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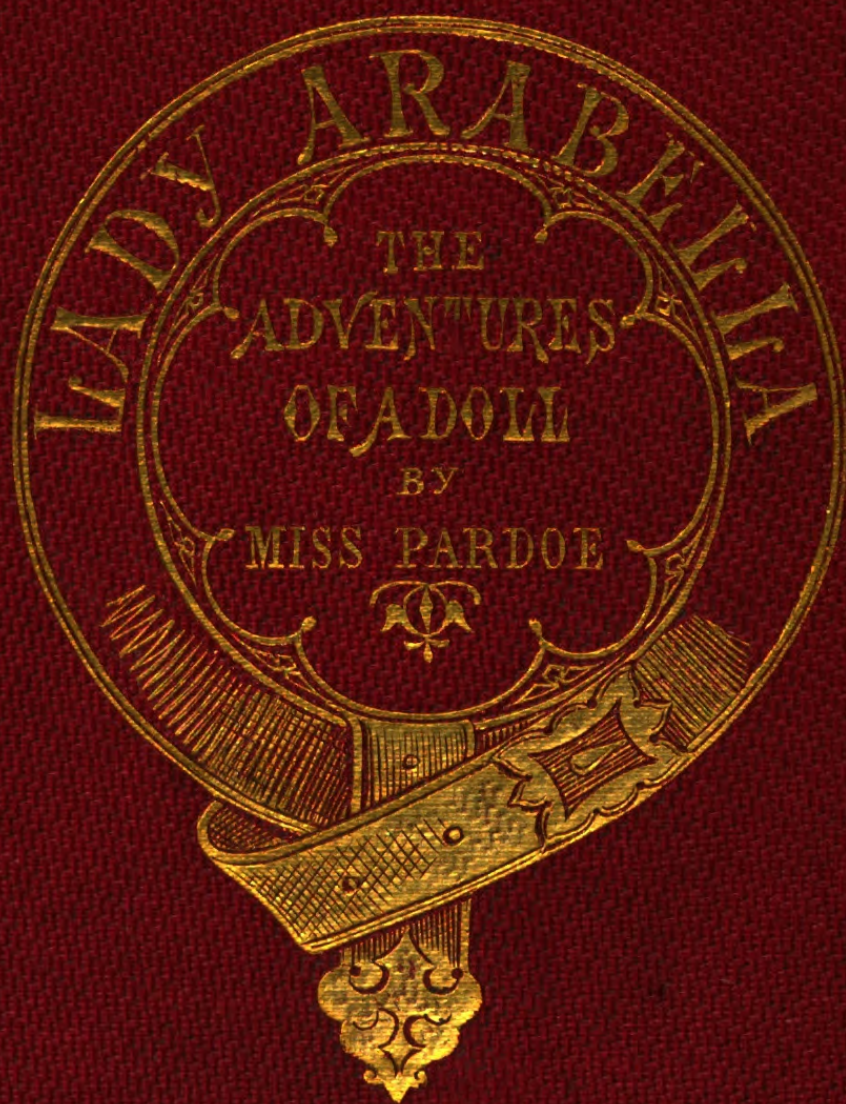
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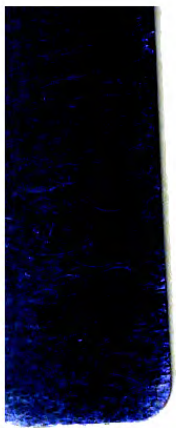


LADY ARABELLA

THE
ADVENTURES
OF A DOM

BY
MISS PARDOE





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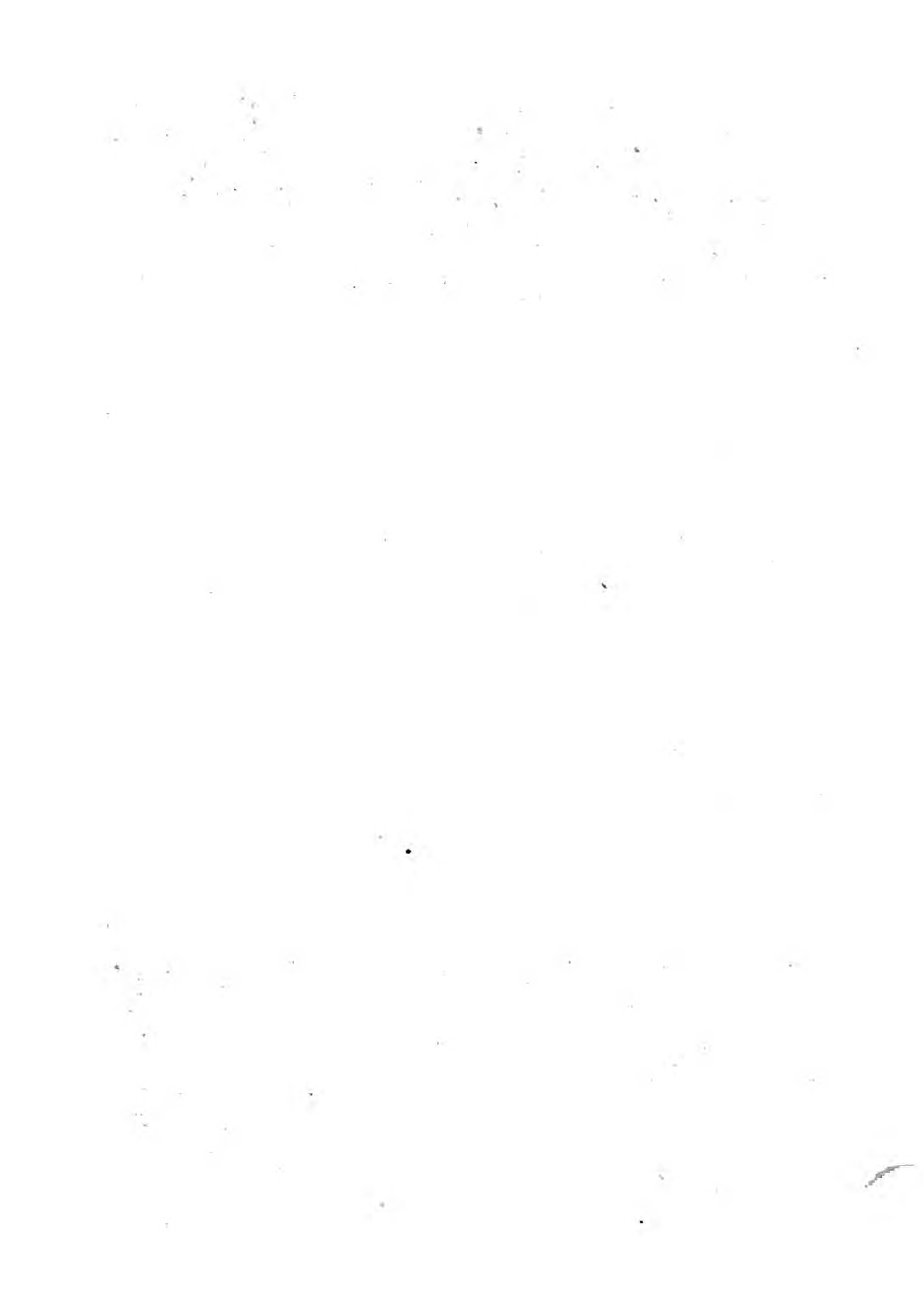
C. WILSON
Bookseller & Stationer
37. Wilmore Street

