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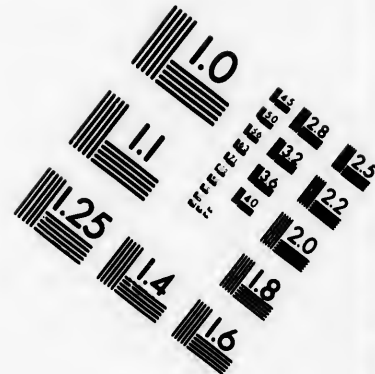
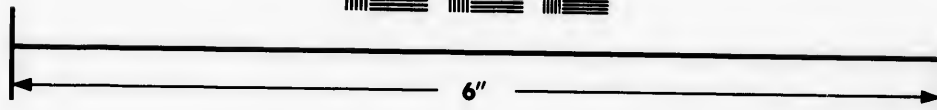
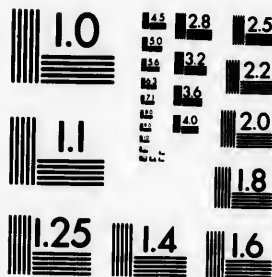
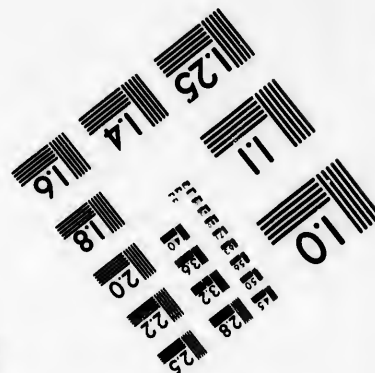


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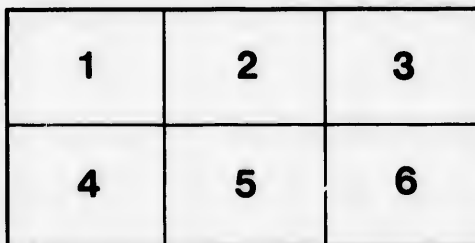
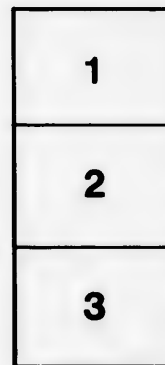
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TWO STORIES

OF

TWO GIRLS

OUT IN LIFE'S STORM.

~~~~~  
By IRIS.  
~~~~~

Montreal :
WILSON'S PRINTING HOUSE.
1873.

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MARA HOLMES.

“What is life?” ’tis a delicate shell,
Flung up with eternity’s flow,
On time’s bank of quicksand to dwell,
And a moment its loveliness show.

Gone back to its element, grand
Is the billow that brought it on shore;
See, another is dashing the strand,
And the beautiful shell is no more.

MONTGOMERY.

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MARA HOLMES ;

OR,

WRECKED ON PASSION.

IN the chamber of a cottage, in a village on the bank of the St. Lawrence, Edward Holmes lay dying; by his side sat his eldest child, she held one of his emaciated hands in hers, and her swollen blue eyes rested sadly on his pale face ; presently the door opened quietly, and a girl of fifteen years stepped softly to the bedside, and, before the gentle watcher could prevent it, stooped and pressed her crimson lips to the hollow cheek of the sick man ; at the touch he opened his eyes, and seeing that bright face bending over him he threw his arms around her and pressed her to his heart.

“ My darling, my precious one,” he murmured while the tears fell quickly from his eyes.

“ What is the matter Pa ? are you in pain or do I worry you ?”

“ No, no my child, I am pleased to have you here, sit down by me, I wish to speak to you.”

She obeyed, and in a low faltering voice he said, “ Mara, five years ago your mother left us, and went to a better land, and do you remember the last time she held you in her arms, you promised to be a good and dutiful child ?”

“ Yes, Pa, I remember, and am I not good ?”

“ You are indeed, my dear, as much so as we can expect you to be with such poor feeble ones to guide you; but I wish you to repeat that promise here to me, you are older now, and can understand and feel the solemnity of such a promise better; your sister Mary has since then been a mother to you; I know you are grateful, and I hope that through all your life you will express your gratitude by trusting to her love and mature judgment; do you understand, do you promise ?”

“ I do, Pa, I know she is a good kind sister.

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I will always try to do as she wishes me ; but wait until you are well, you shall then see how good it is possible for a naughty girl like me to be." As she spoke she wound her arms round his neck and laid her soft cheek against his.

" There you must go now, and come again some other time," said her sister, gently disengaging her arms and leading her to the door, then returning she once more took her seat by the bedside.

" Mary," said her father, " this is a great trust, but take courage, do not faint by the way, you have a friend in Him who hath promised to temper the winds to the shorn lamb, place all your trust in Him, He will never leave nor forsake you." As he spoke his pale face grew paler, and his voice sunk to a whisper ; at that moment there was a knock at the door, and while Mary stood in speechless agony bending over her father their pastor, the Rev. Mr. Hurst, and his sister, entered ; the moment they saw Mr. Holmes they knew he was dying, and instantly summoned the doctor, but medical skill was of no avail ; he calmly bade them farewell, and clasping Mara's hand his spirit took its flight. Mary and Emma

(his ~~second child~~) were prepared for this, but Mara, who had not known of her father's danger, could not realize that he was dead, threw herself on his inanimate form and begged him to speak to her once more ; but those pale lips were sealed for ever, and orphan Mara begged in vain.

There was a quiet funeral, and another hillock raised beside the one that had been formed five years before. Three weeks passed, mourning had been purchased and made up, and in these few weeks, short as they were, time had in a measure soothed the anguish in the hearts of the bereaved ones, and on this beautiful September night Mary, after breathing a prayer to heaven for strength, sat down with her face buried in her hands to think ; she saw herself floating out on life's stormy ocean buffeting with the waves that broke and lashed round her, while feeble hands clutched her for support, and pleading eyes gazed into her's for re-assurance ; her own inability caused her heart to tremble, and she felt she must sink, when her father's dying words recurred, recalling her courage and strengthening her faith. "Good evening, Mary," said a voice beside her, looking up ;

she found it was her affianced who addressed her, she returned his salutation as she placed a chair for him. When he had seated himself he said, "Well Mary, what do you intend doing?"

"I have not decided yet, but to-morrow I shall call on our kind pastor and his sister; they have offered to use their influence with their friends in the city to procure us employment."

"Then you purpose going to Montreal."

"Oh! certainly, what could we do here?"

"Do you not think you could find something for Emma and Mara to do in the village?"

"No, I think not, there is so little business done here."

"There is very little chance for them to work at any business, but do you not think they could get employment in some family; I should think the Hursts could easily find places for them." A flush for a moment tinged Mary's face, then she calmly answered,

"I think it would be much better to go to the city, where they could learn some business, such as millinery or dress-making."

"Ah yes! now I see it would be more advantageous

to them, but I thought, Mary, we might at last consummate our long engagement, and still keep them near you ; but of course as the city offers such advantages you do quite right to send them there, but I hope it will not interfere with my plan relative to yourself."

"You are very thoughtful, Harry, but I cannot part with them, I could not think of sending them out into the world alone, and I sitting quietly here in a comfortable home ; no, no, my heart and duty bid me go with them."

"It will be no harder for them to face the world now alone than a few months later."

"A few months later."

"Yes a few months later ; you have not forgotten, have you, that you are to become my wife on the first December ?"

"O Harry every thing has changed since we made that arrangement, we must wait."

"Wait !" said he impatiently, "have I not waited ; six years ago you said wait until I am older, then when your mother died it was wait until Emma is able to take my place in the family, and now it is wait for some thing else."

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He had risen to his feet as he spoke, she had done the same, and resting her hands on the table to support herself, with flushing cheeks and quivering lips she said,

“Enough, Harry, you shall wait no longer—from this moment you are free.”

“You are too hasty, Mary, you had better think it over; I will not consider our engagement broken yet. I shall see you again.”

“Harry my path is plain, I will never forsake my sisters should it cost me all earthly happiness.”

“Very well, Miss Holmes, I hope you will yet be rewarded for your strict adherence to duty, good bye.”

He took his hat and left the house, and Mary sank to the floor, bowed her head and burst into tears; as she thus knelt sobbing a pair of soft arms stole round her neck, and her aching head was drawn to a bosom throbbing with sympathy, while showers of kisses fell on her wet cheek, and Mara's clear voice whispered words of comfort. As Mary rose from her knees her heart swelled in gratitude to God for enabling her to make the sacrifice she had for her loved ones' sake. In a few days the cottage furniture was sold and the three

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sisters took a tearful adieu of the village and entered upon their new life in the city ; Mary took a situation as sewing girl in a private family, Emma and Mara were apprenticed to a milliner named Mrs. Wells, who boarded them in return for their work ; this arrangement satisfied Mary, and she looked hopefully forward to the time when they would be proficient in their business. A month passed away, and they seemed to progress quite encouragingly until Mrs. Wells, who was very passionate, one day, when hurried with work, reproved Emma for being slow ; at this the tears rose into Emma's eyes, and before she could prevent it rolled down her cheeks and fell upon the white silk she was sewing. While she was trying to erase the stains, Mrs. Wells caught sight of it, and flying into a passion she grasped Emma's arm and shook her violently, as she said, " You little wretch, you have ruined that silk."

A cry of pain and affright burst from Emma's lips ; at this moment Mara sprang forward, and throwing her arms round Mrs. Wells, she dashed the astonished woman to the floor, then clinching her hand she almost screamed " You hateful old thing, how dare you act so to my sister ?"

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“Mara, Mara,” sobbed the trembling Emma as she placed her hand over her sister’s lips, do not, Oh do not, what would Mary say?”

When Mrs. Wells regained her feet, pale and choking with rage, she ordered them to leave the house immediately. The fire died out of Mara’s eyes, and the color faded from her cheeks, as she received this unexpected intelligence; but there was no alternative, go they must; so putting on their cloaks and hats they went; it was just growing dark, the lamps were being lit in the streets.

As this was the first time they had been alone in the street after nightfall, they were almost bewildered as they tremblingly clung to each other and hurried along Notre Dame Street and up Beaver Hall Hill to Mrs. Pope’s, where Mary lived. Timidly they rang the bell, which was answered by the housemaid, who showed them up to the room in which Mary sat sewing. Emma threw herself into her sister’s arms and burst into tears; Mara, feeling guilty and wretched, sank on the floor by her side sobbing hysterically.

