

(CONTINUED FROM FIRST PAGE.)

conscious cause, because dead, lay in its mother's arms, two little, bare feet and limbs, wasted and shrunk, lay rigid and exposed. The pale white face of a little girl lay on its mother's arm, its pretty flaxen hair was brushed back from its marble brow, its large dark eyes were half open, and on its wasted features there rested a peaceful expression, as though its little soul on entering the door of God's heavenly mansion had let a ray of light and hope get through, and which had lighted there.

Oh! oh! Anton, what shall we do, what shall we do we must starve, I wish we could, to-night, and finish it, no money to bury poor Lena with. Oh, God! oh, God! pity us, pity us!

It was too much, with anguish in my heart, and a resolve for the morning's action, I hurried on, almost stunned with the fearful sight, and bewildered by the vast contrast in the situation of two of my neighbors. One so full of satisfaction and self-content, that there was no room for pity, or thought of others' woe; the other so full of desperate suffering, that there could be nothing in imagination worse, leaving no room or time even for envy.

CHAPTER III.

I hurried on; perspiration stood on my forehead, my head throbbed, my heart quaked with intense feeling of pity and surprise. I was about passing the prettiest cottage in Highland Park, a cottage surrounded by a beautiful and well kept lawn, dotted with choice and graceful shrubbery, and where lovely flowers bloom continually in seeming joy that they exist, tended by such careful and loving hands. Darkness was all about, but, as I passed, their oft noted beauty came up before me and I wondered if the flowers and shrubs alone received the thought and care of the fair hand, and mind of my neighbor Mrs. ———, the widow, I wondered if she too, who seemed the embodiment of all that is pure and lovely in human nature, was thoughtless of all but her self and child. I was curious and impelled by an irresistible influence I stepped noiselessly up to the brightly cheerful window, which too, was slightly opened, and the south breeze that was blowing forced slightly back the beautiful curtains that shaded the room from view.

The room was furnished very plainly, but in perfect taste and neatness, a few choice pictures adorned the walls, a single burner lighted the room. The widow, a lady in the full prime of womanhood, dressed in deep but simple mourning was seated at a table, where she had evidently been busy with some occupation, but she now held a Bible in her hand. Her face of marble whiteness without a shadow or tinge of color, was rounded in perfect symmetry, her features were strong and distinct, her hair black as a raven's wing was brushed low upon her high white forehead making a strong contrast. Her eyes large, dark and liquid, beneath long drooping lashes. The expression was remarkable, an expression such as is sometimes seen upon the pure face of a child, who has never known, or dreamed or thought of aught that is painful, harsh, unkind or unlovable, but this face bore an expression of still more perfect beauty and purity, an expression in which there was no trace of present sorrow, an expression based on intelligence, purity, resignation, love and a deep unflinching, anticipating faith. She closed her Bible and as she did so she repeated, evidently, what she had been reading, "in as much as ye have done it unto the least of these my little ones ye have done it unto me," and then after a moment thought she continued.

"This will be a hard winter for the poor. How thankful I am that it is in my power to assist some poor suffering mortals, Oh, that I could relieve all wants and wipe away all suffering. My income will permit me to give more liberal employment through the winter to several poor families and a surplus which shall all be expended for the relief of the needy. Tomorrow I must go early to enquire after and assist the poor family whose child is so sick, Oh how I pity the poor, and the sick. My purest happiness is in brightening up their homes and lives by unexpected assistance, and I thank God that this happiness is given me in my widowhood, the means, the disposition and love of doing good to the weak and needy.

Hanging on the wall before her, was a portrait of a noble man in the prime of life, his soft blue eyes seeming to beam down upon her, as she raised her gaze to his and they appeared to commune together; her pale face was radiant with joy, though her eyes were suffused with tears, as she murmured, oh Albert, my husband! how thin the veil seems that separates us. To-day I have felt your presence, and my soul has been filled with joy, another day is added to the past and taken from the number which separates me from you. I am one day's journey nearer to you, and I count the rest as a school girl counts the days of school; I will try to fill each day with deeds of charity, try and see that no sun goes down on any day, unless some pain or suffering is made less on account of me. My husband watch over and guard me, lead me in all things; help me to do faithfully God's good will. Good-night. And with eyes still upon the portrait she extinguished the light and I hurried away, filled with new thoughts and made better by what I had seen and heard and my faith in humanity strengthened and restored. The three pictures from actual life were before me, deeply impressed on my nature, never to be effaced or forgotten, and I shall try and know whether there are any "shorn lambs" of humanity without shelter and protection, at least in this little community, and I trust that all of us when we feel a comfortable satisfaction that we are bountifully cared for, will know that there are none of God's poor among our very neighbors who are hungry and cold. Let us be sure if any thirst that we give them drink; if any hunger that we give them food; if any are naked or in rags, that we clothe them.

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