Charlotte Georgia Parkyn
from Aunt Georgie
9th March. 1860.

b/a
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LADY ARABELLA.







BUTTERS & BIRTH & DEATH

LADY

The Adventure

MISS PARSONS

ILLUSTRATED BY GEORGE CRUIKSHANK

LONDON:
KERBY AND SON,
190, OXFORD STREET.



LADY ARABELLA:

OR

The Adventures of a Doll.

BY

MISS PARDOE,

AUTHOR OF "THE CITY OF THE SULTAN," ETC.

ILLUSTRATED BY GEORGE CRUIKSHANK.

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LADY ARABELLA,

OR

THE ADVENTURES OF A DOLL.

“PASS on, little girl ; pass on,” said a good-tempered voice, as Mary Lawson, on her way to school, stopped before a heap of rubbish and litter which had been swept together in the corner of a narrow street, and stooped gazing intently on the unsavoury pile ; “there is nothing there that you can meddle with without dirtying yourself ; so be a good girl, and let it alone.”

The little girl did not, however, pass on as she had been desired to do ; but, with the forefinger of her left hand in her mouth, and the corner of her clean, nicely-ironed pinafore twisted into a hard ball in the palm of her left, she continued to stare with her large, round, widely-opened eyes

upon the mutilated remains of what had once been a doll of no common size and pretensions, but which now lay, a sad spectacle indeed! amid the dust, and rags, and ashes, and decayed vegetables, which formed the accumulated refuse of the street. One of its eyes had disappeared, and a large fracture disfigured its bald and misshapen head; its cheeks and lips had not a tinge of red; its nose had been broken by either a heavy blow or a terrible fall, and the dingy old piece of dark print in which it was wrapped could not conceal the fact that it had lost an arm, and that one of its legs had been torn away at the knee.

Nothing, in short, could be more deplorable than its whole appearance; but still there was a strange fascination about it to the wondering little maiden, who, quite forgetting that her mother believed her to be on her way to school, and that she would certainly be punished should she play truant, at last seated herself on a large stone beside the dirt-heap on which the poor doll had been flung, in order to examine it at her ease.

Generally speaking, Mary Lawson was a very

good and obedient child; but on this occasion, I am sorry to say, she never troubled herself to reflect that she was doing wrong; it was quite extraordinary to see what an unaccountable interest she suddenly felt in the despised and discarded object before her.

Now, this was very silly, as our little girl had four dolls of her own at home; all of them more or less worn and broken, it is true; but still every one of them a great deal prettier and better than this wretched thing, which, had she attempted to touch it, would indeed, as the kind neighbour had warned her, have made her so dirty that she would certainly have got into disgrace for her carelessness as well as her truancy. However, there she sat; and before long, to her great surprise, she saw the white lips of the forsaken doll begin to move, and a large tear fall from the only eye that it still possessed, upon its sallow-looking cheek. She was a good deal astonished at first, as I need scarcely tell you; but her amazement was increased when a thin feeble voice made itself heard, and these words fell upon her ear:

“ You are looking at me with pity, little lady ; and, fallen as I am, it does me good to discover that any one can still feel for my misfortunes. What, however, would be your grief could you know all that I have endured ! There *was* a time, and I am not now too proud to own it, when I should have considered it quite a condescension to talk of myself to a little girl in a printed frock and a nankeen bonnet ; but that time has long been over, and now, in return for your compassion—for I cannot mistake the expression of your face—I will, should you wish to hear it, tell you the sad story of my life.”

“ Oh, do ; pray do, if you please,” eagerly exclaimed Mary ; “ I should so like to be told where you were bought, and who bought you, and who was so naughty as to put out your eye, and tear off your hair, and break your head and your leg, and pull off your arm.”

“ Ah !” sighed the doll ; “ you have indeed discovered some of my misery, and you can therefore imagine what I have had to suffer from rough usage ; but I can assure you, my good child, that

my bodily pains have been nothing to the agonies of my mind.

“ I was unfortunate even from the moment that I came into the world ; the careless workman who was employed to make me having stuffed me with damp bran, in consequence of which my chest was slightly contracted, and my limbs deprived of all muscular power ; still, in spite of these defects, I was declared to be a very handsome doll ; and there can, indeed,” she continued, with a sudden emotion of reawakened vanity, which caused little Mary to wonder more than ever, “ be no doubt that I *was* very, very handsome. Imagine, my dear, that I had scarcely become conscious of my own existence, when I suddenly found that I had one of the most beautiful heads of hair you ever beheld ; such curls ! all of a golden brown, falling about my cheeks and low upon my bosom ; the sweetest blue eyes in the world—I am sure they were, for I have heard it declared a thousand times ; although I may as well confess to you that the delicacy of constitution, for which I was indebted to that heedless workman, had affected them also, so that

I was unable to keep them open, do as I would ; and my owner was obliged to furnish me with a piece of machinery—intended, as you will of course understand, to be kept out of sight—by which they could be opened or closed at the pleasure of my nurse. Then I had *such* cheeks, and *such* lips, that the first time I chanced to see myself in a glass, I thought I had never beheld anything half so charming.”

“ I am afraid you grew up very vain,” said Mary timidly.

“ You are right, my child, I did ; and no wonder ; for I was no sooner declared to be just what they wished by those about me, than two pretty young women, who sat at a table covered with silks and gauzes and tinsel, received orders to dress me in the very first style, and to spare no expense in my decoration, as I was to be the show-doll of the shops. You may be quite sure that if I had had a heart in my bosom, it would have jumped with delight at such a prospect ; and as I lay on my back upon the table, in the midst of all the gay materials I have just described to you, I am afraid

that I glanced very disdainfully over the mute companions which were collected about me, and among whom I was soon to take my place in so flattering a character. Nor did I fail, during my survey, to form a tolerably correct notion of my own superiority over the whole of them. Some had already lost the freshness of their beauty; others wore soiled and crumpled dresses; and each of these had a large paper pinned to its breast, which I learned was intended to inform purchasers that they were to be 'sold at a reduced price'. Poor things! I was naturally of an amiable disposition; and I can assure you that as I reflected on my own attractions, and the admiration which I was certain to excite, I could not help blushing at their degradation."