“What is the matter, my poor children, tell me quickly,” said Mary, greatly alarmed.

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“It was I who did it all,” burst out Mara. Oh I wish I was dead, I do, I do.”

“Hush ! hush !” said Mary as she gently smoothed her dark glossy hair and kissed her burning cheek.

“Do tell me, Emma, what has happened?”

Emma checked her sobs, and related all that occurred, lingeringly touching on the affection Mara had shown for her, regardless of its consequences.

“Well I am glad it is no worse,” said Mary, endeavouring to sooth them. “I thought something dreadful had happened ; however it is quite bad enough. I am very much puzzled what to do. O Mara, my dear girl, if you could but crush that temper.” Raising her from the floor she continued, “it has pleased our heavenly father to place us in a very humble position in this life, and we must be reconciled to it ; it was very provoking to Mrs. Wells to have her silk stained, and although it was very wrong in her to act as she did, yet it was much more so for you ; you should respect those that are older than yourself, and the bible says that “A soft answer turneth away wrath,” and no doubt had you spoken gently to her in behalf of your sister she

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would have forgiven her, and all would have been well. I do not say this to reprove you, it is to caution you for the future ; but dear Mara you should pray constantly that heaven may help you to conquer that fiend that nestles in your breast. Now stop crying my child, and I will go and speak to Mrs. Pope about you." She left the room for a few minutes, then returned with Mrs. Pope's permission for them to remain with her until situations could be found for them. The following day they succeeded in getting Emma employment in a millinery establishment, where she was to act as saleswoman and learn the trade ; it was more difficult to get Mara settled, as she shrank from entering a work-room alone, for Mary had concluded to separate them, for fear of a repetition of what had already occurred. At last Mrs. Pope thought of an old friend of her's who kept school, so calling on her one day, she spoke of Mara, the old lady agreed to take her as an assistant ; this quite delighted Mara, and in due time she entered upon her new duties.

Thus a year passed away ; Emma's term of apprenticeship expired with it, and having made satisfactory arrangements with her employer she remained with her.

Mara too had progressed considerably, but now the old lady's health had declined, so she was necessitated to give up school teaching, leaving Mara once more without employment; she had grown quite fond of teaching, but there being but little chance of procuring an engagement in a school she inserted an advertisement in a daily paper for a situation as nursery governess; this she in a short time obtained in a family named Graham; she had charge of two children, a girl of eight years and a boy of six. Mrs. Graham was a careless, ignorant woman, and with her Mara suffered a great deal; the children were rude and unmanageable, and at one time Mrs. Graham would say, "Mara, I wish you would correct these children," but the next moment if she saw her act severely with them, she would then say, "you need not punish my children, I can do so myself," thus between the unprincipled mother and the unruly children the passion which had lain dormant while with the gentle yet firm school-teacher, once more revived, she felt it grow stronger and stronger each day, but had no power to check it; a burst of passion was thought nothing of by Mrs. Graham, who indulged so

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frequently in it herself, in fact, she seemed rather pleased than otherwise to meet with one who could answer her in so hot and spirited a manner as Mara did, this being new to her; Mr. Graham being too quiet and sensible to pay any attention to her when in one of these moods. Much as Mara disliked her place, she remained in it, for she knew it caused Mary much anxiety to be so unsettled and discontented, and she noticed with fainting heart, that her sister's cheek was paler and thinner each time she saw her; she frequently received letters from Mr. Hurst and his sister, these were ever filled with affectionate christian counsel, but poor impulsive child, although she would weep penitential tears over them and form resolutions of amendment, yet the moment a cause of irritation presented itself, they were all forgotten. Winter passed with little change, and in the spring Emma was married to an old playmate named Albert Grey; he had left the village two years previous to her father's death, and immediately on hearing of their arrival in the city renewed their acquaintance, which resulted as stated. They insisted that Mary should live with them,

but Mrs. Pope, who had become much attached to the pale gentle girl, would not consent to it, so she remained, but it was only for a short time, for before the summer flowers bloomed, she slept the sleep that knows no waking. It was hard to watch their sister float out on death's dark stream, but as they looked upon her face beautifully animated with the thought of a glorious immortality, and listened to her low hollow voice, as she repeated those sweet promises of rest to poor weary ones, Emma was much comforted, and Mara longed to lie down beside her and share that rest. Two days before her death she asked that Mr. Hurst should be sent for, he immediately attended her, and proffered his services in any way she could use them; she gratefully accepted the kind offer and begged him to become Mara's guardian in her stead. "Most willingly and solemnly I accept the trust, Mary, and may heaven help me to keep it faithfully," he answered. We need not dwell on the touching death-bed scene; the day following this she died,—her remains were taken to the village and placed beside her parents.

CHAPTER II.

Mara returned to her duties with an aching heart, but her innumerable trials allowed her no time to indulge her grief; one morning, in the beginning of June, she went in search of the children, as she had been told by Mrs. Graham to take them to their aunt's to spend the day, she found them in the parlor busily engaged in attempting to arrange the fragments of a beautiful vase they had broken; when they saw her they begged she would not tell their mother, she promised she would not, unless obliged to; she then accompanied them to their aunt's and returned home, and spent a quiet day in her own room; in the evening, she seated herself on the piazza to watch the sun as it sank behind Mount Royal, it was a glorious sight, and as she gazed on the heavens resplendent in their purple and gold, her thoughts flew to that bright land where dwelt her loved and lost, but gradually a

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sense of her loneliness crept over her, then stretching out her arms with quivering lips, she called, "Come, oh, come, and take poor weary Mara." "Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest;" the words were spoken by Mr. Hurst, as he laid his hand gently on her head, "you know who spoke these words, Mara, my child; can you not feel they were spoken to you, you are very lonely and need a constant friend, you need a bosom to rest your weary head upon, His is ever swelling with sympathy and love for you, His outstretched arms are waiting to receive you, His gentle voice is ever calling, "Come, come unto me." O, listen to that voice now, while you are bowed in sorrow for the departed, think perhaps their pure spirits are hovering near you, waiting to bear the glad tidings to realms above."

Tears fell fast from Mara's eyes, and for a while she sobbed audibly, then she became calm and listened attentively to what he said, and when he left, he felt certain his exhortation had not been in vain. As she sat in the deepening twilight, thinking of what had been said to her, she was disturbed by Mrs. Graham and

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the children, coming up the garden-walk, they passed into the parlor without seeing her, and as she knew by Mrs. Graham's voice that she was in bad humor, she remained where she was, not meaning to join them until called for; but as Mrs. Graham took off her bonnet and threw it on the table, it came in contact with the broken vase, scattering its fragments in every direction.

"Good gracious! who has done this, and how and when did it happen," she exclaimed, turning to the children, and reading fear and guilt in their looks, she grasped and shook them violently, as she continued, "You young vipers, you have done it? O, won't you catch it for this."

"No, no, ma," said Fanny, "it was not, indeed, it was not."

"Who was it, then?"

"It was Mara! oh, do not tell I told you."

"Mara did it then, it shall cost her dearly, the cunning thing;" pushing the children from her, she turned again to look at the wreck beside her. Mara had heard all that passed, and as she listened her contrition

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melted and passion rose and swelled in every pulse and vein ; for a while she struggled to conquer it, but at Mrs. Graham's threat she yielded, and springing through the open window she caught Fanny's arm and almost screamed, " It is false, you imp, speak, say it is, or I will crush your life out."

" Mara," said a low sad voice at her back ; she relaxed her hold of the child, and without looking at the speaker, started out of the room, and away to her own chamber.

It was Mr. Hurst who had pronounced her name, he had forgotten to deliver a note to Mara, his sister had entrusted him with, and returned to do so just in time to witness this scene. Mrs. Graham was terribly exasperated at her, and would not listen to any extenuation in her behalf from Mr. Hurst ; she declared she would dismiss her immediately. Mr. Hurst, knowing of nothing better to say, told her he would come for her in the morning. Next morning, when Mara rose, she hurried to the children's room as usual, but she found the housemaid already there busily engaged with what had been her duties ; she felt this was

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ominous, but she was not kept long in suspense, for the girl told her that Mrs. Graham wished to speak to her in her own room ; with sinking heart she entered the room, for she well knew what awaited her. Mrs. Graham, after thrusting a few ill-natured taunts at her, which for once failed to extort a reply, told her her services were no longer required and to prepare to leave immediately, as Mr. Hurst would call for her in a little while. Mara turned silently away ; her preparations were soon made, and in a short time some one came to tell her Mr. Hurst waited to see her ; descending to the parlor she quietly opened the door ; as he stood looking out of the window, he was not aware of her presence until he felt her trembling hand upon his arm ; looking down, he saw her pale face with its quivering lips and swollen eyelids. " Oh, Mr. Hurst, I am so wicked and thoughtless, and give you so much trouble, do you not wish I was dead," she sobbed.

" No, no, Mara, indeed, I do not ; come, you must not cry so, there like a good girl get your hat. I shall take you to your sister's, she is delighted with the

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thought of having you with her, it is so long since you have been together."

Mara did as he directed, and shortly after she was sobbing in her sister's arms, and Emma in sympathy cried too.

"There girls, stop your whimpering," said Mr. Hurst, putting Mara into a chair, "I must go now, I have some business to attend to, but I shall return and take tea with you, and if you are not merry by that time, I shall give you both a severe lecture;" bidding them good morning he left them. Although Emma had had an account of Mara's trouble from Mr. Hurst, she gave her a repetition of it with the additional occurrence of the morning—then they talked of their dear dead sister and wept afresh, but the arrival of the butcher's boy recalled Emma to her domestic duties, this turned the tide of their conversation, and she gave Mara a sketch of her house-keeping experiences, which at first being rather ludicrous, had the effect of bringing them both into better spirits. Then she spoke warmly of her kind loving husband and her quiet happy home; so by tea time they presented

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quite pleasant faces ; after tea, they accompanied Mr. Hurst to the boat ; when parting with Mara, he assured her he would use his utmost exertion to procure her a place, after she had enjoyed a few days relaxation. The first two weeks she remained contentedly with her sister, then she became restless, for she began to think that Mr. Hurst had forgotten her ; but a few days later she received a letter from him, stating that the village school was without a teacher, and if she thought she would like it, he would use his influence to get it for her. Scarcely anything could have pleased her more than the thought of returning to the village, so she immediately dispatched an answer expressing the pleasure his letter had given her. In a few days she was summoned to the village to be examined by the commissioners, this she considered a severe ordeal ; but knowing it to be inevitable, made up her mind to pass it creditably. The day following her arrival in the village, she passed a successful examination, and the next week commenced on her new duties. The principal Commissioner seemed to take special interest in her, he being wealthy and influential,

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she was often congratulated on having such a friend ; and although she was not ungrateful for his many acts of kindness, yet it annoyed her, as he appeared to feel the full extent of his own magnanimity, and called on her oftener than was pleasant or necessary ; he would frequently step in a short time before school closed and assist her with dismissal, then walk home with her. On one occasion, when she had parted with him at the gate, she met Miss Hurst in the garden, who said to her, " Well, Mara, I see you have had your chevalier home with you this evening ?"

