

Youths' Department.

CHRISTIAN LOVE AND LOYALTY;
OR, THE REBEL RECLAIMED.CHAPTER XVI.
Continued.
Hephzibah all things.

We read of the Christian's "patience of hope," of the "hope that maketh not ashamed," the hope that is "a sure anchor." But how different is this from all that the worldling calls by that name! Hephzibah is like the delicate rainbows that play on the fountain when the sunshine of youth rests on its spray; passing clouds can destroy them, they have no substance, no true foundation; as a reality, none can grasp them, and they leave no brightness behind!

Such had been the hopes of Jaspas Brabrum; "vanity of vanities, all is vanity," might have been inscribed upon each. He had hoped for fame, and had found dishonour; for distinction, and had earned reproach; in trying to climb above others, he had only fallen below them; his vision of a niche in the Temple of Fame seemed likely to melt into a nameless grave!

Gloomily sat Brabrum in the same upper cell in Nina's Tower, in which, not many hours previously, he had immured his wife's orphan child. His guards had removed the ladder; he had no means of reaching, as Grace had done, the skylight by which his eyes were so frequently raised. Jaspas had nothing to look upon but the bare walls around or gathering clouds above; nothing to meditate on but past errors, present disgrace, and a future which he feared to contemplate.

His state of mind was not that of passionate grief as his daughter's had been; it was hopeless, settled dejection, a consciousness that his life had been one great mistake! Like the Tower, yet unpaid for, which Jaspas had planned in pride and built in folly, his lofty and ambitious hopes had been a failure, and he was left a prisoner!

Jaspas Brabrum remembered his brother, and recalled with bitter feelings the earnest anxious warning uttered on the previous day. Had the vain self-seeker but possessed the "one thing needful," that living faith which bears fruit in love, how different would his present fate have been! He had given up a substance for a shadow; he had, in the forgettable metaphor of Holy Writ, "sown the wind," and now he must "reap the whirlwind!"

Leaving Jaspas to his solitary gloom, we will now follow Liberia Brabrum, who, accompanied by a maid-servant, hurried down to the shore, in hopes of finding a boat. The day, which had commenced in sunny brightness, was now overcast, and all presaged the coming of a storm. The wind blew in sudden violent gusts, and the crest of billows came tumbling, rolling, roaring—blowing up high their foaming spray as they broke on the pebbly beach. There was no boat in the little bay, and Liberia had to follow the coastline for full half a mile, before she was gladdened by the sight of a fisherman's skiff, drawn up high and dry on the shingles. A seaman in coarse blue jacket and sun-burnt straw hat stood near, with a telescope at his eye, which was pointed in the direction of what seemed to be a large vessel, indistinctly visible across the brown tossing waves streaked with the white "candleflowers" of the ocean.

Liberia walked on rapidly over the shingles, so rapidly that her panting maid could scarcely keep at her side. Before she reached the skiff, she called out in her eager haste: "Has the frigate 'Aurora' yet passed down the channel?" A gust of wind carried away the sound of her voice, and she had to repeat the question before Ben Jones, the seaman, turned round and made reply, "The 'Aurora,' Captain Brabrum's son, that be she," and he pointed to the vessel in sight; "she be a prime sailor, she will not make much way, 'cause, ye see, she wind it against her."

"You must take me to her at once," cried Liberia; "I have business of importance with my uncle, who commands her!"

The seaman shook his head, and glanced at the sky—"There's a storm brewing," he observed; "I've no mind to put out to sea."

"I'll pay you handsomely," cried Liberia, eagerly drawing out her purse, "here's a guinea if you'll take me to that ship!"

"I could not reach it with the oars," said Ben Jones, "and as for putting up a sail, we're too like to be caught in a squall for that—it'd be to be done without danger."

"I care not for danger!" exclaimed Liberia; and seeing a grim smile relaxing the weather-beaten features of the seaman, she added, "If I am not afraid, you cannot fear! You shall have two guineas—it is all that I have—if you will only take me on board of that vessel!"

Two guineas were a temptation hard to be resisted. Liberia's golden eloquence prevailed; Jones rubbed his rough hand across his chin, again glanced up at the clouds, and then hallooed to two men not far off to come and help to push down the boat.

"It's impossible, Miss Brabrum, that you shall go! it would be tempting Providence to venture out on such a day as this!" cried Martha, the maid, who by no means shared the courage of her young mistress. "If you are afraid, you can stay behind," said Liberia.

"Indeed, Miss, I will; I've a father to think of!"

"And so have I!" exclaimed Liberia Brabrum, as she sprang into the boat, without awaiting her help out of the aid of the brown hand which Jones held out to help her.

"Yo-e-o! yo-e-o! yo-e-o!" the keel grated over the pebbles as the arms of three strong men pushed down the boat. As the prow cut the water, a wave splashed over it, and Liberia, who sat in the bow was wet by the spray. Jones swung himself into the boat and pushed off, and they were afloat on the rough, heaving sea.

"You'll have a toss coming back!" said one of the men from the shore.

"Oh! don't go! pray don't go!" cried the maid.

"Now up with the sail!" said Liberia, watching with keen interest the movements of Jones, as he raised the little mast, drew the ropes, and hoisted the fluttering, flapping canvas, which was instantly swelled out by the wind.

"What a glorious speed we are going at! How the boat cuts through the sea!" exclaimed Liberia, as, leaning over to one side, so that every now and then the salt water splashed over the gunwale, and the little craft leaped over the waves. Liberia Brabrum loved the sea, and felt at home upon it. The consciousness that she was doing and daring something for her father, combined with the freshness of the northern breeze, and the excitement of rapid motion, had such an effect in restoring her spirits, that she seemed to be another being from the wretched self-reproaching girl whom Grace had vainly tried to console. There was a pleasant stimulus to Liberia in the very name of danger, for she knew little of personal fear. Her soul was now full of hope—the hope of a bold, independent spirit, resolved upon success, and seeing clearly the way towards it. Liberia did not herself understand all the causes of her revulsion of feeling, as the boat sped over the foaming waves, almost light as the sea-bird which she beheld, now skimming the surface of the brine, now with its silver wing gleaming against the dark background of the sky. Liberia had never before had anything so like an adventure, and even the wretched circumstances which had led to it did not altogether deprive it of zest. She was going on board the "Aurora"—she would tread the deck of that famous frigate, bound on an errand of importance to its noble commander! She would see her gallant uncle again—see him in his proudest position, be an object of his interest—compassion—admiration

for not the brave love the brave, and was it not a glorious thing for a daughter to dare so much for a father?

Liberia's thoughts wandered farther, impelled by a stronger impetus than that which sent her boat scudding over the heaving brine. She formed various plans for the future, and carried them out in her own mind, with every circumstance which could heighten the interest of the romance of her life. Under the guidance and protection of her uncle, she hoped to penetrate to the presence of the great sovereign himself! She would plead for her parent at the feet of a monarch, whom she regarded with loyal reverence; and if, from awe or emotion, her voice should falter, she would have the tones of a hero beside her, urging her on to the point of her services, than appealing to the generous sympathy of his king for the daughter before him! Liberia had long indulged a wish to be a heroine, and now she felt that this wish might be on the point of realization! In wild visions of earthly hopes, Jaspas's child, like Jaspas himself, might aspire to a niche in the Temple of Fame!

(To be Continued.)

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