"Well, I never!" murmured Mary to herself, as she contemplated the miserable, one-eyed, ugly-looking wreck before her.

"Not to tire your patience with a long story," continued the doll, "I may as well tell you at once that I was soon very gaily dressed in a blue silk robe trimmed with silver, pink gloves and shoes,

and a superb hat and feathers ; and having been carefully seated in a crimson velvet chair under a glass shade, I was placed in the very centre of the window, where, within a few moments, I became an object of general attention. I could not help feeling flattered ; and, as I was not under the control of any one, I half-closed my eyes with a charming expression of offended modesty, which I at once discovered must greatly add to my beauty. The only drawback to my triumph was the occasional remark of a stout matronly lady, dressed very much in the same style as myself and my companions, who, as she walked slowly about the shop, sometimes scolding the two pretty young work-women, and sometimes re-arranging the drawers and shelves, every now and then exclaimed impatiently : ‘ How very strange it is that beautiful doll does not go off.’

“ Now, you must understand that I had not the least idea of what was meant by ‘ going off ;’ but still, as I was naturally very intelligent—you smile, little girl ; well, smile if you will, but I think you ought to have discovered by this time that, even if

I have lost my beauty, I still retain as much sense as you have any right to look for in a doll."

"Oh, pray don't be angry," almost sobbed Mary in alarm; "only it seemed to me so very odd, that if you had ever really been so handsome and so clever as you say, your little mama should knock you about so sadly, and then throw you away."

"You know nothing of the world, my child, as yet, or you would not utter so silly an opinion. If I could always have remained *new* as well as pretty, I should not now have been lying on a dust-heap in hourly expectation of being shovelled into a scavenger's cart; but as my novelty wore off, I was every day exposed to the mortification of seeing the meanest playthings preferred to myself. Yes, my dear, even wooden dolls! Can you imagine anything more vexatious? To be flung aside for creatures cut out of a piece of timber, as ugly as Indian idols, and as deformed and shapeless as they were ugly! However, their favour never lasted long, that was one consolation; and I have even occasionally had the triumph of seeing them crammed into the nursery fire to make it burn,

when nurse was in a hurry to get her kettle boiled."

"But perhaps," said Mary in a tone of rebuke, "if you would have burned as well as they did, it would one day have come to your turn to help nurse to boil the kettle."

A low contemptuous laugh was the only reply of the doll, who remained silent for a minute or two; and then continued, rather, I am afraid, from a love of hearing herself talk, than from any wish to amuse or instruct her little listener.

"Well, be that matter as it may, it is certain that the trial was never made; and it will be right to remind you at once, my good child, that if you are to interrupt me every moment by such very absurd remarks as the one you have just uttered, I shall not attempt to go on with my story."

"Oh, pray, ma'am; pray forgive me. Indeed I will not be so very rude again," whimpered the anxious Mary.

"I trust not, and in the hope that you will perform your promise, and not confuse my recollections, I shall continue my tale. Well, then, as day

by day went by, and I still remained seated in my chair (although I was more than once lifted out of my glass prison and displayed to strangers, who, after admiring me, decided that, beautiful as I was, I was too dear), I found that I was beginning to be out of favour with my mistress; and I confess that my vanity was wounded when I saw very inferior dolls to myself eagerly bought, and joyfully carried away by happy-looking little girls, who could scarcely wait until the money was paid before they smothered them with kisses. However, my turn came at last; and for a time I had every reason to believe that it had been well worth waiting for. There chanced to be a stoppage in the street just opposite the window where I sat; a great coal wagon and a brewer's dray blocked up the way; and at that very moment an open barouche, with two footmen and fine prancing grey horses, came thundering up, and was suddenly brought to a stand-still. In the carriage were seated a lady in a rich satin dress with feathers in her bonnet, and a little girl of about your age, who, while the coachman was impatiently calling to the drivers of

the wagons to move on, amused herself by looking about her. All at once her eye fell upon me, and I saw her eagerly pointing me out to her mama, for such the lady was. All the bran in my body seemed to melt away as I watched them. I could see that at first her entreaties were disregarded; but before long one of the tall footmen was summoned to the side of the carriage, and in another moment, to my great delight, he entered the shop and desired that I might be taken to her ladyship to be looked at.

“ You should have seen the effect produced upon my mistress by the words ‘ her ladyship’! In an instant I was out of the window, my blue silk dress carefully smoothed down, the plumes of my hat bent more gracefully over my left shoulder, and myself transferred from the hands of the fat shopkeeper to those of the delicate and elegant lady in the barouche. The little girl was enraptured with me, but I was mortified to find that her mama was much less so. She even declared me to be vulgar, and wondered that her daughter should show such bad taste. I trembled for myself; the

gay carriage, the powdered footmen with their long canes, even the very white damask of the cushions delighted me ; and when the little lady closed my eyes for a moment I was all impatience to open them again, that I might admire these fine things. New as I was to life at that time, I saw at once how different my fate must be if I passed my days with such great ladies as these, to that of sitting perched up in a shop window to be stared at by a parcel of dirty children, or handled by common people, who, having satisfied their curiosity, were too poor to buy me. Well, not to keep you in suspense, I will tell you at once that I *was* purchased and carried off by the Honourable Miss Tantrum (for that was the name of my new mistress), who, moreover, to complete my delight, would not allow me to be suffocated as the horrid shopkeeper wished, by being rolled up in paper, but declared that she wished me to enjoy my drive in the fresh air. And I did indeed enjoy it ; for when the brewer's man with his horrid barrels of beer had made way for us, we really seemed to fly along the streets ; and, as I lay in the arms of my new nurse,

I began to feel that I was quite in my proper place.

“ ‘ She is really beautiful, is she not, mama ? ’ asked the little lady, as we at length swept through a tall marble arch, into what I afterwards learned was Hyde Park.

“ ‘ Not beautiful, my love, but pretty enough, ’ was the reply ; ‘ and I am quite ready to believe that she will be much prettier when you replace that tawdry dress by something a little more lady-like.’

“ ‘ Oh, Lenox will soon make her fashionable, you know ; and now, what shall I call her ? ’

“ ‘ Nay, you must settle that important question yourself.’