" Yes, is it not tiresome, I cannot account for such disinterestedness "

" Well, you need not be so displeased with it, for I assure you it is to your advantage to have Mr. Bennet's approbation."

" Then I have it, but I pay dearly for it, for I am in misery when in his company, for I know he feels how condescending he is to thus patronize me as he does," said Mara, with flashing eye and flushing cheek.

" Mara ! Mara ! is that demon passion never to be

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crushed; remember, dear, what you have already suffered by it, what you may yet suffer."

"Indeed, indeed, I cannot help it, Miss Hurst. I do try very hard to keep it down, but it is no use, I know I shall be so all my life."

"Do not speak so despondingly, dear child, for I am sure if you on every occasion struggle to conquer it, you certainly will, for you have a strong will, and you know in battle one side must finally yield, and with you why should it not be passion; but particularly I would warn you to be on your guard in Mr. Bennet's presence, for it is in his power to dismiss or retain you at pleasure."

During the latter part of this speech, Miss Hurst was bending over a vine that the rude October wind had displaced, so she did not see Mara's clouded face with its quivering lips as she passed into the house, repeating, "for it is in his power to retain or dismiss you at pleasure." Week after week passed, and Mr. Bennet still remained as assiduous in his attentions to Mara, but only growing more and more unendurable, however she was soon relieved of them by the follow-

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ing circumstance : One day, as on many previous ones, he called in to assist her in dismissing the school, he stood in her place on the slight elevation that supported the desk, she on the floor with one hand resting on the desk ; as the last child passed out, he laid his cold phlegmatic hand on hers, and said, " They are all gone."

" Yes, sir," she answered.

" Are you glad ?"

" Yes, sir."

" Then you are tired of teaching ?"

" No ! I cannot say that I am, but I am often glad when the duties of the day are over."

" Would you not like to be placed in a position in which you would not require to toil thus for your living ?"

" Most assuredly."

" Well, I have come this evening to speak to you of an arrangement by which you can become independent, rich and envied ; yes, you need not look so astonished, Mara, it is true."

" How ?" she asked, with amazement. He pressed

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her hand as leaning toward her, and lowering his voice, he replied, "by becoming my wife."

Mara shrank back abashed; he continued, "Let me assure you I mean it; come now, I await your answer, say yes?"

"No," she said, confusedly.

"Nonsense, Mara, I have taken you by surprise, but you will not, I am sure, refuse so good an offer."

"I cannot accept it, sir."

"Do you mean to reject me?"

"I fear I must," she said, endeavouring to mollify it, as she noticed the angry gleam in his strong eye.

"Do not be so hasty, I shall give you a few days to think it over."

"It would be no use," she answered, thinking it best to end it at once.

"Why?"

"Because I do not love you"

"Pooh! I did not ask you to love me, I asked you to be my wife."

"But I cannot, I cannot; please release my hand, I must go home."

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“Stay, one moment, do you know that if I choose you shall go from this place and never enter it again?”

The hot blood rushed to Mara's cheek and brow, but she compressed her lips firmly to keep down the passion she felt rising within.

“Ah! I see, you are conscious of that fact, now I shall take your answer.”

“I have already given it,” she said, struggling to be calm.

“Silly girl! shall I be obliged to threaten you with dismissal before I can subdue that stubborn will.”

Mara remained silent as she leaned her head against the desk, while the great tears rolled down her cheeks. “Humiliating though it be,” thought she, “I will restrain my passion, even should it choke me, and appeal to his humanity, he cannot be so heartless to a poor orphan.”

“Speak, Miss Holmes, I wish to know your decision.” She raised her now pale tearful face, and taking a step toward him, her trembling lips attempted to utter a few words but failed; he misconstrued the movement, and catching her hand once more, he said

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with a smile of triumph, "That is right, I thought you would come to your senses."

It was all over now, at the sight of that smile, and touch of that cold hand, she sprang back, and with curling lip and flashing eyes, she burst out.

"I marry you, no! I would starve first; yes, starve a thousand times; I hate you, I despise you; you the most contemptible of the human race."

Mr. Bennet's face grew white with rage; scarcely knowing what he did, he raised his hand threateningly; in fear Mara rushed through the doorway, not stopping until she had reached the church-yard, where, throwing herself on the cold damp ground, she gave full vent to her feelings. As evening advanced and she did not return, Miss Hurst went in search of her, and found her ill and feverish; she immediately hurried her home and to bed, where she remained for the three following days; during her illness she told Miss Hurst all that had passed between Mr. Bennet and herself; and Mr. Hurst had received a note containing her dismissal. When she recovered she insisted on returning to Emma. Miss Hurst tried to per-

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suade her to remain with them for a while, but Mara could not think of it ; so she once more parted with her kind friends.

CHAPTER III.

It was the first of December before Mara was again settled ; she was now companion to a young lady about her own age. Alice Christie had but recently lost her mother, and her father placing her under her grandmother's care, had gone to England. Old Mrs. Christie lived at Lachine alone with the exception of her servants and her ward, Walter Stuart, the orphan of a distant relative, whom she had adopted when quite a child ; this quiet mode of living, being in great contrast to what Alice had been accustomed to, she felt very lonesome and frequently expressed a wish

for company, but Mrs. Christie disliked the idea of having strangers disturbing the routine of her household, so readily proposed that she should have a companion, and Mara duly installed and soon fast friends with Alice. For a while the girls were very happy in each other's society, they spent the day in riding together, sewing and chatting, or studying just as their inclinations led them; the evenings were spent with Walter, whose fine voice was not unfrequently employed in reading to them, or singing with them; thus the winter passed quickly away. One day Mara noticed that Alice was unusually moody and silent, and endeavoured to cheer, but in vain, each amusement or employment she suggested, was rejected with impatience, and in this unpleasant manner the day wore away. Toward evening, as they sat silently together, the sound of an approaching carriage reached them; Alice rose and went to the window, Mara followed, and putting her arm around Alice's waist, she said, "Alice, it is Walter, I am glad, for I am sure he will soon do what I have failed to do, although I had a whole day for it."

“What is that?”

“Bring you into good humor.”

“Do not fear, I am sure he will not trouble himself about me,” said Alice as she pushed Mara from her, “it is you he appears to have a special interest in.”

“What do you mean, Alice? why do you speak so to me?” said Mara, drawing back, deeply hurt by the tone and gesture.

“I mean exactly what I say.”

“But why do you say so? you know he has no interest whatever in me.”

“And I know also you would like him to have, you sat in a bad place last night, I saw all in the mirror opposite, you stooping your head so pensively, and he passing his hand over it so caressingly.”

“You know, Alice, that hymn you sang always makes me sad.”

“Sad! Bah! a trick to excite sympathy, for pity is akin to love,” sneered Alice.

“Alice Christie, how dare you say so,” burst out Mara, “I am above dissimulation, whatever you know

about trickery, I care not, but do not dare to accuse me of it."

"Hush! hush! Mara, here comes Walter," said Alice, laying her hand on Mara's shoulder. "Go away, I care not," said Mara, pushing her forcibly from her, just as Walter entered the room; as she turned to go out, Walter held out his hand to detain her, but she brushed past him with haughty step and flaming cheek; he then turned to Alice, who had dropped pouting into a seat with tearful eyes.

"What is the matter, Alice," he said.

"Nothing worth speaking about, but Mara is so hasty tempered."

"Yes, she seems to be rather hot, but surely an outburst such as that is of rare occurrence, for I have never seen it before."

"You have not, but I have."

A look of pain crossed his face, but as he saw her bright blue eyes bent intently on him he quickly smiled, and drawing a new book from his pocket, he turned the conversation, and by dinner time, Alice had resumed her usual gayety; but poor Mara, who

had spent the intervening hour alone, appeared at the table with swollen eyelids and pale sad face. After this time did not pass so pleasantly, Mara grew more and more reserved and silent ; Alice frequently fretful, and Walter, ignorant of the cause of the breach between them, was more assiduous than ever to both. Mara often thought of leaving, for her feelings revolted at the thought of being ever watched with suspicion by Alice, but still she lingered. One beautiful evening in autumn, Alice having a headache retired after dinner, and Mara went alone into the parlor, opened the window, drew a cushion to it and seated herself to watch the undulations of the broad expanse of water before her ; an object on its surface caught her eye, and after watching it long and earnestly, with a weary sigh she dropped her head on her arm, and bright tears fell from her eyes.

“ Mara, Mara,” said Walter, who had quietly approached her.

“ Bitterness, bitterness,” she replied, half laughing, half crying, as she dashed the tears away.

“ But why bitterness ?”

“ Because there is nothing that could be more suitable, I think ; those who named me must have had a prescience of what my life was to be.”

“ Nonsense ! Mara, your life will yet be so sweet that Mara will be changed into Myrrh ; you must look at the bright side.”

“ There is no bright side ; see, there is an object floating on the water, emblematic of myself ; look how it is dashed about from one wave to another ; now submerged, again appearing, now caught in an eddy to be whirled round and round without rest, no matter how weary.”

With a quivering sigh, she sank back on the cushion, and again laid her head wearily down on her arm. Wishing to divert her, he spoke of himself, recounting his life ; he went on rapidly and earnestly, she followed ; her face glowing with pleasure as he related incidents pleasurable to himself, or clouding, when his life clouded.

“ And the future, Mara,” he said, drawing closer to her with a warmer pressure of the hand, as he gazed into her upturned face, “ a great measure of its happiness depends on you.”

