

acquiesce in the late transfer of my funds. I have one favor to ask—that you will keep this a secret. I have something of importance to communicate to you, and will write you a long letter in a few days.

Having sealed and directed this letter, she exclaimed, 'Now for the test. Oh, that it might come!'

And come it did, sooner than she expected. But what was Dr. Carter's horror and astonishment when he learned the failure of the bank! Great was the sympathy and regret throughout Oldbury, for Mrs. Lee was universally beloved; but Dr. Carter was mute: he was puzzled how to act. Dr. Parker heard the news with a mingled feeling of sorrow and pleasure. He was ignorant of the engagement existing between Mr. Lee and Dr. Carter, and he thought the loss of property would make his own secretly hoarded love less presumptuous. How willingly would he toil by day and night for the charming widow and her gentle daughter!

Rather cold and formal was Dr. Carter when he called upon the widow the second day after the report of her losses. He had previously urged an early day for their marriage. He did not now refer to the subject. Mrs. Lee perceived in some pain and surprise, her gratitude and partially to her old family doctor had prevented her observing the mercenary traits of the doctor. When he called again he expressed a strong desire to go to Europe; there was much to interest him in the medical schools of France and England and, if he ever travelled, it should be now, as old age would soon be creeping upon him.

This time the widow smiled 'in her sleeve and thought of the many ridiculous attempts the doctor had made to appear younger than he really was. She encouraged his project, and, when he was about leaving to take passage from New York, she gave him a letter releasing him from his late engagement, if he wished. She received a very polite reply written from his hotel just before his departure, in which he acknowledges the beauty and the mental superiority of his fair friend; but he feared that he had been too hasty in supposing an old crusty bachelor like him self fitted to make such a woman happy in domestic life. Dry bones, and his dusty study, with the occasional change to the dissecting room of the medical college in the neighboring city, had been the sources of his amusement; the dull round of a country practice his life-long employment. Wishing her many years of health and happiness, he still remained her faithful friend and physician, Sampson Carter.

Mrs. Lee smiled as she perused this letter, and a feeling of quiet satisfaction filled her heart as she folded it and placed it carefully by in a private drawer. Gratitude was at the ebb.

Dreary and desolate as our New England winters are to the eye of the aged and the view of Englishmen, they have great charms for childhood. The blood that bounds through their veins is not easily chilled, and sleigh rides, skating, snow-balling, and sledging supply the absence of birds and flowers.

'Come, Lizzie, I have brought my new skates,' said Willie; 'and I want you to try them on the pond. May she go, Aunt Alice, just for half an hour?'

Aunt Alice looked doubtful, Lizzie very supplicating.

'I am afraid, Willie; there is danger. Little girls, too, are so timid, they are apt to be roughly treated if they play with boys.'

'But I can take care of Lizzie. Besides, Dr. Parker is there, and Sisy; and the doctor says that it is fine exercise for ladies; he wishes they would all practice it.'

This last hit was successful. Lizzie was clad in her furs, and permitted to go; and, with the Doctor as leader the children had fine fun. On their way home, Lizzie and Willie went into the Doctor's office, with him to rest a few minutes, and have a little chat.

'And, now Dr. Carter is gone,' said Lizzie 'you will have all the practice in town; for nobody will think of employing little Doctor Sturges, who has hung his name upon Dr. Carter's door.'

'But I hope somebody will think of employing him, Lizzie,' said Dr. Parker. 'He is a young man, and needs practice. I should be sorry to deprive him of his share.'

The children looked surprised.

'Well, I heard mother say that she hoped people would find out that there was some medical knowledge and skill in town besides what was laid up in Carter's head.'

Dr. Parker's pulse beat faster for a moment and his eye brightened.

'I used to think,' said Lizzie, 'that Dr. Carter was so learned he could never die; and I wished I knew his wonderful secret, so I could live always.'

'My poor child, you know not what you asked. To be denied the blessed boon of death!—the dreamless sleep, the undisturbed repose for the body, and the endless felicity of the spirit!—Earth is so bright to you now that you have not turned your ear to hear

The music ringing

The lulling sounds of heaven's repose

But in future life there will be hours when you may feel it a blessed thing to die.' And the Doctor gazed on the beautiful young creature, as if he trembled to trust her in a heartless word. Unconsciously, he had imparted sadness to the children, which observing, he said, 'Did you ever hear the story of the 'Wandering Jew?'