“ ‘ Well, then, I will not give her either your name or my own, for I am quite tired of both. But what do you think of my godmama’s ? ’

“ ‘ No doubt she will be highly flattered by the compliment.’

“ ‘ Of course she will ; so it shall be LADY ARABELLA.’

“ Lady Arabella ! How grandly it sounded. I

had only one regret, and that was that the trumpery dolls I had left behind me would never know that *I* had become a doll of rank and title; and my idea of my own importance was increased when, on arriving at my new home, I was transferred to one of the footmen, with an order from his young mistress to carry Lady Arabella very carefully into the house. It was really a pity that the bungling fellow who stuffed me with damp bran, as though he cared nothing about either my figure or my comfort, could not see me waited upon by the gold-laced and silk-stockinged gentleman, who dandled me gracefully upon his arm while he assisted his lady to alight."

"But were you not a little afraid that you should not know how to behave in such a fine place, and among such fine people?" asked Mary eagerly.

"Not at all, child, not at all; on the contrary, I never felt more satisfied with myself. Had I not been chosen because of my beauty? And had I not been handsome enough to please a young lady of quality, in spite of my ridiculous dress? For,

elegant as I had once thought it, I soon learned, by studying the appearance of my new mistress, that I was as absurdly bedizened as a sweep on May-day ; and heartily did I long for the moment when the mysterious Lenox, of whose abilities the Honourable Miss Tantrum seemed to have so high an opinion, should release me from the vulgar finery which had so much disgusted her mama. I had not long to wait, my dear ; for before my young patroness would suffer her maid to take off her bonnet and mantle, she rushed into the dressing-room of her ladyship, whose shawl the important person in question had just removed from her shoulders, and holding me up triumphantly, she once more demanded :

“ ‘ Is she not beautiful, Lenox ?’

“ ‘ Yes ; a nice doll indeed, miss,’ said the attendant, who was so handsomely dressed that I could not at first believe that she was not as great a lady as her mistress ; ‘ but, dear me ! what a tawdry figure they have made of her. Why, she looks like a rainbow.’

“ ‘ So she does,’ replied Miss Tantrum pettishly,



BUTTERWORTH & HEATH.

as she tore off my plumed hat, and threw it disdainfully on the floor. ‘How *could* they make such a figure of her? I am sure I should be ashamed for my godmama to see her before she is properly dressed; so, mind, Lenox, the very moment that the dinner-bell has rung and that you are at liberty, you must make her fit to be seen. Even papa must not set eyes on her until she looks like a lady.’

“‘Then, miss, you must not introduce her to my lord before to-morrow!’

“‘Nonsense, Lenox; I cannot wait so long. My own maid and the housekeeper must help you; you are always so slow, and I hate slow people.’

“‘Indeed, miss,’ said Lenox; ‘my Lady Breezeby will tell you, that to dress her as a doll of *yours* ought to be dressed, it will be impossible to finish her to-night.’

“‘How provoking you are!’ cried Miss Tantrum. ‘But that is always the way when I have set my heart upon anything. One would think that you were going to dress me instead of my

doll. Now, mama, do insist upon my having my beautiful Lady Arabella dressed directly.'

" ' You hear, my love,' said her ladyship, ' that it is impossible ; so that I am afraid you must make up your mind to content yourself with your old favourites, until Lenox has had time to decorate your new one.'

" ' I have no old favourites,' pouted the young lady ; ' I am sick and tired of them all ; and now I have got this beautiful creature—for she *is* beautiful, although, to vex me, you won't admire her,—I am determined not to wait.'

" ' In that case,' smiled her mother, ' you must put up with her as she is for to-day.'

" ' I shall do no such thing !' angrily exclaimed the young lady, tearing off my blue silk frock as she had just torn off my hat ; ' and there, you see she has nothing under her odious blue silk but a piece of white calico, and I suppose that you do not wish to see me nurse her without clothes !'

" ' My darling pet, why will you always be so impatient ?' asked Lady Breezeby with a light laugh, as she held out her arm to allow Lenox to

clasp her diamond bracelet ; ‘ you are really quite childish.’

“ ‘ I will tell papa how ill-natured you are !’ sobbed out my little mistress. ‘ First you would not let me buy the doll, and then you called her vulgar, and now you want me to play with her the object she is !’ and in her rage—for I am sorry to say she was really in a rage, and looked very red and ugly, I can assure you—she tossed me on to the sofa where her mama was sitting, and flew out of the room.

‘ Poor little dear ?’ said her ladyship, selecting a dozen rings from her jewel-case, and arranging them on her fingers ; ‘ she is so like her papa, she dearly loves to have her own way ; and now, Lenox, as she has made up her mind that the odious doll must be dressed to-night, dressed it must be, or the house will be utterly unbearable.’

“ ‘ In that case, my lady,’ said the maid, ‘ I will, with your ladyship’s permission, take it to a baby-linen warehouse, and have it fitted with a robe and cap ; for it will be quite impossible to manage in any other way.’

“ ‘ A very good thought, Lenox,’ replied her mistress, ‘ and if you direct the coachman to drive you there when he has set me down at the Opera House, Miss Tantrum will have time to amuse herself with it for an hour before she goes to bed.’ And so saying, her ladyship went down to dinner.

“ She had scarcely left the room when Miss Tantrum’s maid, who had been waiting for her departure, came hastily towards the sofa, upon which I was still lying in a very uncomfortable position, with my arms spread out and one of ⁴my legs turned over my back, and lifting me up she exclaimed: ‘ What a dear doll! I could really kiss her for being so vulgarly dressed, and so helping me out of a dilemma. Only fancy, Mrs. Lenox, how provoking! I had made an engagement with Mr. Tomkins,—Sir Sydney Seymour’s gentleman, you know,—to go with him and a few friends to the Adelphi to-night, and my young lady had given me leave for the evening; when lo and behold! in she flounced to her dressing-room just now, declaring that as every body was trying to

vex her, I should stay at home and see how *I* liked to be contradicted.'

“ ‘Just like her!’ was the remark of Mrs. Lenox. ‘I certainly never did see such tempers as we have to bear with in this house!’

“ ‘Well,’ continued the new comer, ‘not to seem shabby, I had prepared a delicious little treat for Mr. Tomkins and his friends; just some of those beautiful candied fruits that my lord had sent to him from Spain, and which have been housed up so long that they are now quite forgotten; you will wonder how I came by them, but never mind, I have got them; and now I want you to leave them, with my compliments to Mr. Tomkins, and to tell him that the little termagant has played me a trick. I will do as much for you another time.’

