, and Modern Times. With Notes, &c. by Rev. H. P. DODD, M.A. 2nd Edition, enlarged.
Post 8vo. 6s.

LATIN AND GREEK QUOTATIONS. A Dictionary of. Including Proverbs, Maxims, Mottoes, Law Terms, Phrases, &c. By H. T. RILEY. Post 8vo. 5s. With Index Verborum, 6s.

BRYAN'S DICTIONARY OF PAINTERS. See p. 2.

COOPER'S BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY. See p. 2.

DR. RICHARDSON'S DICTIONARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE. Combining Explanation with Etymology, and copiously illustrated by Quotations from the best authorities. New edition, with a Supplement. In 2 vols. 4to. 4l. 14s. 6d.; half-bound in russia, 5l. 15s. 6d.; russia, 6l. 12s. The Supplement separately. 4to. 12s. An 8vo edition, without the Quotations, 15s.; half russia, 20s.; russia, 24s.

The following are the only authorised and unabridged Editions of **WEBSTER'S DICTIONARY** containing the valuable Etymological Notes and Derivations of Dr. MAHN, of Berlin, who devoted five years to the Revision of the Work.

WEBSTER'S GUINEA DICTIONARY, containing all English words now in use, including scientific, biblical, and Scottish terms and phrases, with their pronunciations, alternative spellings, derivations, and meanings. In 1 vol. 4to. with nearly 1600 pages and 3000 Illustrations. Strongly bound in cloth, 21s.; half-calf, 30s.; calf or half russia, 1l. 11s. 6d.; russia, 2l.

WEBSTER'S COMPLETE DICTIONARY, containing all that appears in the above, and also a valuable Appendix, and 70 pages of Illustrations grouped and classified, rendering it a complete Literary and Scientific Reference Book. 1 vol. 4to. strongly bound in cloth, 1l. 11s. 6d.; half calf, 2l.; calf or half russia, 2l. 2s.; russia, 2l. 10s.

Certainly the best practical English Dictionary extant.—*Quarterly Review.*

NATURAL HISTORY.

THE LIBRARY OF NATURAL HISTORY. Containing MORRIS' British Birds—Nests—Eggs—British Butterflies—British Moths—BREE's Birds of Europe—LOWE's Works on British and Exotic Ferns, Grasses and Beautiful Leaved Plants—HIBBERD's Plants—MAUND's Botanic Garden—TRIPP's British Mosses—GATTY's Seaweeds and WOOSTER's Alpine Plants—making in all 39 Volumes, in super-royal 8vo. containing upwards of 2300 full-page Plates carefully coloured.

Complete Lists sent post free on application,

SOWERBY'S BOTANY. Containing a Description and Life-size Drawing of every British Plant. Edited and brought up to the present standard of scientific knowledge, by T. BOSWELL (formerly SYME), LL.D., F.L.S., &c. With Popular Descriptions of the Uses, History, and Traditions of each Plant, by Mrs. LANKESTER, Author of 'Wild Flowers worth Notice,' 'The British Ferns,' &c. The Figures by J. C. SOWERBY, F.L.S., J. DE C. SOWERBY, F.L.S., and J. W. SALTER, A.L.S., F.G.S., and JOHN EDWARD SOWERBY. Third Edition, entirely revised, with descriptions of all the species by the Editor. In 11 vols. 22*l.* 8*s.* cloth; 24*l.* 12*s.* half morocco; and 28*l.* 3*s.* 6*d.* whole morocco. Volumes sold separately.

SOWERBY'S FERNS AND FERN-ALLIES OF GREAT BRITAIN. With 80 Plates by J. E. SOWERBY. The Descriptions, Synonyms, &c., by C. JOHNSON. Royal paper, Coloured Plates, 25*s.*

COTTAGE GARDENER'S DICTIONARY. With a Supplement, containing all the new plants and varieties down to the year 1869. Edited by G. W. JOHNSON. Post 8vo. cloth, 6*s.* 6*d.*

BOTANIST'S POCKET-BOOK. By W. R. HAYWARD. Containing the Botanical name, Common name, Soil or Situation, Colour, Growth, and time of Flowering of all plants, arranged in a tabulated form. Fcap. 8vo. 4*s.* 6*d.*