“My dear children, what are you thinking of, sitting there with that cold wind blowing in upon you ; enough to give you your death,” said Mrs. Christie as opening the door she caught sight of them ; and the words that would have turned Mara into Myrrh were never spoken. If Alice had cause for suspicion before, there was none after this, for Walter’s preference for Mara was quite marked ; she did not change her manner toward either, but her thoughts were ever busy with how she would supplant her ; she finally concluded that Mara herself should work out her ends, and now she only watched the opportunity. One afternoon, as the two girls sat together, Alice by the window, busy with some fancy work, Mara near her by the table, with pencil in hand, idly sketching as she talked ; presently there was a pause in the conversation. Alice went steadily on with her work, until looking up she saw Mara bending over the paper before her with an earnest smiling face, she leaned slightly towards her and saw she had traced a distinct outline of Walter’s features ; she drew back, glanced at the clock, then along the road, then back to

her work alternately until Mara laid her pencil down and sat contemplatively with her eyes on her work. Alice did not disturb her, until the sound of an approaching carriage reached her ear, then quickly leaving her seat, she caught the paper ; with an exclamation Mara caught her hand, but Alice dexterously transferred it to her other hand, as looking at it she burst into a loud, derisive laugh ; Mara colored deeply and bit her lips in vexation. " My dear Mara, this is splendid, I must show it to Walter ; how highly flattered he will feel to think that *you...*," and she curled her lip scornfully, " treasure his image so carefully that you can transfer it with perfection at will to paper ; is this, may I ask, the inspiration of love ? And again she broke into a mocking laugh. Fighting bravely with the storm within, Mara, still silent, rose to go, but Alice held her ; she heard the carriage stop, and a footstep in the hall ; so she continued, " you naughty girl are you never going to give me your confidence and I take such an interest in you ; come, tell me now, after all the trouble you have taken to entrap him, have you any prospect of success ?"

Mara could stand no more ; she caught Alice by the arm and shook her violently, as she burst out, " You hateful, mean, suspicious thing, how dare you insult me in this manner ; I feel like crushing....." She stopped suddenly, for there stood Walter in the doorway, apparently struck with astonishment.

" O Mara, Mara, do not speak so," said Alice, putting her handkerchief to her eyes and dropping into a seat ; Walter casting a cold stern look on Mara apologized for intruding, and turned away, and Mara, heart and soul sick, went to her room, threw herself on the bed, and wept unrestrainedly.

" O Mary ! Mary," she sobbed, " had I listened to you and sought divine aid to conquer this enemy, how happy would I have been to-day ; but trusting to my own strength, what a wretched creature I am."

The next day she told Mrs. Christie she was going to leave them ; the old lady all unconscious of what had occurred, urged her to remain, but Mara was invincible.

On the afternoon, previous to the one fixed for her departure, Alice went out alone to walk, while Mara

went to her room, and was soon busily engaged in packing. The afternoon passed quickly away: she did not notice the time nor the change going on outside, until the room became suddenly darkened; going to the casement, she opened it and looked out; the wind blew fiercely and the clouds grew denser each moment, showing strong indications of the rapid approach of a violent storm. "Where can Alice be" thought she, "she will be drenched through, I must go and meet her." Hastily equipping herself for her walk, she took Alice's waterproof cloak, and hurried along the beach in the direction she knew Alice had gone, expecting each moment to meet her; but she walked on and on, it growing darker each moment, until she could but see a short distance before her. Suddenly a scream of terror, sharp and clear, reached her; she stopped, looked toward the lake, and saw straight before her, two or three yards from shore, a little boat which the current would have soon carried out, only that the strong wind drove it back to shore, and in it sat Alice with palid face, grasping the side of the boat with mortal fear. "Save

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me, save me," she shrieked. Mara glanced quickly round, no one was near, and the howling wind almost drowned that fast failing voice ; again she turned toward the boat. Alice was leaning far over the side of it, it was in danger of being capsized. " Let her go," whispered the tempter, " she stands between you and Walter " This terrible thought broke the spell that rooted her where she stood, she now dashed into the icy lake and waded out just in time to catch it as it floated down ; as she caught it, it whirled round, almost jerking it from her hands ; but with the strength of one who was mad she held it, and with much difficulty pushed it to land, then sank to the ground completely exhausted.

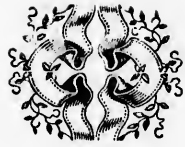
Alice sprang from the boat and stooped to raise her, but she dropped that cold stiff hand in affright and sped along the road to the nearest house for assistance. They despatched a messenger to Christie's for the carriage, and brought Mara to the house and did all they could for her. Walter soon arrived with the carriage and in a short time Alice was seated cosily by the grate telling how she had walked along without noticing

the change in the sky until it had become alarmingly dark ; then thinking the storm would come down immediately, she sought shelter in the boat house, sitting in the boat, which was not fastened ; she was so intently watching the lake that she did not notice the boat slipping down until all at once she found herself out on the lake.

Mara had been conveyed to bed and every attention given her ; but before midnight she was tossing about in wild delirium ; day after day passed until three weeks had gone, then she opened her eyes in consciousness once more. She found the penitent Alice by her side, who tenderly begged her not to speak, being strictly prohibited by the doctor. "I must speak, Alice ; yes, see and speak to all my friends ; I am to be here but a short time ; the end has come at last to a long long life lived in a few short years."

She lingered a few days longer, attended by her sister, Mr. Hurst and his sister, Alice and Walter, who scarcely ever left her bedside ; and thus surrounded by those she loved most dearly, and trusting in Him who alone can bring peace to the troubled spirit, she fell asleep.

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LILLY HUNTLEY.

LILLY HUNTLEY.



When adverse winds and waves arise,
And in my heart despondence sighs ;
When life her throng of care reveals,
And weakness o'er my spirit steals—
Grateful I hear the kind decree,
That " as my day my strength shall be."

SIGOURNEY.

LILLY HUNTLEY.

CHAPTER I.

LILLY had just cleared the tea table, washed, and replaced the dishes in the cupboard, when she heard a carriage rumbling down the street ; it stopped before the cut-stone house which stood opposite her humble home. Instantly she was at the window with her face pressed close to the glass ; she saw a span of beautiful white horses, and an elegant barouche, from which stepped a stout lady dressed in heavy black silk and velvet ; she was followed by a little girl about Lilly's own age, who was also richly dressed ; she bounded up the steps before her mother and rang the doorbell. They were soon admitted, and a few moments

later Lilly saw through the handsome lace curtains the figure of the child seated at the piano running her fingers lightly over the keys, sweet strains of music faintly reached her; often when tired and hopeless she had been refreshed by these soft notes, often when rebellious been soothed; but to-night she felt wicked and envious, and as they reached her, she shut her heart and ears to their, sweetness and bitterly contrasted the luxury of the home before her with her own.

“Lilly,” called her mother; Lilly turned toward her to listen, but a violent fit of coughing checked the words she would have spoken. Lilly went to her, drew her head to her shoulder, where it rested with closed eyes long after the coughing had ceased; at last, raising her head, she said, “Lilly, dear, light the lamp, I must finish this dress and take it home to-night; but what is the matter my child? your cheeks are wet with tears, come, tell your mother, love.”

Lilly sank to the floor, dropped her face in her mother's lap and sobbed loudly. When the violence of this outburst had passed, her mother lifted her and again gently questioned her :

"It is only this, ma," she burst out. "Why is there such a difference between the Newtons and us; they have everything they wish for, horses and carriages, silks and velvets, fine house and servants, and everything, everything, and we nothing but poverty, and you so sick, and while they do nothing but pleasure, you have ever to hurry and work, then carry it home; yes, carry those great heavy parcels, while their footman carried their parcel from the carriage, and it was only a tiny thing that a baby would have taken. Ma, is it always to be this way? are we never to be better off."

"Dear Lilly," said her mother, drawing her close to her, "how strange it is that you should feel so, just when I was wishing we could live this way for years; yes, my dear, you need not glance around at our poor room and extend your great eyes in wonder. If I was only just a little better, I could work and carry home these great parcels which you dislike so much; yes, carry them home with pleasure, feeling rich; yes, rich my girl, if you were so close to me that I could put my arms around you; but instead of these great

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riches, my health and my daughter ; the one has gone, the other I am soon to lose."

" Ma !"

" Yes, dear, you must know soon, you may as well know now : I am no longer able to work for our maintenance as I have done, and my sister, your aunt Katie, says she will no longer help me if I persist in trying to do so ; so there is nothing else for me to do, but to give up. I am going to live with her in the country ; and you, my child, do you remember your uncle Hubert, you have not seen him since the day of your father's funeral ; he then offered to adopt you, but I could not give you up, knowing that all intercourse between us would be at an end ; but now I am obliged to, we both must try to bear the separation bravely ; I know you will for my sake, and I trust you will be happy in your new home. You have envied Grace Newton,—with your uncle all you have seen her with, you will then enjoy ; no doubt you will have many trials and you will miss me very much, but I have taught you where to look for comfort, where to go for counsel ; be ever obedient, gentle, kind, for-

giving. I do not know your cousins Fanny and Helen, but I know they must be very different from you, their circumstances and surroundings are so widely different, but by following my advice, I am sure you will win their confidence and love."

"O ma! I can never live separated from you."

"You will grow accustomed to it, my dear, and it will help you to bear it to know I am released from this drudgery, in a comfortable home among kind friends."

"Why cannot I go to the country with you?"

"Your aunt has four daughters of her own to dress and educate, and does not feel equal to taking another, particularly when she knows your uncle's offer is so much more advantageous."

"When do we leave here, ma?"

"Let me see, this is Tuesday, just a week from today."

"Where does uncle Hubert live?"

"In Sherbrooke street."