“ ‘Very well, Barton,’ said her companion condescendingly, ‘as the carriage is to be at my orders, I don’t mind obliging you; so make yourself easy.’

“ ‘I wish that I had the money that will be spent on this trumpery doll,’ pursued Miss Barton impatiently; ‘really my lady is as silly as her daughter!’

“ ‘ Be so good as not to speak of my lady in that way,’ said Mrs. Lenox; and I really began to feel a respect for her; when she added, greatly to my astonishment: ‘ I, of course, have a right to speak of her as I please; but you are only Miss Tantrum’s maid, and have no such privilege.’

“ ‘ I beg your pardon, I am sure,’ said her companion, ‘ but I am really so annoyed and disappointed.’

“ ‘ I dare say you are, so I will do what I can to serve you; and now I must go downstairs, and take some refreshment before my lady rings for her cloak and fan.’

“ Away went the two friends, and then I had leisure to look about me. Fortunately Miss Barton had placed me very conveniently with my back resting against one of the cushions of the sofa, so that I could see every part of the room; and a very pretty room it was. Pink silk curtains were drawn across the windows; and a large glass, reaching nearly from the ceiling to the floor, stood between them. On a dressing-table which faced the fireplace were scattered such a number of toys

and trinkets, of which I knew neither the names nor the use, that it was almost fatiguing to examine them. On the sofa beside me lay a French novel; and, littered over a richly inlaid desk on a writing-stand, were a heap of tiny notes of all the colours of the rainbow, and a great number of very alarming-looking bills, none of them receipted; a fact which I discovered at once from having often seen things of the kind at the shop of my first mistress. How long I thus remained alone I really cannot say, for, to tell you the truth, I was so much amused that I never thought of the time, when suddenly I was startled by the entrance of Mrs. Lenox in her bonnet and shawl, who, catching me up with a violence which quite took away my breath, hurried with me downstairs, and jumped into the carriage that was waiting for her at the door.

“ In a few minutes we arrived in Regent-street, where we were set down at a large shop brilliantly lighted with gas, and where Mrs. Lenox was warmly welcomed by half a dozen fashionably dressed young ladies, with whom she appeared to

be a great favourite. When she had explained her errand—which she did in so slighting a manner to myself that my feelings were quite hurt—a general laugh burst out on all sides, and I was handed from one to another in the rudest manner in the world. However, the mirth at last came to an end, but not before every particle of bran in my body shook with indignation. The length of my legs was particularly condemned; and one black-eyed, curly-headed girl, who had turned and twisted me about until I was becoming perfectly giddy, actually had the audacity to propose that they should be cut off at the knees. You may fancy what a fright I was in! Luckily her suggestion was over-ruled; and it was finally decided that by putting me into long clothes my long legs would be rather an advantage. Then the dressing began; and no infant princess of the blood-royal was ever more carefully attired. Every article of raiment that the most fastidious nurse could require was brought forward by the zealous young ladies, to whose care Mrs. Lenox had confided me, while she retired to an inner room with the principal of

the establishment, to take a glass of wine and talk over the affairs of her noble mistress.

“ At last my toilette was completed, and very beautiful it certainly was. Such a robe, my dear ! of real French cambric, richly embroidered, and edged with Valenciennes lace ; and a cap to match. At first I felt inclined to regret my silk frock and my hat and feathers, even although I had begun to despise them a few hours before ; but this regret did not long trouble me, for the last string was no sooner tied than the dashing young lady who held me upon her lap, lifting me up in order that her companions might have a good view of my whole person, exclaimed in a tone of triumph, ‘ There ! isn’t it wonderful ? Only see what a change this dress has made in the narrow-chested, long-legged, gawky-looking thing that Mrs. Lenox brought to the shop. Really I would not wish to see a handsomer doll. Her face is so pretty, peeping out of the lace borders of her cap, that I almost feel inclined to kiss her.’

“ ‘ She ought to be handsome,’ said another of the party ; ‘ for it is actually a sin to put such

clothes upon a doll. Why, that cap and robe alone will cost ten pounds.'

"How proud I felt! Now I was indeed Lady Arabella! No one would again venture to call me 'tawdry' or 'vulgar'. Justice had been done to me at last.

"Put it down in my lady's bill, if you please, Mrs. Simpson,' said the voice of Mrs. Lenox, as she returned to the shop; 'and be so good as to give me my per-centage at once, for I have to go to Manchester-square, and I am in a hurry to return home, to be in time for a supper-party which our butler, Mr. Jenkins, gives to half a dozen ladies and gentlemen of his acquaintance.'

"Certainly, ma'am,' was the ready reply. 'Miss Dobbs, what does the whole suit amount to?'

"Thirteen pounds, five, ma'am.'

"Very good,' said the principal, laying a sovereign and three or four shillings upon the counter: 'Miss Parkinson, enter to my Lady Breezeby's account, one doll's suit, fourteen pounds.'

"Good evening, Mrs. Simpson,' said Mrs. Lenox, as one of the young ladies preceded her,

carefully carrying me, folded in gauze paper, upon her arm. 'You may depend on me if I can serve you in any way.' And with a step and air as haughty as those of her mistress, my companion got into the carriage, and placed me on the opposite seat.

"We were detained so long by our call in Manchester-square—where the friend of Miss Barton tried by every argument in his power to induce my companion to take the place of the missing lady in his box at the Adelphi—that on our arrival at home, we found Miss Tantrum already in bed, and her maid, in white ribbons and tears, sitting beside her.

"'A fine time you have been gone, upon my word!' exclaimed the young lady, springing up and holding out her arms to welcome me; 'and a nice evening I have spent with this stupid Barton, who is more tiresome every day. Oh! you darling,' she continued, as Mrs. Lenox, without making any reply, composedly removed the paper, and delivered me up to my new mistress. 'How beautiful she is now, Lenox; you are really a dear good creature, for you have made her look like a real baby,

and that is a great deal more sensible than a ball-dress for a doll. I am quite sure that her god-mama will be delighted with her.'

" ' I am very glad that you are pleased, ma'am,' said Mrs. Lenox, who, during the raptures of her young mistress had been exchanging some mysterious looks with *our* maid.

" ' I *am* pleased,' was the condescending reply ; ' and as I never intend to part with her, you may give all my other dolls to your sister's children.'