MY GARDEN; its Plan and Culture. Together with a General Description on its Geology, Botany, and Natural History. By A. SMEE, F.R.S., with more than 1300 Engravings on Wood. 4th Thousand, imp. 8vo. 2*s.*

"My Garden" is indeed a book which ought to be in the hands of everyone who is fortunate enough to possess a garden of his own; he is certain to find some things in it from which he may profit.—*Nature.*

NATURAL HISTORY OF SELBORNE. With Notes by SIR WILLIAM JARDINE and EDWARD JESSE, Esq. Illustrated by 40 highly-finished Engravings; or, with the Plates coloured, 7*s.* 6*d.*

HISTORY OF BRITISH BIRDS. By R. MUDIE. With 28 Plates. 2 vols. 5*s.* each, or with coloured Plates, 7*s.* 6*d.* each.

ART AND ORNAMENT.

TURNER'S LIBER STUDIORUM Seventy-one Reproductions in Permanent Photography of this Series of Etchings. 3 vols. imp. folio, 4*l.* 4*s.* Sold separately. Vol. I. Architectural and Historical Subjects; Vol. II. Mountain and Marine Subjects; Vol. III. Pastoral Subjects.

TURNER'S PICTURESQUE VIEWS IN ENGLAND AND WALES. With Descriptive Notices. 96 Illustrations, reproduced in Permanent Photography. In 3 vols. imp. 4*to.* Vol. I. Landscapes, 40 Plates, 2*l.* 12*s.* 6*d.*; Vol. II. Castles and Abbeys, 32 Plates, 2*l.* 2*s.*; Vol. III. Coast Scenery, 24 Plates, 1*l.* 11*s.* 6*d.*

TURNER'S CELEBRATED LANDSCAPES. Sixteen Autotype Reproductions of the most important Works of J. M. W. TURNER, R.A. With Memoir and Descriptions. Imp. 4*to.* 2*l.* 2*s.*

THE RAFFAELLE GALLERY. Permanent Reproductions in Autotype of Engravings of the most celebrated Works of RAFFAELLE SANZIO D'URBINO. With Descriptions, &c. Imp. quarto, 2*l.* 2*s.*

THE LANDSEER GALLERY. Autotype Reproductions of Engravings of the celebrated early Paintings of Sir E. LANDSEER, R.A. Imp. quarto, 2*l.* 2*s.*

MEMOIRS OF SIR EDWIN LANDSEER. Being a New Edition of 'The Early Works of Sir Edwin Landseer.' Revised and enlarged by F. G. STEPHENS. With 24 Illustrations in Photography. Imp. 8vo. 1*l.* 5*s.*

NOTES ON IRISH ARCHITECTURE. By the late EARL OF DUNRAVEN. Edited by M. STOKES, Associate of the Scottish Society of Antiquaries. With numerous Woodcuts and fine Photographic Illustrations. Imp. 4*to.* Vol. I. 4*l.* 4*s.*; Vol. II. 4*l.* 4*s.*

MOUNTAINS AND LAKES OF SWITZERLAND AND ITALY. 64 Picturesque Views in Chromolithograph, from Original Sketches by C. C. PYNE. With a Map of Routes and Descriptive Notes by Rev. J. MERCIER. 2nd Edition. Crown. 4*to.* 2*l.* 2*s.*

RIVIERA, THE. Pen-and-Pencil Sketches from Cannes to Genoa. By DEAN ALFORD. With 12 Chromolithographic Illustrations and numerous Woodcuts, from Drawings by the Author. Imp. 8vo. 21s.

CRUIKSHANK (G.) A COMPLETE CATALOGUE OF THE ENGRAVED WORKS OF. Including Etchings on Steel, Copper, &c., and Woodcuts executed between the years 1805 and 1870. Compiled by G. W. REID, Keeper of the Prints and Drawings in the British Museum. With a large number of Illustrations, chiefly from the Original Plates and Blocks. In 3 vols. royal 4to. 12l. 12s.

FLAXMAN. LECTURES ON SCULPTURE, as delivered before the President and Members of the Royal Academy. By J. FLAXMAN, R.A. With 53 Plates. New Edition, 5s.