'No,' they said; 'do tell it to us now.' But, as it was time the children were at home, he promised it the next time they called.

One year more passed on. The Christmas holidays were at hand, and the merry-hearted school-girls were full of delightful anticipation and joyous discussions as to the fruit which the Christmas-trees would produce. The recesses were too short for the busy tongues of the girls; but one day the subject was suddenly changed by the appearance of the mail stage, from the inside of which looked forth the old familiar face of Dr. Carter.

'Look! look, Lizzie!' they all exclaimed; 'he's come to the wedding!'

'I am glad of it,' said Lizzie; 'for I like Dr. Carter better than I did a year ago.'

Merrily passed the Christmas holidays to Willie and Lizzie, who thought the wedding ceremony the only serious affair of the week. 'It made them feel so solemn,' they said; but when it was fairly over, and all the friends had congratulated the beautiful bride—our friend Mrs. Lee—and her noble looking husband, the new popular Dr. Parker, the children stole to his side, and Willie whispered—

'Don't you want to live a great many years now, Uncle Doctor?'

'Yes, yes, my boy, to see you as happy a Doctor as myself.'

'How sorry I am for the 'Wandering Jew!'' said Lizzie, as she pointed to the tall, lank, muscular form of Dr. Carter, who was stalking through the back parlor, as if seeking that which he could not find.

That evening he ascertained the safety of Mrs. Lee's funds; and, though he was not a profane man was heard to say, 'What confounded cheats women are!'

CAPTAIN M'CLURE,

THE DISCOVERER OF THE NORTH-WEST PASSAGE.

The next day Captain M'Clure returned to the Investigator; Captain Kellett, as senior officer, having determined that if twenty able bodied men volunteered to remain with Captain M'Clure, that dauntless officer should be at liberty to stay by his ship, and attempt to bring her through, should the season render it possible. The twenty brave-hearted men were found, and from that period up to the present time they and Captain M'Clure have remained in their frozen prison in the Bay of Mercy.

Lieutenant Cresswell travelled on to Beechy Island, a distance of three hundred miles, intrusted with Captain M'Clure's despatches. Captain Pullen, with the North Star, was there. Great was the excitement at the marvellous tidings. Lieutenant Bellet, amongst others, the gallant but ill-fated French officer, had such an intense enthusiasm about the north-west passage, that he was heard to declare, that to have been a partaker in that glorious success, he would willingly have laid down his life. At his own request, Captain Pullen intrusted him with the original despatches to convey to Sir Edward Belcher, up in Wellington Channel. The ice being heavy, of course it was a sledge expedition.—Five days after the party set out, Lieutenant Bellet was standing with two men on a mass of ice, when it suddenly broke off from the main pack, and drifted away with them out of sight. Six hours after, the two men returned. They had saved themselves and also the despatches, but the unfortunate young officer was seen no more. On the 8th of August, Captain Inglefield, in the Phoenix, arrived at Beechy Island, and the despatches being of such vast importance, it was thought advisable that Captain Inglefield should immediately return to England, and convey Lieutenant Gurney Cresswell, the bearer of them. The night before they sailed, the Bredalbane transport, under command of Captain Inglefield, was struck by the ice, and in fifteen minutes went down, and was totally lost, the crew having just time to save themselves.

On the 21st of August, 1853, Lieutenant Cresswell sailed in the Phoenix for England, where he arrived in less than six weeks. 'At five o'clock on Friday morning, the 7th of October, Mr. Barrow, of the Admiralty, was awakened from his sleep to hear the startling intelligence, that the life-long object of his father, the late Sir John Barrow, was accomplished, and the North-west Passage made. Lieutenant Gurney Cresswell, the grandson of the good and gifted Elizabeth Fry, having the singular good-fortune to be the first who entered the Polar Sea by Behring's Straits and returned to England by Baffin's Bay.'