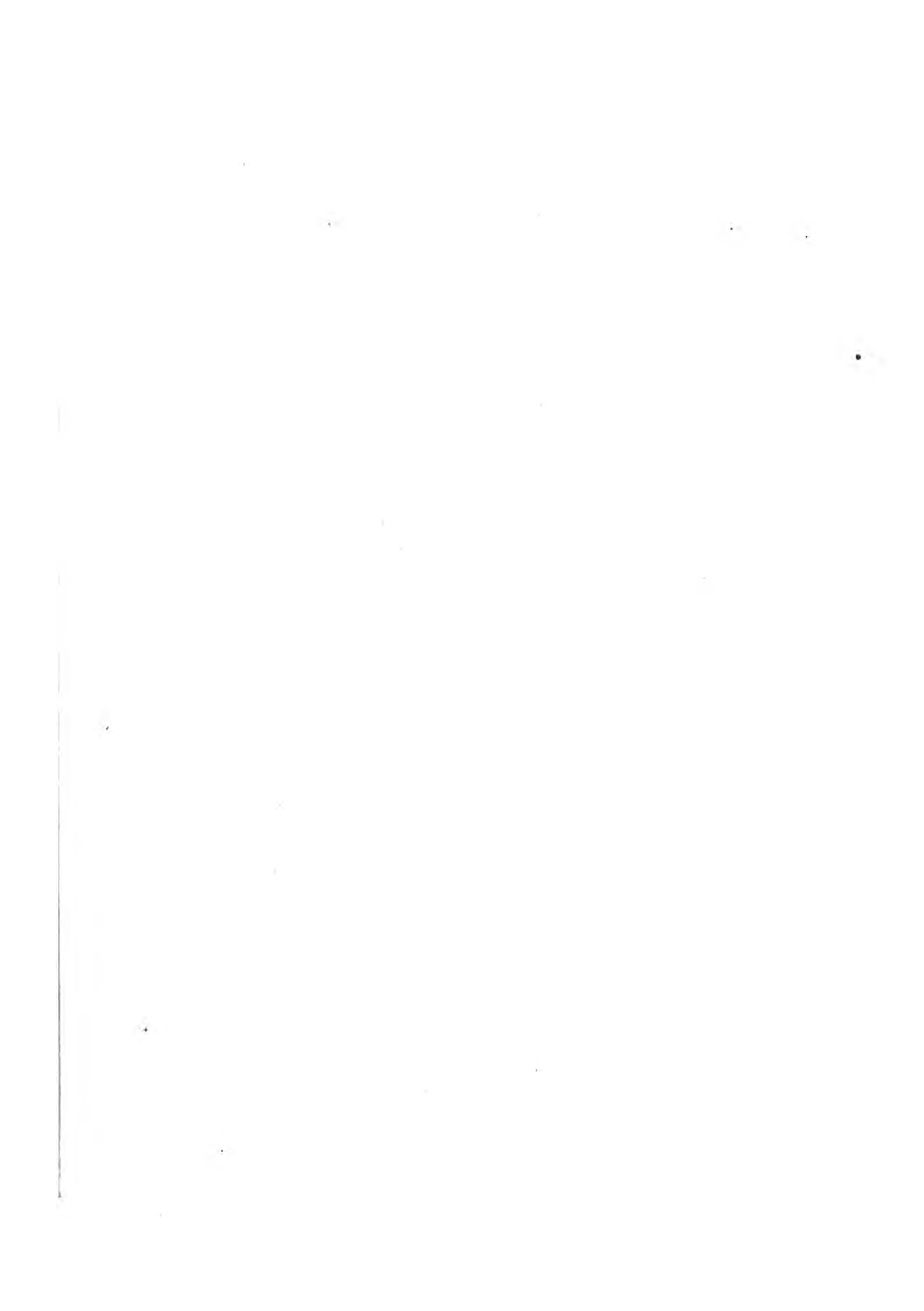
" ' Not the last new one, surely, Miss Tantrum ?' said Mrs. Lenox in surprise.

" ' And why not, pray, if I am tired of it ?' asked the young lady, as she pressed me to her bosom, and tenderly kissed my cheeks and lips ; ' do you think I could love any darling but this ? No, indeed ; she shall be my baby, and I shall be her little mama ; so take away all the others whenever you please.'

" ' I am very much obliged to you, I am sure, ma'am.'

" ' Oh ! you are quite welcome ; and never let me see the odious things again.'





“ I was enchanted, my dear, as you may imagine; and when my little mama again laid down in bed, with her head close beside mine, and her arm thrown lovingly over me, I cannot tell you how proud and happy I felt: and many, many happy days and nights did I pass, now and then disturbed, I am obliged to confess, by the caprices and fits of passion to which Miss Tantrum gave way with all about her, and even with me when she thought proper to believe that I was trying to provoke her, before she began to grow tired of me, as she had done of her former favourites. I saw a great deal of high life in that handsome house, my good girl; and as I was generally present when my new mistress was in the school-room with the governess and a number of masters who professed to teach her all sorts of accomplishments, you may depend on it that I did my best to profit by so excellent an opportunity of improving my mind; a circumstance which will explain to you the extraordinary refinement of my language and feelings. Nor was I less fortunate in the drawing-room, where, lying on a sofa, or seated in a corner, while

her ladyship received her morning visitors, I learnt to recognize the persons, and form my own opinion of half the noble ladies and gentlemen in London: nor do I mind owning to you that, when I had become so thoroughly accustomed to the elegance of their dress, and the charm of their high-sounding names, that they no longer confused my ideas, I was astonished to find how very little difference there was in point of fact between them and the young ladies of the doll-shop where I first came into being; except indeed, that while my new acquaintance lounged idly in their chairs, and talked of Sir Harry and Lord William, the Botanical Gardens, and the French Play, my former companions had busily plied their fingers as they whispered together about Mr. Smith the stationer, and Sergeant Sabretach of the Blues, the Cremorne Gardens, the Adelphi, and Astley's. I was sorry for this, but there was no help for it; so, like a doll of sense, I consoled myself by feeling that if I only had the opportunity, I should be a match for the greatest lady in the land."

"Oh, my goodness!" exclaimed little Mary,

clasping her hands together ; “ I am sure that I should have been frightened out of my wits.”