"How I do wish I was going with you, mama, I love the country so much too; do you remember when

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aunty took us to her place, what a nice time we had, walking in the beautiful fields, and resting under the great trees listening to the sweet birds. Oh! I must go with you, ma, I will ask aunt Kate;" and the little girl threw herself into her mother's arms and sobbed bitterly. Her mother tried to sooth her, telling her of the luxurious home she was going to, but Lilly only sobbed louder and clung closer to her; her mother then gently released herself from her, placed her in a chair by her side, and wiping the tears from her own eyes, went on with her sewing,—two hours after the dress was finished, neatly folded, and for the last time, the mother and child together carried home the work. The rest of the week was spent in looking over Lilly's wardrobe; as Mrs. Huntley was unable to add any new dresses to it, she took the best of her own that she had laid aside after her husband's death, and made them over for her. The week soon slipped away; during that time Mrs. Huntley had received a note from her brother-in-law, stating the time that he would send his carriage for Lilly; and now as it neared the time, the mother sat holding her child in her

arms, counting the moments that yet remained. Lilly, conscious of the pain her tears caused her, struggled bravely to restrain them, and sat leaning her head on her mother's shoulder, gazing mutely along the street in the direction she expected the carriage to come in ; at about ten o'clock, it came drawn by a sleek span of horses in silver mounted trappings. With a long embrace, Mrs Huntley placed her on the crimson cushions, closed the carriage door, it swept away and left her gazing after it until it turned the corner. Lilly strained her eyes to catch a last look at that pale loved face, then slipped from the seat to the bottom of the carriage and gave full vent to her pent feelings. She forgot her wish of a week ago : the grand house with its brilliant lights, velvet carpets and gorgeous furniture, the servants, barouche and horses, all were as nothing ; her only wish and thought was to be with her mother. She knew in about an hour her aunt would call for her, and could she but nestle beside her in the market wagon among the rude buffaloes, she would be happy ; this thought alone occupied her during the ride ; she was roused by the car-

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riage stopping; she sprang up and seated herself just as the coachman opened the door. He lifted her out and led her in. As Lilly passed through the hall she saw a little girl leaning over the stairs trying to get a glimpse of her, and as her eyes fell on her she exclaimed, "What a horrid fright;" and with a smothered laugh ran up the stairs; deeply mortified she walked into the room where her aunt sat, and stood before her with downcast eyes. "O dear!" The exclamation came from a young lady who sat beside Mrs. Hubert Huntley. Mrs. Huntley held out her hand to her and said, "Lilly I am your aunt Clara, and bid you welcome." She touched her fingers as she spoke, then presented her to her cousin Fanny, who also bade her welcome. Lilly raised her eyes first to one face then the other, but she found the young one was but a counterpart of the older, and that was proud and cold; she had not expected a very warm welcome, but had she tried she would have failed to conceive one such as this. Mrs. Huntley bade the man ring for Lucy the maid, and under her charge she was conveyed to her room. Lilly gave a furtive glance at the mirror

in passing, and what a picture met her eye ; her pretty blue merino dress soiled and crumpled, the black velvet her mother had cut down to fit her and trimmed so nicely, now gray with dust, and her bonnet so battered and crushed that it was scarcely recognizable as an article under that name, while her curls were thrown over it in every direction like so many bright auburn feathers, and her face tear-stained and begrimed, poor Lilly truly a "horrid fright." When they reached the chamber the maid left her and returned to Mrs. Huntley for orders, and Lilly seated herself in mute despair, mortification and grief, the very last promise to her mother she had violated. "Act lady-like Lilly, so that the conduct of the child of a farmer's daughter may not jar rudely against the feelings of your refined friends," and she had answered "yes, mother ;" but what had she done instead, and she glanced ruefully at the clothes in which her kind mother had arrayed her with such pride, and her tears quietly flowed. Lucy's return soon effected a change in her appearance, for when she had made a liberal application of water to her face and hands, and a vi-

gorous brushing to her hair, together with a change of dress, she declared that "Miss Fanny herself did not look better," then left her. Lilly after carefully inspecting the apartment, which was beautifully furnished, and contained two lovely little beds, which she concluded was for her cousin Helen and herself, went to the window and stood there looking out ; being on the third floor she had an excellent view of the city, and as she was busily engaged in trying to find the home she had just left, out from among the hundreds before her, she received a violent jerk by her curls and a merry voice said, "Well, fiery locks ;" she turned, and confronted the little girl whom she had seen in the hall.

"Are you cousin Helen?" she asked.

"I have that honor," said Helen with a low courtesy. Lilly's face grew very red and her eyes filled with tears ; this softened her cousin, who was naturally a warm-hearted little girl, so she put her arms round Lilly's neck and said, "Lill don't you mind me, I am an awful madcap, but I mean to like you. I am real glad you have come ; you see ma is so hor-

ridly stiff and formal, and Fan is just like her, they get on splendidly together, and without me, but I am pa's pet and pride ; but you know he is so much occupied with business that I am mostly alone ; but by the figure you cut when you arrived this morning I think your company will suit me better than them, there take that as a compliment. Here give us a kiss and let us be friends."

After the kiss had been given Lilly said, " Why did you call me fiery locks—my hair is not red ?"

" My eyes deceive me then ; pray what is it ?"

" Pa used to call me golden hair."

" And what did ma call you ?" asked the mischievous cousin ?"

" She called it auburn, and used to say my curls were like beautiful floss," answered Lilly, all unconscious that her cousin was amusing herself at her expense.

" Well after such conclusive proofs as this I must admit I am wrong, and give up the name, but I am sorry, for I rather liked it ; however I suppose Lill will do as well when I get used to it, mine remember

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here in the room is Nell, out of it it is Nellie or Helen."

"Why this difference?"

"Because Nell, though all to be desired in the way of being short, blunt and pointed, is rather vulgar, while Nellie is sweet and genteel, and Helen is well; I cannot describe it exactly unless I say it has a touch of Ma and Fan about it: do you understand?"

"Yes I think I do, and I would rather call you Nellie all the time; I think it very sweet and pretty; I like it very much."

"Very well, that is settled; now how old are you?"

"Twelve years."

"The same age as I am; Fan is fifteen, she sleeps in the room below this, Lucy our maid in the one next to this. There goes the lunch bell, you will see pa now."

Nellie took her hand and led her down. All the family were already there when they entered the dining room. Mr. Huntley drew his niece toward him, welcoming her warmly; he pressed her in his arms, smoothed the hair back from her brow, and kissed her as he repeatedly said, "How like her father." And

Lilly, looking up into his face with its full forehead, bright brown hair and kind blue eyes, thought "How like pa he is." Lilly, dazzled by the display of silver and china, did not enjoy the meal much, and was glad when Nellie and she were allowed to return to their room. They had not been long there when the sewing girl, which Mrs. Huntley always kept, came into the room and asked Lilly for the key of her trunk; then to her astonishment and dismay the girl opened it and quickly turned its contents out upon the floor.

"What are you going to do, Sarah?" asked Nellie.

"I am going to see what your cousin has fit to wear, and what she needs, and bring the report to your Ma," said the girl, taking a pencil and paper from her pocket. It was with no small pang that Lilly saw the clothes which her mother had made or mended, turned and trimmed with such care and pride, now thrown aside in a heap as useless; and others that they had thought looked so beautiful and fit for any day or occasion, now eyed half doubtfully and finally pronounced fit for school; and her trunk, which had been her delight,

pushed into the passage, waiting to be carried to the lumber room. Sarah now withdrew, and Lucy came in and commenced to arrange her clothes in the bureau and closet, while Nellie tried to cheer her with visions of much finer ones than those which had been rejected. That afternoon they joined Fanny, who sat in the sitting room busy with some fancy work.

“Are you fond of this kind of work, Lilly?” she asked.

“I have never done much of it; the only kind of wool work that ma taught me was to knit stockings, do you like that?”

“I have never tried it,” said Fanny dryly.

But Nellie’s active imagination, at the mention of stocking-knitting, had conjured Lilly in the form of an old woman working away with the end of a huge stocking tucked under her arm, then to vary the scene she remarked, “I suppose you darn.” To her astonishment Lilly said, “Yes, ma says I darn very nicely.”

“Of course you do housework,” went on Nellie as though she was quite an adept in it herself, and expected as much of Lilly. “Yes,” answered Lilly, “I

did the most of ours for the past year, Ma's health was so bad she could not do all."

"Do you make nice cake?"

"I have made very little cake, but I can make real good biscuit."

Nellie was about to speak again, but Fanny checked her, saying, "Helen we have had enough of this; if there is any more of it I will ask you to go up stairs."

CHAPTER II.

The next day Lilly went to school with her cousin. Before starting her aunt strictly charged her to remain perfectly silent on everything connected with her past life. Lilly's time was so much occupied between the school and the many novel things round her at home, that although she talked a great deal about her to Nellie yet she grew accustomed to the separation. Nellie was her bosom friend, and although mischievous and

could enjoy a little sport at Lilly's expense; yet she would not allow another to do it; so to her Lilly came with all her troubles, and found in her ever a loving and kind friend.

Time passed on; the Christmas holidays were fast approaching. Fanny and Nellie now constantly talked of the pleasant time they anticipated. Nellie often tried to interest Lilly by recapitulating her past pleasures, but a longing had taken possession of her to spend them with her mother; so one evening, a week before Christmas, she confided her wish to Nellie, but Nellie shook her head doubtfully and said, "I am sure I would be real glad if I could help you, but I cannot. I am afraid ma would not consent; do you remember when you came here first how you used to say, when you heard a name mentioned that was familiar to you, 'Is that Mrs. So and So of such a street,' if the answer was, 'Yes, do you know her?' you would then say, 'Ma used to sew for her.' Now, my dear girl, this was decidedly unpleasant for Ma and Fan, and it sometimes put me to a great deal of trouble to manage to get a convenient place within reach of your elbow

or toes that I might pinch you into silence ; and it is only last week I heard Ma remark to Pa, ‘ Is it not well we took the plan we did with Lilly ; had we allowed intercourse between herself and friends she never would have fallen so nicely into our ways as she has done.’ So you see there is not much hope there ; give up the thought and think of the fun here.”

“ But Nellie I cannot give it up, and I know you will help me, or at least try to ; do, do, Nellie dear, if it is only to ask your Pa.” And Lilly laid her wet cheek against that of her companion’s, and wound her arms round her. Nellie sat a few moments with her eyes fixed on a flower in the carpet, as though reading in its delicately colored petals the best plan to adopt. Then passing her hand caressingly over Lilly’s head, she said, “ There is only one way in which we may hope to succeed in gaining Ma’s consent, if that fails you are done.”

“ Oh I am sure it will not. Nellie your plans are always good ; what is it ?”

“ Well, first, I do not think it a good idea for me to ask Pa, for he would say go to your Ma about it, and

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Ma would say, 'child go to your room, we know what is best both for you and your cousin, and that we shall do without being asked.' Do you see, Lill, I know all about that from past experience; but here is my plan—you ask Ma before Pa; he is impulsive and will at once take sides with you, and most likely the day will be ours."