HEATON (MRS.) A CONCISE HISTORY OF PAINTING FOR STUDENTS AND GENERAL READERS. By Mrs. HEATON. With Illustrations. 8vo. 15s.

DRAWING COPIES. By P. H. DELAMOTTE, Professor of Drawing at King's College, London. 96 Original Sketches in Architecture, Trees, Figures, Foregrounds, Landscapes, Boats, an Sea-pieces. Royal 8vo. Oblong, half-bound, 12s.

HANDBOOK TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PRINTS AND DRAWINGS IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM. With Introduction and Notices of the various Schools, and a Frontispiece after Raffaële. By LOUIS FAGAN, of the Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum. Medium 8vo. 8s.; sewed, 9s. in cloth.

By Eliza Meteyard.

MEMORIALS OF WEDGWOOD. A Series of Plaques, Cameos, Vases, &c., selected from various Private Collections, and executed in Permanent Photography. With Introduction and Descriptions. Imp. 4to. 3l. 3s.

WEDGWOOD AND HIS WORKS: a Selection of his choicest Plaques, Medallions, Vases, &c., from Designs by FLAXMAN and others, in Permanent Photography, with a Sketch of his Life and of the Progress of his Art Manufacture. Imp. 4to. 3l. 3s.

CATALOGUE OF WEDGWOOD'S MANUFACTURES. With Illustrations. Half-bound 8vo. 10s. 6d.

WEDGWOOD HANDBOOK. A Manual for Collectors: Treating of the Marks, Monograms, and other Tests of the Old Period of Manufacture; also including the Catalogues with Prices obtained at various Sales, together with a Glossary of Terms. 8vo. 10s. 6d.

OLD DERBY CHINA FACTORY. The Workmen and their Productions. Containing Biographical Sketches of the chief Artist-workmen, the various Marks used, Facsimiles from the old Derby Books, and original Price Lists of more than 400 Figures and Groups, &c. With 12 Coloured Plates and numerous Woodcuts. By JOHN HASLEM. Imp. 8vo. 3s. 6d.

'That which has been done so well by Miss Meteyard for Etruria, by Mr. Bins for Worcester, and by Mr. Owen for Bristol, has now been done for the Derby works with at least equal zeal, intelligence, and ability, by Mr. Haslem.'—*Staffordshire Advertiser.*

FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

AUNT JUDY'S MAGAZINE. Edited by H. K. F. GATTY. A High-class Illustrated Magazine for Young People. 8d. Monthly.

The CHRISTMAS VOLUME for 1876 contains Stories by ASCOTT R. HOPE, Mrs. EWING, Mrs. O'REILLY, and others. Translations from the German and Swedish. Short Stories. Old-fashioned Fairy Tales. Papers on Historical Subjects. Natural History Articles. Short Biographies of Eminent Persons. Verses. Child-poems. A Christmas Play. Hints for Private Theatricals. Songs with Music. Acrostics. Correspondence. Book Notices. Upwards of One Hundred Illustrations, and a Portrait, beautifully engraved on steel by C. H. JEENS, accompanied by a Memoir of HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN. Imp. 16mo. handsomely bound, price 8s. 6d.

Former Volumes may still be had, some at reduced prices.

By Mrs. Alfred Gatty.

PARABLES FROM NATURE. With Notes on the Natural History; and numerous large Illustrations by eminent Artists. 4to. cloth gilt, 21s. Also in 2 vols. 10s. 6d. each.

— 16mo. with Illustrations. First Series, 17th Edition, 1s. 6d. Second Series, 10th Edition, 2s. The two Series in 1 vol. 3s. 6d. Third Series, 6th Edition, 2s. Fourth Series, 4th Edition, 2s. The two Series in one vol. 4s. Fifth Series, 2s.

WORLDS NOT REALIZED. 16mo. 4th Edition. 2s.

PROVERBS ILLUSTRATED. 16mo. With Illustrations. 4th Edition, 2s.

A BOOK OF EMBLEMS. Drawn by F. GILBERT. With Introduction and Explanations. Imp. 16mo. 4s. 6d.