“ I dare say you would, child ; I dare say you would, and no wonder,” retorted the doll scornfully ; “ for you have not been accustomed to high society like myself, which makes all the difference in the world. Well, to go on with my story, you must know that the gentlemen amused me much more than the ladies. It was really wonderful how few of them could speak plain, and how vain they were of their curls and their varnished boots ; and how they lisped out all kinds of pretty nonsense to my lady, much in the same way that my little mama talked to me when she had a fit of fondness upon her ; nor did I fail to remark that my lady herself was quite another person when she had a crowd of these fashionable young gentlemen about her, and when she was alone with my lord, which, however, was very seldom. In company she always spoke in so low a tone that you were obliged to listen very attentively to catch her words ; but to my lord she talked loud enough to be heard all over the room ; and I soon saw that

her noble husband would rather she should not have exerted herself quite so much, for, from some cause or other, no matter how the conversation began, it was sure, before it ended, to turn upon his lordship's debts, and his lordship's faults; nor was he slow, I can assure you, to return the compliment, by reproaching my lady with her own imprudence and extravagance. Now, as I was naturally of a placid and haughty disposition, I could not help being extremely disgusted and annoyed by this want of dignity in two people of their rank; and I confess that I lost all respect for Lady Breezeby, when I heard her complain of her husband to half a dozen confidential friends, and particularly to the Honourable Frederic Fitzfidget, who was unfortunately so very deaf that he was obliged to lean over her seat, and put his ear quite close to her lips all the time she was murmuring out her troubles. However, he was extremely patient, and always listened very attentively till she had done speaking, looking all the time so full of grief at her sorrows that I really felt quite a regard for him, and wondered how she could be so

unfeeling and selfish as to cause him so much distress. He was a great favourite also with my little mama, and was always bringing her flowers and trinkets ; but I soon discovered that he was particularly disagreeable to my lord, who would seldom stay in the room when he came to visit us, and who was always very cross and rude to his beautiful wife after he was gone.

“ Well, my dear child, delay it as I may, I must tell you at last that my period of grandeur was nearly over. One night my lady went as usual to the opera ; where my lord was I do not exactly know, but probably he was at his club. At twelve, the carriage drove to the Haymarket, to bring home its noble mistress ; but, after an absence of two hours, it returned empty. Miss Tantrum had been asleep a long time, and Barton was sitting reading a novel by the night-lamp, when Mrs. Lenox entered the room, and, drawing a chair to the table beside her, began in a rapid whisper to communicate some intelligence of so interesting a nature, that the novel, although it was a very charming one no doubt, as it had previously absorbed the whole

attention of the reader, not only fell to the ground, but was actually allowed to remain there. As the apartment was very large, and I was a long way from the two ladies, I could not hear the whole of their conversation; but an occasional exclamation caught my ear, as the less cautious Miss Barton in her astonishment slightly raised her voice. She began by: 'Now, you don't mean to say so!' and then, after a renewed assurance from her companion, I heard her indignantly reply: 'Just what I expected! I have been looking for this for the last three months! I thought how it would end!'

"I could not imagine what was the matter; and particularly as the house was evidently all in a commotion. Servants were running up and downstairs; doors were opening and shutting; my lord's brougham drew up, and in a few minutes drove off again; and, finally, the two friends, having decided that they would go and consult the housekeeper as to what was best to be done, hurried from the room, and left me in a very painful state of suspense. As my little mama had forgotten to shut my eyes before she shut her own, there I

lay staring at the night-lamp, the abandoned novel, and the empty chairs ; and, listening with all my might to the extraordinary bustle, which, as Barton had left the door open behind her, became more distinct than ever. Still Miss Tantrum slept on, and at length the cold dawn of a spring day began to steal into the room ; when suddenly I once more heard a carriage stop, the house-bell ring violently, and then the voice of my lord in loud and angry tones upon the stairs.

“ What could it be ? ” ——

“ I am quite sure, ma'am, that I can't even guess ? ” said Mary, supposing that the question had been put to her.

“ Nonsense, child ; how should you, when I could not do so myself ? ” asked the doll angrily ; “ if you were only as good a listener as the Honourable Frederic Fitzfidget, I should have finished my story long ago ; but really your silly interruptions make me lose patience.”

Poor Mary blushed, and did not attempt to excuse herself ; so, after drawing a long breath or two, the doll continued :

“Nearer and nearer came the loud and angry tones; and just as my lord reached her chamber door, my little mama sprang up in her bed, exclaiming: ‘Papa, dear papa, what is the matter? Where is mama?’

“‘Eveline,’ said my lord, with a strange disagreeable smile, ‘you were asking me some time ago to take you to Paris: we will go to-day, if you like.’

“‘Oh, directly, this very moment!’ exclaimed the impetuous young lady, springing into his arms. ‘Where is Barton? tell her to come and dress me this instant. But,’ she added suddenly, ‘can mama be ready so soon?’

“‘Oh, your mama is already gone,’ answered my lord, with a laugh that made my blood curdle; it sounded so harsh and wild; ‘so we need not wait for her.’

“‘Nonsense, papa; gone without us? I am sure that mama would not be so rude,’ said the little girl angrily.

“‘Lady Breezeby was in a hurry, my dear,’ replied the father, still in the same bitter accent;

‘and when people are in a hurry, you know, they wait for no one.’

“ ‘Then I will not wait another minute for Barton,’ cried Miss Tantrum.

“ ‘But you will for *me*, I trust, my love,’ was the retort of my lord; ‘and I cannot be ready until the afternoon. And now, Eveline, listen to me,’ he continued, as he seated himself on the sofa, with his daughter upon his knee: ‘you must forget that you are still only a little girl, for I want you to be a woman.’

“ ‘So I will; but still I wish that mama had not gone without us.’

“ ‘Oh, she has left a good deal behind her,’ said my lord, with another uneasy laugh.

“ ‘What has she left, papa?’

“ ‘Her debts, my love.’

“ ‘Debts! What are they?’ asked Eveline.

“ ‘I will explain that to you another time, my dear, unless you learn it without my assistance, which is likely enough,’ replied Lord Breezeby, as he replaced her in her bed. ‘So now, Eveline, it is understood between us that you are no longer a

child, and that we are to be very happy together, without mama.'

“ ‘ Without mama ? ’ echoed his daughter.

“ ‘ Well, well, ’ he said impatiently ; ‘ without mama for a time, at least ; so now go to sleep for an hour or two, my love, and this afternoon ——.’

“ ‘ Oh ! this afternoon I will be ready, do not be afraid, papa. How good you are ! you will take me to see the Exhibition and the palaces, and the Madelaine, and the Palais Royal, will you not ? ’

“ ‘ You shall see everything, darling, if you will only promise to make yourself contented ; to forget that you are still a child, and to be happy with papa.’

“ ‘ You shall see, ’ said Miss Tantrum, as her eyes began to close again in spite of herself : ‘ Barton shall pack my trunks, and I will ——.’ What more she meant to say I do not know ; for before my lord left the room she was again fast asleep.

