

cold drops streaming from his corrugated brow. He again threw himself upon his seat, and remained so long silent that the priest ventured to speak to him—

"My friend, time passes. The sun is going to rest, and beyond that hour I cannot remain."

"Pardon me," said the prisoner, in a subdued tone; "but the recollections that crowd on my mind madden me. Think what it is to me, the condemned, the outcast, to speak of past happiness. It is like rending apart soul and body, to dwell on bright scenes amid the profound yet palpable darkness of guilt and woe that is ever present with me. 'The heart knoweth its own bitterness,' was once quoted to me by her lips. Ah! how overwhelmingly significant is that phrase to the guilt-stricken. My God! my God! pardon and forgive; for thou knowest the provocation."

The priest breathed a few words of consolation and hope, and again the bitter waves of anguish rolled back from his soul, and left him calm. He sat a few moments silent, as if recalling the scenes he was about to depict; his brow cleared, his eyes lighted up with love and joy. For a few moments the magic of the happy past seemed to hold complete sway over his mind. He continued:

—Heretofore my character had been undeveloped. The master-passion was required to show me my true nature. As the warmth of the sun is needful to give life and beauty to the productions of earth, so the soul of man remains in its germ until love has aroused and expanded his being into the more perfect state of existence. All the better feelings of my nature were brought into action, for I loved a being far superior to myself; one who I felt would long ere this have perished in the atmosphere of evil in which I had been reared.

Until I knew this pure girl I had never felt all the degradation, the debasing effects of my mode of life; but now I blushed before her and resolved to rescue myself from my associates and become worthy of her.

Alice was many weeks recovering from the shock she had sustained, and the subsequent exposure. During that time a portion of our men, headed by my father, had perished in one of their expeditions. I thus became by hereditary descent, the head of the village. In pursuance of my recent determination, I at once delegated my authority to a nephew of my nurse, the same Reardon on whose body I have since perpetrated such fell revenge as he merited. I learned from Alice that the ship was bound for New York, from Liverpool, and five hundred souls were on board when she struck. And must so many perish to bring thee to my side? was my thought; for I felt that she was the guardian angel sent to save me from utter desecration.

For many days after the storm bodies were washed on shore, which were thrown into one common grave. Among them I recognised the father of Alice, and gave him a sepulture with my own hands. I selected a small headland which sloped gradually toward the sea; the greensward was shaded by a single thorn tree, beneath whose shelter I placed the grave of the unfortunate stranger. When Alice had sufficiently recovered to walk to the spot, I led her thither, and pointed out the mound which marked his resting place. She thanked me with many tears, and from that hour I date the commencement of my interest in her heart.

On that spot I learned the simple history of Alice. Her father was an officer on half-pay in the British army. He had no influential connections, and never rose beyond the rank of Lieutenant. A severe wound received in the battle of Waterloo affected his health so seriously that he was compelled to retire from active service; but his pension supported himself and his only child in comfort. As his health, however, visibly declined, he anxiously contemplated the future fate of his daughter; and after mature reflection, resolved to visit the United States in search of a brother who had emigrated to that country many years before, and had there accumulated a fortune. Alice said she had no other relatives except the family of this uncle. In the wide world she was alone without the means of reaching him, even if she could have remembered the place of his

abode. Many of her father's effects had been saved, but among them were no letters or papers which gave any information relative to the residence of Mr. Crawford.

During the illness of Alice I had busied myself in preparing for her an abode removed a short distance from the village. About half a mile from the sea stood a lonely and deserted cottage, sheltered by several fine trees. The rank grass had overgrown the walks in the garden, and the few shrubs which some unknown hand had planted around the house had spread in wild luxuriance over the miniature lawn. I put everything in order myself. The ruined portico was securely propped, and the graceful vine made to trail its foliage over the rustic pillars which supported it. Among the accumulated stores of my deceased father, concealed in vaults constructed for the purpose, I sought the richest carpets for the floor, and the most beautifully-wrought fabrics, with which the mildewed walls were hung. I made a visit to a distant town, and secretly purchased every article of luxury which could be desired in the household of the most delicately-nurtured of Fashion's daughters.

When Vine Cottage, as I named the place, was ready for the reception of its mistress, I secretly induced old Elspeth to remove thither; and, after spending an hour of sweet communion at her father's grave, I persuaded Alice to walk with me in the direction of the cottage. As we drew near it, she expressed her admiration of its simply elegant appearance, and seemed surprised to find so neat a residence in such a vicinity.