WAIFS AND STRAYS OF NATURAL HISTORY. With Coloured Frontispiece and Woodcuts. Fcap. 3s. 6d.

THE POOR INCUMBENT. Fcap. 8vo. 1s. and 1s. 6d.

AUNT SALLY'S LIFE. With Six Illustrations. Square 16mo. 3rd Edition, 3s. 6d.

THE MOTHER'S BOOK OF POETRY. Selected and Arranged by Mrs. A. GATTY. Crown 8vo. 3s. 6d.; or with Illustrations, elegantly bound, 7s. 6d.

A BIT OF BREAD. By JEAN MACÉ. Translated by Mrs. ALFRED GATTY. 2 vols. fcap. 8vo. Vol. I. 4s. 6d. Vol. II. 3s. 6d.

• The Uniform Edition. Fcap. 8vo. 3s. 6d. each volume.

PARABLES FROM NATURE. 2 vols. With Portrait.

THE HUMAN FACE DIVINE, and other Tales. With Illustrations. 3rd Edition.

THE FAIRY GODMOTHERS, and other Tales. With Frontispiece. 7th Edition: 2s. 6d.

AUNT JUDY'S TALES. Illustrated. 7th Edition.

AUNT JUDY'S LETTERS; a Sequel to 'Aunt Judy's Tales.' Illustrated. 5th Edition.

DOMESTIC PICTURES AND TALES. With 6 Illustrations. **WORLDS NOT REALIZED,** and Proverbs Illustrated.

THE HUNDREDTH BIRTH-DAY, and other Tales. With Illustrations by PHIZ. New Edition.

MRS. ALFRED GATTY'S PRESENTATION BOX for Young People, containing the above volumes, neatly bound, and enclosed in a cloth box. 3rs. 6d.

By Mrs. Ewing.

'Everything Mrs. Ewing writes is full of talent, and also full of perception and common sense.'—*Saturday Review*.

THE BROWNIES, and other Tales. Illustrated by GEORGE CRUIKSHANK. 3rd Edition. Imp. 16mo. 5s.

'Mrs. Ewing gives us some really charming writing. While her first story most prettily teaches children how much they can do to help their parents, the immediate result will be, we fear, anything but good. For if a child once begins "The Brownies," it will get so deeply interested in it, that when bed-time comes it will altogether forget the moral, and will weary its parents with importunities for just a few minutes more to see how everything ends. The frontispiece, by the old friend of our childhood, George Cruikshank, is no less pretty than the story.'—*Saturday Review*.

MRS. OVERTHEWAY'S REMEMBRANCES.

Illustrated with 10 fine Full-page Engravings on Wood, after Drawings by PASQUIER and WOLF. 2nd Edition, cloth gilt, 3s. 6d.

'It is not often nowadays the privilege of a critic to grow enthusiastic over a new work; and the rarity of the occasion that calls forth the delight is apt to lead one into the sin of hyperbole. And yet we think we shall not be accused of extravagance when we say that, without exception, "Mrs. Overthway's Remembrances" is the most delightful work avowedly written for children that we have ever read. There are passages in this book which the genius of George Eliot would be proud to own. . . . It is full of a peculiar, heart-stirring pathos of its own, which culminates in the last pages, when Ida finds that her father is not dead. The book is one that may be recurred to often, and always with the same delight. We predict for it a great popularity.'—*Leader*.

By Mrs. Ewing—Continued.

MELCHIOR'S DREAM, and other Tales. Illustrated. 3rd Edition. Fcap. 8vo. 3s. 6d.

'“Melchior's Dream” is an exquisite little story, charming by original humour, buoyant spirits, and tender pathos.'—*Athenæum*.

A FLAT IRON FOR A FARTHING; or, Some Passages in the Life of an Only Son. With 12 Illustrations by H. ALLINGHAM. 5th Edition. Small 8vo. 5s.

'Let every parent and guardian who wishes to be amused, and at the same time to please a child, purchase “A Flat Iron for a Farthing; or, Some Passages in the Life of an Only Son,” by J. H. Ewing. We will answer for the delight with which they will read it themselves, and we do not doubt that the young and fortunate recipients will also like it. The story is quaint, original, and altogether delightful.'—*Athenæum*.