Let us now cast back one glance from the triumphs of Captain M'Clure to his present position. Four years of his life passed, in the very prime of life, in the horrible monotony

of that frozen region, and a fifth year commencing—God only knows whether it will send him release. People talk lightly of three or four years in the ice. Have they ever thought what it means?—The destitution of all that can interest man. Officers do not talk of these things in their despatches; but let us hear Sir John Ross; let us hear the cry of a least one human heart coming up from the ice-grave of all life: 'Let no one suppose,' he says, 'that we had not felt all this—the eternal wearisome iteration of registers, and winds, and tides, and ice, during months and years, though I have passed it by as if we never felt it. There were evils of cold, evils of hunger, evils of toil; and though we did not die, or lose our limbs, as men have done in those lands, had we not undergone anxiety and care, the sufferings of disappointed hope, and, more than all, those longings after our far-distant friends and native land, whom we might never again see? Yet there was a pain beyond all this: we were weary for want of occupation, for want of variety, for want of the means of mental exertion, for want of thought, and—why should I not say it?—for want of society. To-day was as yesterday; and as to-day, so would be to-morrow. With a sea around us impracticably frozen, one would wish to sleep the winter through like the dormouse; but to be ever awake, wanting to rise and become active, yet ever to find that all nature was still asleep, and that we had nothing more to do but wash, and groan, and hope as best we might! . . . Who more than I,' he continues, 'has admired the glaciers of the north, sailing from the pole before the wind and the gale, floating along the ocean like castles, and towers, and mountains, gorgeous in coloring and magnificent in form? And have not I, too, sought amid the crashing and thundering roar of a sea of moving mountains for the sublime, and felt that nature could do no more? In all this there has been beauty, horror, danger; every thing that could excite, that would have excited a poet to the verge of madness; but to see, to have seen ice and snow during all the months of a year—uninterrupted and unceasing ice and snow during all the months of four years—this it is that has made the sight of those most chilling and wearisome objects an evil which is still one in imagination, as if the remembrance would never cease. To us the sight of ice was a plague, a vexation, a torment, an evil, a matter of despair. We hated its sight, because we hated its effects and every idea associated with it. For ten months the air is snow, the gale is snow, the fog snow the breath of the mouth is snow. Snow is on our hair, our dress, our eyelashes around us and over us on our beds, our dishes; when our huts are snow, our drink snow, our larders snow, our salt snow—the cold, the icy, the monotonous; and when we died, our shrouds, and coffins, and graves would be of snow likewise.'

Yet there is an awful beauty in these regions, even though associated with terror. The icebergs, the frost giants of the old sagas glittering in the sunlight as if they were crowned with gems; glaciers a thousand feet high, green as emerald, or violet with the sun's last rays; cliffs of crimson snow, and an azure sky above so clear that objects are visible a hundred miles off; and round the horizon sweeps the red sun in an endless summer evening of three months long. Then comes the three months' polar night, with its stupendous stillness, when all nature sinks in torpor, and men's faces grow ghastly in the darkness, and the silence is only broken by the crash of an iceberg, and the stars burn fiery red in the black heaven, and on every side is an infinite *mer-de-glace*, through which rises masses of basalt 'like the unlifted hands of drowning men;' while above circles the magnificent polar moon, for days and weeks without setting, and over all shines the cold beautiful light of the aurora, which vivifies nothing, animates nothing, and leaves nature still and icy as before. Ten months the waters are ice, the land snow, and the stillness of death reigns everywhere.

Humboldt says, that 'dangers exalt the poetry of life,' but not dangers that must be met only with passive helpless endurance. A commander in the Arctic regions must not only be a hero himself, but able to make all around him heroes; and in this frozen torpor of existence, how difficult to preserve his own energy, enthusiasm, heroic purpose, and sanguine hopes, all unchilled! Yet this M'Clure has accomplished both for himself and the courageous men with him. We have, indeed, but to look at his portrait to see how a brave and beautiful human nature is expressed in the noble brow, fine-cut lip, and clear deep eye. In the very carriage of the head, one can trace the frank bold spirit of the man. His success was not the result of chance; the heroism was in the purpose.—He would listen to no recall; flung himself upon fate with the audacity of genius; and even if death is to come, he says, calmly, 'Let no life be risked to rescue mine.' Thank God he is Irish. His heroism is his country's glory. In estimating what he has accomplished, let us remember that he alone has filled up the blank between Behring's Straits

and Melville Island—he was the first that ever burst into that silent sea: and that now with a chart to guide them, the hazard to human life in this dangerous ocean is infinitely lessened.