"When shall I ask?"

"Let me see; well to-morrow after dinner when they are at leisure."

Soon after this chat the two girls went to bed; Nellie's fair curly head had scarcely touched the pillow when she slept; but Lilly tossed about wakeful long after, thinking of the great pleasure in store for her, for her confidence in Nellie was unbounded, and now she wondered at herself for not having spoken to her sooner about it; at last, tired out, she fell asleep thinking of her mother's pale face, and dreamed her own was nestling close against it.

The day following was unusually long to Lilly, but finally it ended: and when the family had taken their seats in the parlor after dinner her heart throbbed

painfully, for she stood in awe of her cold, haughty aunt. For some time she sat uneasily in her chair, trying to think of something to say, and how she would say it; until Nellie began to fear she would let this good opportunity slip, and commenced such a series of pinches and meaning looks, that poor Lilly was driven to her task in spite of herself. She arose, stepped across the room and stood before Mr. and Mrs. Huntley, who sat side by side near the glowing grate; they both looked at the child, as she stood there twitching her fingers nervously, and her bosom heaving with great sobs that her quivering lips could not keep down.

“What is it, Lilly?” said Mr. Huntley, holding out his hand to her; she laid her’s timidly in it; as his fingers closed over her’s she gained courage, and looking up with tear-filled eyes, she said, “Uncle, Aunt, I am a great trouble to you I know, and you are so kind; I should not ask anything, but every one is talking about all the beautiful things they are going to have in the holidays. May I see my poor dear Ma?” The fingers closed tighter over her’s, and the owner of them said, “She may go, I suppose, Clara.” A look

of intense displeasure crossed the lady's face; he noticed it and quickly said, "Of course I know you would not think of keeping her when she wishes so much to go." Then, in a lower tone, "It will be the last holidays they will spend together here."

"Yes, I suppose you may go, Lilly," said her aunt. Lilly gave her uncle one earnest look of gratitude and burst into tears.

"I will excuse you, Lilly," said her aunt; and glad to be alone she hurried to her room. How the intervening days passed Lilly did not know; it seemed like a dream to her; she was not only going to see her mother, but to spend two weeks with her and Aunt Katie, who had been so kind to her, and whom she loved so much, but now did not dare even name; because on market days she rode into the city in her wagon, which was filled with butter, eggs and fowl. On the morning of Christmas eve, when the great load of turkeys and geese had been disposed of, Lilly, wrapped in a buffalo, sat beside her aunt and sped over the smooth ice bridge that spanned the St. Lawrence between Montreal and Laprairie; no word had been

sent to the poor invalid mother regarding her child's coming, and although she had longed to see her she did not hope to, for she knew what her brother-in-law meant when he said, 'if she is sick or in any way needful of your presence I shall send for you;' so, for her child's sake, she could bear it, hard as it was, and she could trust her darling with him, he was so like her late husband; and although his haughty wife had never called upon her since she had come from her humble country home to the city, yet Hubert had, during her husband's life, and when he died, had offered every help and kindness; as long as she could do without she had done so, but when no longer able, she resigned herself to what he thought best.

When her sister reached home that evening she left Lilly in the sleigh and went in alone; the widow was seated by the fire with her knitting lying idly in her lap; she went to her, laid her hand on her shoulder, and said, "Julia, I have brought something from the city to you." Mrs. Huntley grasped her hand and cried "It is my child, Katie, bring her to me." Another moment and she held her in her arms; when at last

she was able to release her she held her at arm's length, and run her eyes over her slender figure, which was draped in fine merino, while glistening jewels sparkled at her ears and throat. "Can this really be my little one?"

"O Ma, this is nothing to what I have," cried Lilly. "I have everything just like Nellie, and they are all so kind to me, even Aunt Clara, who is so grand and and proud."

"Then you are happy in your new home, Lilly?"

"Yes Ma, I should be perfectly so if you were there."

"You must not expect perfect happiness here, my dear, so you must be content knowing I am comfortable, and well satisfied with your present position. Lilly you may never have an opportunity of showing how sincerely you feel their kindness, but if you do have it, remember, my daughter, you owe them even to the sacrificing of your own comfort and happiness."

"I hope you do not think me ungrateful, Ma," said Lilly, resting her bright head on her mother's shoulder, and gazing up into her eyes.

"Not the least so, my little warm-hearted pet; but

it is my duty to charge you thus, even though no shadow of a chance is apparent, at present, of you ever being called upon to make a sacrifice, or you failing to do so if required."

The two weeks flew quickly by, and although they could not enjoy those delightful walks in the beautiful fields, as they had done on Lilly's last visit, yet they did not miss them, they had so much to tell each other ; and when the allotted time had ended Lilly found she had not yet told half, but go she must.

"Ma, ma, it is hard, hard," she sobbed, clinging to her as she stood by the market sleigh in the early grey morning light.

"This is your cross, my love," her mother whispered in a trembling voice, "bear it bravely, looking to the crown."

They parted, each straining her eyes as the distance widened between them, until they were out of sight.

In a day or two Lilly regained her usual lively spirits, and everything glided smoothly on as before until spring ; when one day Lilly was called to the parlor where her uncle sat waiting to speak to her ; when she

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entered the room he held out his hand to her, and in a low compassionate voice said, "I have something sad to tell you, Lilly, my child," and he drew her toward him. She scanned his kind face wonderingly, for she missed his gentle smile as he pressed her closer to him. Her heart stood still; she put one of her little cold hands up and drew his face close to hers, and her white lips breathed the single word "mother."

"She is very ill," he said. She drew a long breath in relief, and the color once more returned to her white face; he had meant to break the news gently to her, but she had leaped to a conclusion worse than the reality. She was dying, while Lilly thought her already dead. "You are going to her now, the sleigh is at the door, and always remember, I am your father whatever may happen. Tell your mother so; now go for your wrappings, I will see you at the door."

It was a long dull ride for poor Lilly; she was not acquainted with the man that had been sent for her, but as she had no wish to speak, no matter who he was; so she drew her veil over her face and nestled down in the corner of the sleigh, with but one thought

in her mind, "If she only lives until I get there."

And she did live, for she lay quietly sleeping when Lilly reached her bedside; by it she knelt and laid her cheek to the marble like hand which rested on the coverlet, until the white lids were lifted and the great eyes gleamed with recognition. For the remainder of the night she sat by the bedside; her mother being very weak was able to speak but little and at long intervals. Toward the evening of the next day she fell asleep with her head resting on Lilly's shoulder, and one of her hands in her's; sometimes she lay so still that Lilly's heart would beat quickly, and her ear would be strained to catch the sound of her breathing, but again the faint wave of sound would reach her, that told her she still lived. Thus the time passed until midnight, then the dying woman opened her eyes, took one last look at that dear face bending over her, and closed them forever.

Soon after the funeral Lilly was taken back to the city, for her kind aunt knew it would be much better for her to return at once to her young friends and school, than to stay there brooding over her loss, as

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she would undoubtedly have done ; nor did she wish to stay, for now she felt her Uncle Hubert was her only protector, and in no arms but Nellie's could she sob out her grief. She was received with much kindness when she returned ; every one did their utmost to divert her mind from her bereavement.

Months passed ; Nellie and Lilly grew warmer friends each day, and Lilly has become fully initiated into all the punctilios of the family ; she now seldom requires a friendly pinch from Nellie to recall her. But one summer day, being at home alone, Fanny and Nellie having accompanied their mother to make a few morning calls, Lilly wandered about the house until she was tired, then passed out to the yard at the back of the house ; the kitchen window being opened, she seated herself on the sill to watch the servants as they bustled round, busy with their work. After a long time she grew weary of the incessant stir, seeing no appearance of it abating, so she said, " Why, cook, are you not tired ? I dont think you have taken time to draw a good breath since I have been here."

" Tired, child, I am most dead," and she dropt in-

to a chair, caught her apron by the two corners, and commenced fanning herself vigorously. "Tired, yes, I should think I am, look at all those preserves I have made this morning, and done up since you sat there," and she waved her hand toward the table laden with jars of all sizes. "But, dear me what am I sitting here for, with half a dozen tarts to bake, some cake, besides biscuit for lunch." She arose quickly as she spoke.

"O cook, you will never get all that done."

"But I must, and indeed I have done quite as much often enough without thinking of it; but this morning my old head aches so I can scarcely keep it up."

"How I should like to bake the biscuit for you; it is so long since I made any, and I can do them so well; won't you let me, cook?"

"O dear! no, Miss Lilly, I could not think of such a thing even to please you; where did you learn to do any thing of the kind?" The question reminded Lilly that she needed Nellie there to pinch her, so she did not reply; but her desire to help the cook being greater than her prudence, she slipped through the window

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to the floor, caught up an apron that lay on a chair and said, "I will give you better proof than words that I can do it," and was soon up to her elbows in flour; nimbly her hands flew, and how brightly her eyes shone as she mixed, rolled out and cut her paste, and now they are finished. Before her lies the hot pan ready to receive them, her left hand is heaped with a snowy load of them, her right quickly transferring them from her hand to the pan.

"Lilly!" said a voice at her back; a scream escaped her, the biscuit rolled to the floor, and trembling and guilty, she stood before her aunt. "Take off that apron, and go to your room; remain there until I send for you." She dared not raise her eyes to encounter those of her aunt, but to clear the cook of all culpability, she felt she must; yet how could she speak, or what could she say. Thus she thought, as she pulled and twitched at the apron string; at last off it came, she dropt it on the floor, turned toward the door, then stood there, and without looking up said, "Aunt Clara, the cook did not wish me to, I am alone to blame." Then bursting into tears went out; that day

her lunch was taken up to her, and Nellie was not allowed to go near her all afternoon, but in the evening she received permission to join the family at dinner.

This was about the last feat Lilly performed in remembrance of old times, for ever after, if an opportunity occurred where she might have betrayed herself, the formidable shade of her frowning aunt, and the pan of biscuit rose before her.

CHAPTER III.

Three years passed away with little apparent change in the household, but there was an under current at work, which was surely wearing away its foundation. Mr. Huntley's business began to decline, and though he was energetic and clever, he was rather venturesome and after several unfortunate speculations he grew desperate, made one final effort, risked his all, and lost ;

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and now the assignee's flag hung from the doors of both warehouse and mansion. A small house in a retired street was rented and plainly furnished; the only article that remained of their former furniture was the piano, which a friend bought in for them at the sale, as it was going for a trifle.