'A capital book for a present. No child who is fortunate enough to possess it will be in a hurry to put it down, for it is a book of uncommon fascination. The story is good, the principles inculcated admirable, and some of the illustrations simply delicious.'—*John Bull*.

LOB-LIE-BY-THE-FIRE; or, the Luck of Lingborough. And other Tales. Illustrated by GEORGE CRUIKSHANK. 2nd Edition. Imp. 16mo. 5s.

'A charming tale by another of those clever writers, thanks to whom the children are now really better served than their neighbours.'—*Spectator*.

'Mrs. Ewing has written as good a story as her “Brownies,” and that is saying a great deal. “Lob-lie-by-the-fire” has humour and pathos, and teaches what is right without making children think they are reading a sermon.'—*Saturday Review*.

SIX TO SIXTEEN: A Story for Girls. With 10 Illustrations by Mrs. ALLINGHAM. 3rd Edition. Small post 8vo. 5s.

'The homely good sense and humour of the bulk of the story are set off by the pathos of its opening and its close, and a soft and beautiful light, as of dawn and sunset, is thrown round the substantial English ideal of what a girl's education ought to be, which runs through the tale.'—*Spectator*.

'It is a beautifully told story, full of humour and pathos, and bright sketches of scenery and character. It is all told with great naturalness, and will amuse grown-up people quite as much as children. In reading the story, we have been struck especially by characteristic bits of description, which show very happily the writer's appreciation of child life.'—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

'We have rarely met, on such a modest scale, with characters so ably and simply drawn . . . The merits of the volume, in themselves not small, are much enhanced by some clever illustrations from the pencil of Mrs. Allingham.'—*Athenæum*.

'The tone of the book is pleasant and healthy, and singularly free from that sentimental, not to say “mawkish,” stain which is apt to disfigure such productions. The illustrations by Mrs. Allingham add a special attraction to the little volume.'—*Times*.

'It is scarcely necessary to say that Mrs. Ewing's book is one of the best of the year.'—*Saturday Review*.

'There is in it not only a great deal of common sense, but there is true humour. . . . We have not met a healthier or breezier tale for girls for a long period.'—*Academy*.

By Mrs. Ewing—Continued.

JAN OF THE WINDMILL; a Story of the Plains. With 11 Illustrations by HELEN ALLINGHAM. Crown 8vo. 8s. 6d.

'A capital story, which, like all that Mrs. Ewing gives us, will be read with pleasure. . . . Some well-drawn illustrations materially increase the attractiveness of the volume.'—*City Press*.

By Mrs. O'Reilly.

'Mrs. O'Reilly's works need no commendation . . . the style is so good, the narrative so engrossing, and the tone so excellent.'—*John Bull*.

LITTLE PRESCRIPTION, and other Tales. With 6 Illustrations by W. H. PETHERICK and others. 16mo. 2s. 6d.

'A worthy successor of some charming little volumes of the same kind. . . . The tale from which the title is taken is for its grace and pathos an especial favourite.'—*Spectator*.

'Mrs. O'Reilly could not write otherwise than well, even if she were to try.'—*Morning Post*.

GICELY'S CHOICE. A Story for Girls. With a Frontispiece by J. A. PASQUIER. Fcap. 8vo. gilt edges, 3s. 6d.

'A pleasant story. . . . It is a book for girls, and grown people will also enjoy reading it.'—*Athenæum*.

'A pleasant, well-written, interesting story, likely to be acceptable to young people who are in their teens.'—*Scotsman*.

GILES'S MINORITY; or, Scenes at the Red House. With 8 Illustrations. 16mo. 2s. 6d.

'In one of our former reviews we praised "Deborah's Drawer." "Giles's Minority" no less deserves our goodwill. It is a picture of school-room life, and is so well drawn that grown-up readers may delight in it. In literary excellence this little book is above most of its fellows.'—*Times*.

DOLL WORLD; or, Play and Earnest. A Study from Real Life. With 8 Illustrations. By C. A. SALTMARSH. 16mo. 2s. 6d.