The discovery has also aided the solution of many scientific and geographical problems. He has ended for ever the romantic theory of an open polar sea by showing that the Polar Sea never clears; and while he has set at rest the question of a thousand years, and prove the existence of a north-west passage, he has also demonstrated, that if a communication between India and England by the Polar Ocean be tried at all, it must be by the north-east, as he himself effected it, as the winds and tides set in from the west the greater part of the year, driving the whole polar ice in the face of any ship advancing from the Atlantic.

If, however, modern science, with all its new appliances of steam, screw-propellers, gutta percha boots, provisions that keep *ad infinitum*, and even glycerine for a preventive against frost-wounds, should make men content to dare the northern passage, the chart is now clear: all that can be known of the route to Asia is laid down. Dépôts might be formed at Baring's and Melville Islands; and while one caravan traversed the burning desert eastward to India, another through the ice of the polar steppes might proceed westward to the same destination.

All along the route, tribes of human creatures exist, intelligent and teachable; and wherever man is, his brother man should deem it no unworthy task to bring him within the privileges of a Christianized humanity. All progress is a divine thing, inspired, guided, directed by a wise providence; and the lone ship of the Bay of Mercy has not been led through the frozen sea without some purpose by which humanity may be bettered.

(To be continued.)

THE MARRIAGE ALTAR.

THE late Judge Charlton, in a recent eloquent address before the Young Men's Liberal Association at Augusta, thus sketches the marriage scene:—

'I have drawn you many pictures of death: let me sketch for you a brief, but bright scene of beautiful life. It is the marriage altar. A lovely female clothed in the freshness of youth and surpassing beauty, leans upon the arm of him to whom she has just pledged her faith; to whom she had just given herself forever.—Look in her eyes, ye gloomy philosophers, and tell me if you dare, that there is no happiness on earth.

'See the trusting, the heroic devotion which impels her to leave country, parents, for a comperative stranger. She has laughed her frail bark upon a wide and stormy sea; she has handed over her happiness and doom to another's keeping; but she has done it fearlessly, for love whispers to her that her chosen guardian protector bears a manly and a noble heart. Oh, wo to him that forgets his oath and his manhood.

"Her dark wing shall the raven flap,
O'er the false-hearted,
His warm blood the wolf shall lap,
Ere life be parted,
Shame and dishonor sit,
On his grave ever;
Blessing shall hallow it,
Never! Oh never!

'We have all read the story of the husband who in a moment of hasty wrath, said to her who had but a few months before united her fate to his, 'If you are not satisfied with my conduct, go, return to your friends and your happiness.' 'And will you give me back that which I brought you?' asked the despairing wife. 'Yes,' he replied, 'all your wealth shall go with you; I coveted it not.' 'Alas!' she answered, 'I thought not of my wealth—I spoke of my devoted love; can you give these back to me?' 'No!' said the man as he flung himself at her feet, 'No! I cannot restore these, but I will do more—I will cherish them through my life and in my death; and never will I forget that I have sworn to protect and cherish her who gave up to me all she held most dear.'

'Did I not tell you there was poetry in a woman's look—a woman's word? See it here! the mild, the gentle reproof of love, winning back from its harshness and rudeness the stern and unyielding temper of an angry man. Ah! if creation's fairer sex only knew their strongest weapons, how many of wedlock's fiercest battles would be unfought; how much unhappiness and coldness would be avoided.'

NEWS FOR THE LADIES.—An extraordinary custom prevails among the Vizres, a tribe occupying an extensive district in Cabul, among the mountains between Persia and India. The women choose their husbands, not the husbands their wives. If a woman be pleased with a man, she sends the drummer of the camp to pin a handkerchief to his cap, with the pin she uses to fasten her hair.

The drummer watches his opportunity and does this in public, naming the woman: the man is obliged to marry if he can pay her price to her father.