"And now," thought Lilly, "I have no right here, for all the money that will be expended on me for the future will be just so much taken from Fanny and Helen; I am sixteen now, and I am sure many a girl of that age has worked for herself, and so will I."

Thus resolved she arose and went to her aunt, whom she knew was sitting alone in her own room; she tapped lightly at the door, Mrs. Huntley bade her enter, she did so, and going to her aunt's side made known her wish to work for herself; tears filled her aunt's eyes, and for the first time in the four years that she had lived with her, she put her arms round her, pressed her to her bosom, and kissed her. "No, no, Lilly," she said, "you will do something better than that, you will stay here and help us; there are many things about the house we shall be obliged to do our-

selves, you know we have only one servant now.”

So Lilly remained. Mr Huntley took a subordinate position in a wholesale warehouse at a moderate salary, but his health and spirits were broken, and in that pale careworn countenance you could scarcely recognise the pleasant, kind-faced gentleman who welcomed Lilly so warmly to his luxurious home. Whatever Mrs. Huntley felt by this change she carefully concealed; with the family she was much the same, with her former friends, when she chanced to meet them, only a shade haughtier. Fanny felt her changed circumstances acutely, but light-hearted Nellie, though for her father's sake she felt it deeply, still the novelty of their new mode of living presented so many interesting phases, she had no time to fret over her lost indulgences, but went heartily into the present; sometimes, when she would lay her tired limbs down on her bed at night, she would say, “Well if I am tired, I can rest on a bed my own hands have arranged in the most inviting state.”

Fanny had chosen, as her share of the work, the family sewing, but she was sadly deficient; so Lilly

had a divided task ; at one time instructing Fanny, at another helping the hired girl.

They lived very quietly, had little company, among the few they had to visit them we mention but one, that was a Mr. Ross, a fellow clerk of Mr. Huntley's, to whom he had shown great kindness when he entered the store, and in return for this he had been invited to call ; this he gladly took the advantage of, as he had caught a glimpse of Nellie's merry face, as she opened the door to admit her father on one occasion that he had walked home with him from the store. His visits were enjoyed very much by every one except Fanny, who on these occasions rarely appeared in the parlor, for she had not yet, and never did become quite reconciled to this humble way of living.

In this way two years slipped away, then Mr. Ross's employer gave him a better position in a house in Upper Canada, with which he was connected ; so there was a quiet wedding, and Nellie accompanied him to his western home. A month later Mr. Huntley became very ill, and in a few short weeks he was laid in his grave. The night after the funeral, as Lilly sat listen-

ing to the fierce December wind as it beat against the window, a low rap at her door startled her ; the door opened and Mrs. Huntley put her pale sad face in, and said, " May I come in, Lilly."

" Certainly, Aunty, but I thought you had retired long ago."

" So I had, but I could not sleep, and when Fanny fell asleep I slipped out, and seeing your lamp burning I thought I would come and sit with you for a while, and together we could plan the future ; what are we to do now, Lilly ?" Lilly remained silent. The lady continued, " Work we must, but what will we do ? I have thought and thought, until I am almost mad."

" What have you thought of doing ?" asked Lilly.

" I think Fanny, my poor proud Fanny, must teach music, and then I thought along with that, you and I might open a day school ; of course at May we must take a smaller house, we must lighten expenses as much as possible, and I am afraid we will be obliged to change our servant ; we can never manage to pay this one."

" Do you mean to teach, Aunt.?"

"I certainly will."

"Then why not dispense with hired help entirely; I can do the house work."

"O I am afraid it will be too much for you."

"I will do it until it has been proved so." She took her aunt's hand, led her to the door saying cheerfully, "There it is one o'clock you must go to bed now, and do not fret a bit about it, I am sure we will get along nicely."

"Lilly, my precious child, what a blessing you have been to us, what could we have done without you?" They bade each other good night, and, much relieved, Mrs. Huntley lay down and slept.

A day or two after the parlor furniture was sold, and a few forms purchased, and a card placed in the window bearing the words, "Music," and Day School. They only succeeded in collecting a few pupils; this they attributed to the number of schools round them, and were not discouraged; for as they intended to move in spring they could choose a more favourable locality; the duty of house-hunting devolved on Lilly, and day after day she traversed the suburbs, and re-

turned home at night tired and heartless. At last one day a ticket on a little cottage caught her eye, quickly she stood before it and read, "Apply at Mr. Greer directly opposite." She crossed the street, rang the door bell, was admitted. As her feet pressed the soft carpet a sigh escaped her, she sank into a great easy chair, leaned her head against the cushions and thought "If I could only remain here, no more toil, no more house-hunting, no more poverty, the past could all be forgotten in this beautiful home."

The room door opened and Mr. Greer entered, a tall portly gentleman, rather bald and very gray. She explained her business, he made some enquiries concerning the family, then ruminated, "Family consists of three ladies." Then to Lilly, "A widow and two daughters."

"No, sir, a daughter and niece."

"Ah, I beg pardon, you are of course the daughter?"

"No sir, the niece."

"Wrong again," he laughed. "Well, I hope it will suit you, and we shall get better acquainted; I do think it would be a good place for a school; I know

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of no school near here, besides I can send you three music pupils myself. I am a widower, I have three daughters, eldest sixteen, next fourteen, youngest twelve."

They now went over to look at the house, it was a pleasant little place, on the first floor a parlor and dining room and back kitchen, in the attic two bedrooms.

"I think it will suit, and if so I will return and let you know."

"And if you conclude to take it, I shall have it newly papered and nicely cleaned, and you may come to it as soon as you wish, it being vacant, it will make no difference to me."

Lilly hurried home to consult her aunt and cousin ; they decided on taking it, and the next day she returned and let him know, and a week before May they moved into it. It was, as Mr Greer had predicted, a good locality for a school, for in a short time they had as many pupils as they could accommodate. Although it was pleasing to have such a fair promise of success, yet each felt she was over tasked, still none spoke of it, for each thought, if they are able for their part I will not shrink from mine."

Besides they knew it took all they could earn to support them, so they silently worked on for about a year, then Mrs. Huntley's health gave out, and she was obliged to give up school. Mr. Greer had become intimate with the family and had been very kind to them. Every Saturday afternoon during the summer he sent his own carriage, that they might enjoy a ride in the fresh air, and in fact in every way he could show them a kindness he took advantage of it. Lilly's feelings from the first were strongly adverse toward him, and an extended acquaintance did not alter them, but she never mentioned this to her friends.

One evening as she sat alone in the front room, Mrs. Huntley having retired and Fanny was engaged with a pupil in the dining room, Mr. Greer came in and taking a seat near chatted awhile in his usual easy manner, drawing from her as he did so, their present unhappy state of affairs. "What pains me most," she said, "is seeing aunt so ill, and without those comforts that until now she did not know what it was to be without."

"It is very sad," he said, and his eyes turned toward his own handsome cut stone house opposite ;

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Lilly's followed, and a deep sigh parted her lips, for she thought of the one such as that where she had first seen her aunt ; but he could not read her thoughts, and perhaps he supposed they had not wandered farther than her eyes, and said, "Miss Huntley how happy, how unspeakably happy, would I be if your aunt was a perpetual guest there and Miss Fanny : if she would accept the position of governess to my girls, or guest also, until she chose a home for herself, and you, my dear Lilly, mistress of it all."

"I beg pardon," said Lilly, not quite understanding.

"Lilly," he went on, from the first time I saw you I loved you, and resolved to try and win you ; now do hear me ;" for she had risen as though to leave the room, "I cannot, sir, you must please excuse me."

"I will not hurry you, think it over, I will speak to your aunt, and do think kindly of me ; remember all that money can buy will be yours."

He dared not say more, her face wore a look of such pain ; so taking his hat he went out. A few days after this, as Lilly sat sewing by her aunt, after a long silence, Mrs. Huntley said, "Lilly how old are you dear?"

“Nineteen, Aunt.”

“Oh! yes, the same age as Nellie; dear Nellie how glad I am she was married at the time she was; she just escaped these hardships; poor girl how she would grieve if she knew how we were situated; it is well we told her our circumstances when we were doing so well; for although she is very comfortable herself, she has nothing to spare; and you are nineteen. nearly two years since Nellie was married, do you not think it is time you were getting settled, Lilly?”

“Fanny is three years older than I.”

“Yes, but Fanny has not been so fortunate as you. Mr. Greer has told me all about it, Lilly, and he hopes the next time he calls I will have a kind answer for him.”

“Then he will be disappointed.”

“Lilly, my dear girl, do not let any silly romance cheat you out of a luxurious home; have you not been pinched enough yet by poverty to know that there is something more substantial than the nonsense of a sentimental school girl. What can you be thinking of? what more do you want than a kind-hearted and wealthy gentleman?”

“ But he is almost repulsive to me.”

“ You could overcome that if you wished.”

“ With this feeling toward him would you wish Fanny to marry him ?”

“ I would insist on it, were she in your place.”

Lilly made no answer to this, but folded her work and left the room ; day after day passed, and neither Mrs. Huntley's health nor their circumstances improved ; and Lilly's work, which had been ample before, was now increased, so that an idea which had occurred to her of finding sewing to do to add a little to their scanty fund, she was obliged to abandon. Though Mr. Greer still continued his visits as before, no further reference was made to his proposal ; the summer faded, and winter, with all its terrors for the poor, was fast approaching, and a very weary prospect it was to them. One evening, as the two girls sat together, Fanny idle and Lilly busily patching up a warm wrapper for Mrs. Huntley, Fanny said, “ I cannot conceive, Lilly, how you can toil so incessantly from morning until bed time as you do, in this miserable way, and wretched place, particularly when such a tempting way to escape lies right before you.”

“If there was a tempting way, Fanny, I should certainly take advantage of it.”

“How perverse you are, child; when it is too late perhaps you will see, and that may be before spring. Only think of the coming winter, with scarcely a stick of wood in the shed, and not enough of clothing to appear even passably respectable, much less to feel comfortable, and ma’s constantly declining health, which is just going to kill you both outright. O Lilly I am in despair when I think of it,” and Fanny dropt her head to the table and burst into tears.