'It is a capital child's book, and it has a charm for grown-up people also, as the fairy haze of "long-ago" brightens every page. We are not ashamed to confess to the "thrilling interest" with which we followed the history of "Robertina" and "Mabel."'—*Athenæum*.

DEBORAH'S DRAWER. With 9 Illustrations. 16mo. 2s. 6d.

'Any godmamma who wishes to buy an unusually pretty and artistically-written gift-book for an eight-year-old pet cannot do better than spend a florin or two on the contents of "Aunt Deborah's Drawer."'—*Athenæum*.

DAISY'S COMPANIONS; or, Scenes from Child Life. A Story for Little Girls. With 8 Illustrations. 3rd Edit. 16mo. 2s. 6d.

'If anybody wants a pretty little present for a pretty (and good) little daughter, or a niece or grand-daughter, we cannot recommend a better or tastier one than "Daisy's Companions."'—*Times*.

Captain Marryat's Books for Boys.

Uniform Illustrated Edition, neatly bound in cloth, post 8vo. 3s. 6d. each; gilt edges, 4s. 6d.

POOR JACK. With Sixteen Illustrations after Designs by CLARKSON STANFIELD, R.A.

THE MISSION; or, Scenes in Africa. With Illustrations by JOHN GILBERT.

THE PIRATE, AND THREE CUTTERS. Illustrated with Eight Steel Engravings from Drawings by CLARKSON STANFIELD, R.A. With a Memoir of the Author.

THE SETTLERS IN CANADA. With Illustrations by GILBERT and DALZIEL.

THE PRIVATEER'S MAN. Adventures by Sea and Land in Civil and Savage Life One Hundred Years Ago. Illustrated with Eight Steel Engravings.

MASTERMAN READY; or, the Wreck of the Pacific. Embellished with Ninety-three Engravings on Wood.

A BOY'S LOCKER. A Smaller Edition of Captain Marryat's Books for Boys, in 12 vols. Fcap. 8vo. in a compact cloth box, 21s.

By Hans Christian Andersen.

FAIRY TALES AND SKETCHES. Translated by C. C. PEACHEY, H. WARD, A. PLESNER, &c. With 104 Illustrations by OTTO SPECKTER and others. Crown 8vo. 6s.

'The translation most happily hits the delicate quaintness of Andersen—most happily transposes into simple English words the tender precision of the famous story-teller; in a keen examination of the book we scarcely recall a single phrase or turn that obviously could have been bettered.'—*Daily Telegraph*.

TALES FOR CHILDREN. With 48 Full-page Illustrations by WEHNERT, and 57 Small Engravings on Wood by W. THOMAS. A new Edition. Crown 8vo. 6s.

This and the above volume form the most complete English Edition of Andersen's Tales.

LATER TALES. Translated from the Danish by AUGUSTA PLESNER and H. WARD. With Illustrations by OTTO SPECKTER, W. COOPER, and other Artists. Cloth gilt, 3s. 6d.

WONDER WORLD. A Collection of Fairy Tales, Old and New. Translated from the French, German, and Danish. With 4 Coloured Illustrations and numerous Woodcuts by L. RICHTER, OSCAR PLETSCH, and others. Royal 16mo. cloth, gilt edges, 3s. 6d.

'It will delight the children, and has in it a wealth of wisdom that may be of practical service when they have grown into men and women.'—*Literary World*.

GUESSING STORIES; or, The Surprising Adventures of the Man with the Extra Pair of Eyes. By the late Archdeacon FREEMAN. 3rd Edition. 2s. 6d.

GRIMM'S GAMMER GRETHEL; or, German Fairy Tales and Popular Stories. Translated by EDGAR TAYLOR. Numerous Woodcuts after G. CRUIKSHANK's designs. Post 8vo. 3s. 6d.

LITTLE PLAYS FOR LITTLE PEOPLE; with Hints for Drawing-room Performances. By Mrs. CHISHOLM, Author of 'Rana, the Story of a Frog.' 16mo. with Illustrations, 2s. 6d.

ROBINSON CRUSOE. With a Biographical Account of DEFOE. Illustrated with 70 Wood Engravings, chiefly after Designs by HARVEY; and 12 Engravings on Steel after STOTHARD. Post 8vo. 5s.