"A friend of mine lives here, dear Alice," said I; "let us visit her."

Alice acquiesced with an air of interest, and I led her forward. Elspeth met us at the door. I will not attempt to describe her astonishment and delight when she found that this charming place was to be her future abode. She turned her beautiful eyes on me, humid with tears, and said—

"You must be the possessor of Aladdin's wonderful lamp to accomplish so much in so short a time. But, no; I wrong you, Erlon; perseverance and affection are the true sources of what you have here accomplished. I can never sufficiently thank you, my friend, my brother!"

"No, not a brother," said I, abruptly; "I love you far better than a brother."

Elspeth had left us, and I poured forth my passion with eloquence inspired by its own intensity. I ended by saying:

"I do not ask you to live forever in this horrible neighborhood. Since I have known you, I have ceased to be a wrecker. Never since that eventful night have I gone forth with the band, and from the hour of my father's death his authority has been given by me into the hands of my namesake, Erlon Reardon."

Alice slightly shuddered at the mention of his name, but at the moment I was so absorbed in my own feelings that I did not observe her emotion. She answered my passionate declaration as nearly as I can remember, in the following words, pronounced with a sweet seriousness which was very impressive:

"I will not deny, Erlon, that your delicate kindness, from one from whom I could least have expected it, has made a deep impression on my feelings; and that impression is perhaps heightened by my forlorn and destitute condition. But I cannot conceal from you that I will never consent to marry a man who has, only through his passion for me, torn himself from a pursuit opposed alike by the laws of God and humanity. Your sorrow for the past must come from a higher source. Your soul must be bowed in humility before the throne of Him whose commands you have outraged, and your life must show the effects of your repentance, before I would dare to trust my earthly lot in your keeping."

"What more can I do?" I bitterly asked. "I was born and have been reared in darkness, and if I am willing to accept the light which first shone on my benighted path through your agency, do I not manifest a desire to improve?"

"But I fear that you regard the weak instrument more than Him who threw me in your way," she replied, with a faint smile. "But

let us not misunderstand each other, Erlon. I joyfully accept the mission which has been appointed me. I see so much in you that is excellent, so much that is noble, that to me it will be a delightful task to assist you in overcoming the evil which is naturally foreign to your soul. The day will arrive when I can with confidence place my hand in yours as your wife, even as I now give it as your plighted bride."

I rapturously received it; but after a vain attempt to repress my feelings, I entreated her to wed me then, and I would never cease striving after the excellence she wished me to attain. But on that score she was obdurate. Her hand must be the reward of my entire reformation, not the precursor of it.

From that period I spent the greater portion of my time with Alice. She was passionately fond of reading, and, what few women are, an excellent classical scholar. She accounted for this by informing me that her father had been originally designed for the church, and was educated with that view; but afterward rebelled against the parental decree, and entered the army. He was a passionate admirer of the old authors, and imparted to his daughter his own knowledge of, and exceeding love for their beauties. [To be concluded.]

SPIRITUAL RAPPINGS.—[Another parody of poor Poe's inimitable song of The Raven]:—

Once upon a midnight stormy, a lone bachelor attorney pondered many a curious volume of his heart's forgotten lore—while he nodded, nearly napping, as of some one gently rapping, rapping at his chamber door. "Tis the spirits!" and he started, "rapping at my chamber door! O, for help—I'm frightened sore!"

Then into his chamber flitting, not even once permitting him to fly into the closet, or to get behind the door—came the ghosts of fond hearts broken—with many a ring and other token—and they set them down beside him, on the dusty, book-strewn floor—set them amid the volumes of most venerable lore. Quoth the lawyer "What a bore!"

It must be something serious; this is certainly mysterious; quite an advent of the spirit—resurrection *con amore*. But I understand them mostly! [Here there came a rap so ghostly that he could no more dissemble, as he had done before; and his face grew pale and paler, as he started for the door: down he fell upon the floor.]

Then there came a clatter, and his teeth began to chatter, as the spirits gathered round him, and accused him very sore, with handsome face all smiling, and with winning words beguiling, he had charmed away the senses of fair maidens by the score, and each lass had fondly fancied 'twas her he did adore. Quoth the lawyer, "Nevermore."