“Fanny, Fanny, do not, oh do not; I can stand anything but this. The work is nothing, for as it becomes heavier I seem to increase in strength in proportion; do not fear for me, and as for the wood I know how to get a supply of that, so we wont be so bad off after all; and I know our good fairy will give us a call before spring; so don’t be down-hearted,” said Lilly, making an attempt at pleasantry. “And who knows but before spring you will be mistress yourself of the mansion opposite.”

As Fanny raised her head and smiled, Lilly in turn

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commenced to cry. It was now Fanny's time to offer consolation, and the unfinished wrapper lay forgotten on the floor. That night before Lilly retired she went to the bureau, opened a drawer, and took from it a little box, seated herself at the table, and opened it with a deep drawn sigh; she took from its velvet cushions her father's watch and chain, her mother's brooch and finger rings, a handsome set of jewelry, pearls set in gold, her uncle's present, then her aunt's emeralds in exquisite gold settings. "It is hard, hard to part with any of them, still I must not falter; my first thought must be of them, not myself," thought she as she took her two beautiful sets and her mother's brooch, and tying them up she placed them in her pocket. She then returned the other articles to the box and replaced it in the drawer with tear-dimmed eyes.

Next day when Lilly held her precious treasures toward the jeweler, stating her wish to sell them, he scrutinized her pale face keenly, and ran his sharp eyes over her shabby dress. She felt an explanation would not be out of place, and said, "I received these from friends when in good circumstances, but now being needful of money I am obliged to part with them."

"Very well, Miss, I will expose them in the win-

dow, and in two weeks you can return and most likely I will buy them from you."

Lilly thanked him and hastened on to market, trying to persuade herself, as she wiped her eyes, it was not so hard after all. Two weeks after she called on him and received from him twenty-five dollars, which was about one-third their value, but Lilly thought not of that, but hurried away to a wood yard and ordered the wood, then went home. That winter proved to be a hard one, and the good fairy she had hoped to come and help them failed to appear, and the butcher's and baker's bills grew longer and longer, with no apparent way of paying them. Mr. Greer once more asked her aunt to intercede for him, but she merely mentioned his wish to Lilly, and made no effort to urge her; but Fanny, who dreaded the thought of losing her mother, as soon as she was alone with Lilly threw her arms round her and begged her to say yes. "Oh! Lilly," she pleaded, "how can you see her fade before your eyes like this; this constant dread of starvation is gnawing out her life. If Nellie were but rich, or if indeed there was the faintest shadow of succour from any other direction, ask you I would not, but there is none, none. O Lilly, you have lost your own mother, have you no pity, no feeling for me," and, trembling and convulsed with emotion, she sank to the

floor. Lilly's face grew ashy white, and her voice was husky as she answered, "Fanny, give me one month more, if then there is no change here I will do as you wish me; say no more about it until that time has expired. Fanny held out her arms toward her, but, with averted face, she left the room and passed into her own; when there she sank into a chair, buried her face in her hands and sobbed convulsively. When the violence of this outburst had completely exhausted she threw herself on her bed and fell asleep. With the morning came the thought of how rashly she had spoken; however it was too late now, she knew Fanny had not slept until she had told her mother, and it was impossible to disappoint them; that she could not do. "There is nothing left for me to do but to redouble my efforts," thought she. "There is, there must be some way of escape. I know there is, and I will find it."

CHAPTER IV.

Day after day and night after night she racked her burning brain for some mode by which they might be

able to earn their livelihood, but all to no purpose, and the time was fast slipping away; half her time was gone. One blustry morning, having business in Notre Dame Street, she walked along with a heavy heart and weary step; it was early, and there were but few people on the street; directly before her walked a gentleman whose figure caught her eye. "How like dear Uncle Hubert," she thought, "even his walk resembles his." While she looked at him, he placed his hand in a pocket in the skirt of his coat, and drew out his handkerchief; as he did so she observed an object drop from his pocket to the ground. She was too far behind him to attract his attention by calling, so she ran forward as fast as she could and picked it up; it was a pocket book. He being still too far away to call, she kept on running, and when she reached the French Square the wind was so fierce she was obliged to wait for a lull; so he advanced much further while she waited, than she had gained on him while running, and he soon disappeared round the corner of St. Francois Xavier Street. Again she commenced to run with all her speed, and when she arrived at the corner she saw him enter an Exchange office; she now walked smartly along until she reached the door, opened it, went in, and, breathless from running, sank into a seat. The gentleman stood warming himself at the cheerful



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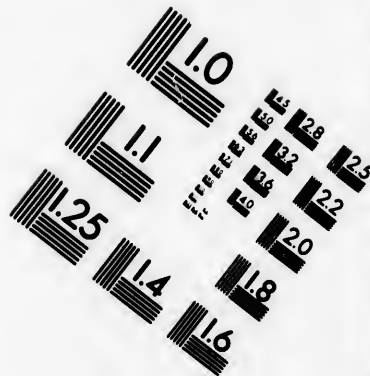
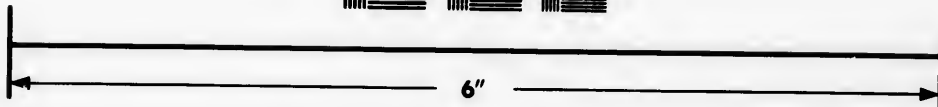
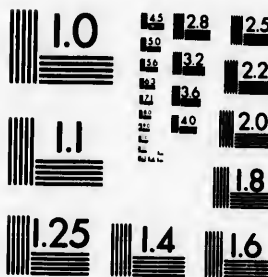


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fire, he looked astonished at her, as she sat panting and shivering, for the keen wind had pierced through her well worn clothes ; finally she made an effort to speak. " Do not hurry, my child," he said kindly. " Wait until you are rested and warmed." He parted the folds of her shawl, that the heat might fall directly on her ; as he did so she extended her hand, and there in her benumbed fingers lay his pocket book.

" What's this ?" he said in amazement.

" You dropt it, Sir."

" Dropt it ; well ! well ! and it contains all those papers," he said to himself rather than to her. Then to her he said, " My dear girl, you have no idea of the service you have done me. I shall never forget it." He opened the pocket book, took a roll of bills between his thumb and finger, glanced at her again, then closed it and placed it in his pocket. He took her cold hand in his and fixed his eyes for a moment on her careworn, thoughtful face, and said, " For what you have done I will not attempt to repay you ; but I am sure you will not deprive me of the pleasure of showing you how grateful I feel ; come, tell me some way in which I may be of use to you." " The relief has come," thought Lilly, and, covering her face with her hands, she burst into tears. When she had somewhat regained her composure, he led her to his private room,

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and, seating himself beside her, said, "Now dear, speak as you would to your father. Tell me all your trouble; I will ever keep it sacred." She told him of her connection to the Huntleys, of their wealth, their loss, the bereavement, their poverty, her aunt's sickness, her fears for Fanny's health, and her own perplexity. When she had ended, he sat thinking for some time, then said, "Would your friends leave the city?"

"They would be glad to do so to better their circumstances."

"Well I think it can be easily done: when my girls were young I bought a pretty cottage at Chambly for them to spend the summer in, but now they despise it and aspire to a fashionable watering place, leaving it idle on my hands. What say you to going there and taking a few pupils to board and educate. I will see you all nicely settled, and among my friends can easily find you a few pupils to begin with. There will be nothing in the arrangement that the ladies can object to, as there will be nothing obligatory in it. I shall rent you the cottage, so after all instead of doing something for you, I have found myself a tenant. You can consult your friends; now give me your address. I will call on you soon, here is my card." Lilly took the card he held out to her and rose to go. "Are you

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sure you are well warmed," he asked her kindly. She answered that she was, and bidding him "good morning," went out.

What a difference an hour of time had made; the wind did not blow so fiercely, and the sun's warmth was felt much more now, and the streets were filled with busy people hurrying in all directions; but this was nothing to the change that had taken place in her. She felt like screaming aloud for joy, she could scarcely control herself, she forgot all about the business she had come out upon—no thought save one filled her heart and mind—the thought of her own escape and the prospect of a comfortable home for her friends. When she turned into Notre Dame Street—that street which she had walked that morning beneath such a load—she could not restrain herself, but bounded along at her utmost speed, not stopping until she reached home. She could not wait to ring the door bell, but passed in at the gate, burst into the kitchen door, breathless and flushed, and threw herself on the floor beside Fanny, who sat by the stove. "Saved, Fanny, saved," she cried.

"Who?" asked the astonished girl.

"I am."

"From whom or what?" But Lilly could say no

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more, and lay for a long time on the floor. At last she sat up and said, "Wait Fanny."

"I am waiting," she answered. So no more was said for a long time; then Lilly told her the whole story from beginning to end, and finished by asking her cousin how she liked the plan.

"I am delighted," she answered. "Among my humble wishes, to leave the city was my highest aspiration."

"And it will do aunt so much good," said Lilly.

"Yes, poor ma will be so much benefitted by it I am sure. Come, let us go and tell her, Lilly."

Mrs. Huntley was very much pleased with the plan, but she remarked that although she and Fanny would gain by it, yet she felt quite sure that Lilly would lose. But Lilly told her she felt altogether differently on that point. Mr. Clarke (for that was the gentleman's name) called in a few days after, and everything was definitely arranged. And before the first of May they were snugly settled in their new home.

Mrs. Huntley rapidly regained her good health, and undertook overseeing the management of everything, and the young ladies taught. Two strong girls were hired to do the housework. They had eight pupils who boarded with them, besides a few day scholars. Mrs. Huntley was content, Fanny passive, and Lilly

happy. Thus things might have gone on for years, only that Mr. Greer, still bent on spoiling the harmony of the trio, proposed to Fanny, who accepted him; and before the next spring she again enjoyed all the luxuries of a wealthy home, and a hired teacher filled her place.

That summer Nellie paid them a visit, bringing with her her beautiful baby boy; and when seated with Lilly in her own room as of old with her arms round her, and her bright golden head on her shoulder, she told her how happy she was, and how Mr. Ross had risen until he had reached quite a high position in the house, and that he now had prospects of becoming a partner. "And you, Lilly," she asked, "you surely have something to tell me concerning your future." Lilly pressed her hand, and the rosy tint in her cheek grew deeper, as her eyes turned toward the ivy covered parsonage that nestled close to the village church, which they could plainly see from the window near which they sat. Nelly understood that look and asked, "When is our lilly to be transplanted?" and the lilly answered, "Next spring."

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