THE WIDE, WIDE WORLD. By E. WETHERELL. With 10 Illustrations. Post 8vo. 3s. 6d.

UNCLE TOM'S CABIN. By H. B. STOWE. Illustrated. Post 8vo. 3s. 6d.

KIRSTIN'S ADVENTURES. A Story of Jutland Life. By the Author of 'Casimir the Little Exile,' &c. With Illustrations. Crown 8vo. 3s. 6d.

'There is so much true art and natural talent in the book that we are half inclined to take it away from the boys and girls for whom it is written.'—*Times*.

KATIE; or, the Simple Heart. By D. RICHMOND, Author of 'Annie Maitland.' Illustrated by M. I. BOOTH. 2nd Edition. Crown 8vo. 3s. 6d.

'The family life which surrounds Katie is both pretty and natural. The tone is good, and the plot—we speak from experience—engages a child's interest with almost too keen a sympathy.'—*Guardian*.

QUEENS OF ENGLAND from the Norman Conquest. By A. STRICKLAND. An Abridged Edition, with Portrait of Matilda of Flanders. In 1 vol. Crown 8vo. cloth, 6s. 6d.

GLIMPSES INTO PET-LAND. By the Rev. J. G. WOOD, M.A., F.L.S. With Frontispiece. Fcap. 3s. 6d.

FRIENDS IN FUR AND FEATHERS. By GWYNFRYN. Illustrated with 8 Full-page Engravings by F. W. KEYL, &c. 3rd Edition. Handsomely bound, 3s. 6d.

'We have already characterised some other book as the best cat-and-dog book of the season. We said so because we had not seen the present little book, which is delightful. It is written on an artistic principle, consisting of actual biographies of certain elephants, squirrels, blackbirds, and what not, who lived in the flesh; and we only wish that human biographies were always as entertaining and instructive.'—*Saturday Review*.

INSECT ARCHITECTURE. By RENNIE. Edited by the Rev. J. G. WOOD, Author of 'Homes Without Hands.' Post 8vo. with nearly 200 Illustrations, 5s.

THE ENTERTAINING NATURALIST. By Mrs. LOUDON. Revised and enlarged by W. S. DALLAS, F.L.S. With nearly 500 Illustrations. Post 8vo. 5s.

ANECDOTES OF DOGS. By EDWARD JESSE. With Illustrations. Post 8vo. cloth, 5s. With 34 Steel Engravings after COOPER, LANDSEER, &c. 7s. 6d.

NATURAL HISTORY OF SELBORNE. By GILBERT WHITE. Edited by JESSE. Illustrated with 40 Engravings. Post 8vo. 5s.; or, with the Plates Coloured, 7s. 6d.

CHARADES, ENIGMAS, AND RIDDLES. Collected by a Cantab. 5th Edition, enlarged. Illustrated. Fcap. 8vo. 1s.

POETRY - BOOK FOR SCHOOLS. Illustrated with 37 highly finished Engravings by C. W. COPE, R.A., W. HELMSLEY, S. PALMER, F. SKILL, G. THOMAS, and H. WEIR. Crown 8vo. gilt, 2s. 6d.; cloth, 1s.

GILES WITHERNE; or, the Reward of Disobedience. A Village Tale for the Young. By the Rev. J. P. PARKINSON, D.C.L. 6th Edition. Illustrated by the Rev. F. W. MANN. Super-royal 16mo. 1s.

THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS. By JOHN BUNYAN. With 281 Engravings from Designs by WILLIAM HARVEY. Post 8vo. 3s. 6d.

OLD NURSERY RHYMES AND CHIMES. Collected and arranged by a Peal of Bells. Fcap. 4to. Ornamental binding. 2s. 6d.

NURSERY CAROLS. By the Rev. Dr. MONSELL, Rector of St. Nicholas, Guildford, with upwards of 100 Illustrations by LUDWIG RICHTER and OSCAR PLETSCH. Imp. 16mo. 3s. 6d.

'At once a poet and a child lover, full of fun and yet disposed gently to instil what is good, Dr. Monsell is inimitable in this particular department.'—*John Bull*.

LONDON:

GEORGE BELL & SONS, YORK STREET,

COVENT GARDEN.

41