Started at the stillness, broken by reply so aptly spoken, for the answer, strange enough, relevancy bore; they began a noisy rapping—sort of spiritual clapping, which the lawyer thought would be a fashionable *encore*—and again, as if his soul was in that word he would outpour, did he groan out, "Nevermore."

Presently his heart grew stronger; hesitation then no longer. "O," said he, "sweet spirits, your forgiveness I implore; on my knees, to every ghostess, who to love has played the hostess, I will promise to recant the many faithless things I swore! Will you promise then to leave me? Here he pointed to the door. Rapped the spirits, "Nevermore."

"Be that word our sign of parting," said the hapless wight, upstarting; "hie ye hence into the darkness; seek ye out some distant shore. In the noisy camp or forum, in the lonely *sanc sanctorum*, such ghastly, grim, ungainly guests were never seen before. Leave my loneliness unbroken." Here he opened wide the door.—Rapped the spirits, "Nevermore."

So the vixen guests of evil—spirits still, tho' most uncivil—they will never leave the lawyer though in tears he may implore. At his false heart they are tapping, they are rapping, rapping, and he wishes, O, how faintly! that his haunted life was o'er; and he often sighs, "O, could I but recall the days of yore, I would flirt, O, nevermore."

## All Sorts of Paragraphs.

A man named Fowler, residing at Eaton Rapids, Michigan, recently put up his wife at auction, and sold her for three shillings, with which money he became gloriously drunk, got into a row, stabbed a man, and was sentenced to the State penitentiary for two years. The wife was well pleased with her bargain, delivered herself up to her purchaser, and with her "owner" left for parts unknown.

The great law of nature is "eat and be eaten." The spawn-eater swallows the worm, the hawk swallows the spawn-eater; the hawk pounces on the chicken—the eagle on the hawk, and the sportsman on the eagle; rogues feed on honest men, pettifoggers on rogues, and the devil on pettifoggers. Queer arrangement this, but who can say that it is not all for the best?

Grace Greenwood, who is now in Italy, on asking a poor woman who had placed one candle at the image of a saint, and another at the image of the devil, why she placed one at each was told by the poor devotee, that "she knew not into whose hands she might fall, so she thought she had better be civil to both." What a politician in petticoats!

A stupid member of the Indiana Legislature was one day at dinner, asked by a wag, what in his opinion, ought to be done with a man who would deliberately commit suicide. The lawgiver looked puzzled, but soon gathered himself together and replied, "I go in for making him pay fifty dollars to the State, and marry the girl!"

THOUGHTS.—Bad thoughts are worse enemies than lions and tigers; for we can keep out of the way of wild beasts, but bad thoughts win their way everywhere. The cup that is full will hold no more; keep your hearts full of good thoughts, that bad thoughts may find no room to enter.

In China they make queer use of second-hand wearing apparel. When a pair of cassimeres are no longer fit for service, they stuff the legs with minced meat and sell them for sausages. There's a use to put breeches to that the outside world has never yet thought of. Inventive people those growers of Young Hyson. Well they are.

TICKLING.—In Troy, N. Y., lately, a young man was fined three dollars for tickling a married lady. The man pleaded common usage in justification; but the lady argued (and she had the best of it) that if it was common usage it was not common right, and that every lady possessed the right of choosing her own tickler.

The Baltimore Clipper says:—"A correspondent asks why marriage and death notices should be paid for." For the very best reason in the world; one is an advertisement of co-partnership, and the other is a notice of dissolution. Business is business.

### ONE OF TOM MOORE'S OBITUARIES.

Here lies John Shaw,  
Attorney-at-law,  
And when he died,  
The devil cried,  
Give us your paw,  
John Shaw,  
Attorney-at-law.

A CHINAMAN'S BELIEF.—One of the Chinese jugglers, about being sworn as a witness the other day, was questioned in regard to his religious belief, when he replied through an interpreter—"I believe in the President of the United States and God Almighty."

A Dutchman suggests a plan for giving pigs an extra kink in their tails. It is by mixing pulverized cork screw with their food.

Mrs. Partington wants to know why they don't bring the whole of China over at once, instead of bringing it in junks.

OTHER PEOPLE'S BUSINESS.—A business that everybody supposes he knows more about than anybody else.