“ Well, child, none of the servants went to bed that night ; and such gossiping, and whispering, and even laughing, you never heard in your life ; for Lord Breezeby, after giving some hurried orders

to his valet, had left the house again ; and a fine confusion there was, I can assure you. Indeed, one would have thought that the town-crier had been employed to give the world notice of her ladyship's flight, for the door-bell rang every moment, there was a constant running up and down stairs, and long before my little mama awoke again, Barton and Mrs. Lenox returned to our room accompanied by a third person, who was evidently deep in the secrets of the family.

“ ‘ You know I hinted to you when you accepted the situation, Mrs. Lenox,’ said the new comer, ‘ that all was not right with my lady. Bless you ! I saw *that* with half an eye ; but as long as she was generous, and that it could answer no purpose to interfere, it was of course my business to shut my eyes ; and if you did not profit by the hint that I gave you, it was no fault of mine.’

“ ‘ Oh, I don't wish to deny that I was greatly obliged to you, Mrs. Pulson,’ was the ready reply, ‘ and that I *did* profit by it, and had the length of my lady's foot in no time ; but I confess that I was not prepared for her going off so soon, or for her

taking her jewels with her. Altogether, I consider myself extremely ill-used.'

“ ‘To be sure you are ; she ought to have taken you into her confidence, and then you might have gone with them, or at all events have had time to make your own arrangements before you left the house. As it is, you will have no opportunity of paying yourself what is due to you ; for, no doubt, my lady was in your debt in more ways than one,’ said Mrs. Pulson with a very peculiar smile. ‘ I know that when I was her ladyship’s gentlewoman, it was always the case.’

“ ‘ Yes,’ replied her friend ; ‘ she does owe me a pretty round sum as a matter of course ; but my lord has really behaved very unhandsomely in taking himself off in such a way, and leaving his nasty lawyer to settle with the establishment. Horribly mean, isn’t it ?’

“ ‘ Shameful !’ was the ready rejoinder. ‘ And you, Miss Barton, are you going with your young lady ?’

“ ‘ Oh, I suppose so !’ said *our* maid with a toss of the head ; ‘ but she may thank my lord’s gentle-

man for it, I can tell her; for if Monsieur Lebel had refused the continent, I should have done so too.'

“ ‘ More fool you, if that's what takes you,' sneered Mrs. Lenox very ill-naturedly; ‘ for you'll no more be Madame Lebel than I shall be ——’

“ I never knew who Mrs. Lenox wished to be, as, in her eagerness to mortify Miss Barton, she spoke so loud as to awaken her young mistress; whose eyes, when she opened them, fell upon the individual who had hitherto been addressed as Mrs. Pulson.

“ ‘ Ah, Marshal,' she said, springing up in her bed, ‘ I am very glad you are come, for papa and I are going to Paris, and I am to be a woman, and to leave off playing with dolls and toys; so you may take all mine home to your little girl.’

“ ‘ Thank you, ma'am,' replied the woman curtsying very low as she approached the bedside; ‘ I am sure I am much obliged to you. I hope you will excuse my having taken the liberty of coming to see if I could be of any use to you, directly I heard what had happened.’

“ ‘ Oh, nothing at all has happened, Marshal,’ smiled Miss Tantrum; ‘ only that mama has gone on before us, and that we are to follow her immediately.’

“ ‘ So I hear, ma’am,’ said the woman drily.

“ ‘ Therefore, Marshal, we are in a great hurry to pack up,’ pursued the young lady; ‘ and you had better collect all the playthings that are scattered about, and take them away at once. Barton shall give you a box to put them into.’

“ The visitor needed no second bidding; a trunk was brought into the room, and Mrs. Pulson appeared to me to have rather a peculiar notion of the meaning of the word ‘ playthings’. Scent bottles, fans, chimney ornaments, every article in short which was not precisely necessary to the comfort of my young mistress, found its way into the capacious box that Barton had obligingly placed at her disposal; and I confess that I could not help being amused as I watched the eagerness with which she caught up one thing after another and hurried it out of sight, as though she feared that Miss Tantrum might not altogether approve of her arrangements. Little did I suspect how all this was to end!

“ You may therefore imagine my dismay, when, having cleared the room of all else upon which she dared to lay her hand, the insolent waiting-woman actually caught me up in my turn, and flung me into the trunk ! That she would presume to interfere with *me*, I had never even dreamed ; and as I lay in the box, with my head upon a pincushion, and my feet in an old china teapot, I literally gasped for breath ; and watched every movement of my little mama, in the hope that she would discover the impertinence of Mrs. Pulson, and rescue me from my degrading situation. Miss Tantrum was, however, far too much occupied in playing the grown-up lady, and trying the patience of Barton, to take any heed of me ; and, as she finished by desiring the light-fingered lady to carry away ‘ a fright of a frock ’ that she could not endure, I was soon smothered under its folds ; and then, indeed, I felt that I was lost !

“ No, child, you could never understand, even if I could describe them to you, the agonies of that moment ! That *I*, who had for the last few months been one of the members of a noble family, petted,

caressed, and watched over with the most delicate attention; addressed as Lady Arabella; been accustomed to high society, and rendered for ever unable to conform to the habits of the vulgar and uneducated; that *I* should thus be suddenly condemned to associate with a lady's maid, and become the helpless tool of a rude and underbred little girl, cut me to the very heart."

"I don't wonder at it, I am sure, ma'am," said Mary, with her bright eyes full of tears.

"Well, my good girl," pursued the doll, gratified by the sympathy of her listener, "all my wretchedness was of course quite unavailing. When the horrid woman by whom I had been so shamefully kidnapped, at length reluctantly discovered that she could not, without actual dishonesty, add anything more to her hoard, she shut down the lid of the fatal box, and having carefully locked it, put the key into her pocket, and took leave of her young lady. Several hours passed by, and there I lay, half-smothered, and thoroughly miserable, nor had I even the melancholy satisfaction of discovering that I had been missed by my little mama, and

reclaimed as a treasure too valuable to be so lightly lost. At length I felt that my prison was raised from the ground; I could distinguish that it was carried down stairs, and finally, that it was flung into some sort of carriage, so rudely that my nose, having come in contact with the pincushion which had been displaced by the shock, was cruelly crushed, and disfigured for ever. My trials had indeed begun! Loud, coarse voices sounded in my ears for a few minutes, and then we began to move away from the door of the paradise of which I had never known the real value until that moment! And what a motion it was! Not the soft, easy, gliding movement of the well-hung and delicately-cushioned barouche to which I had been accustomed, but a harsh, jolting, jarring sensation that made all the bran quiver in my body, and shook my nerves to a painful degree. After a time, however, this torture came to an end: with another jerk, and another blow, almost as severe as the first, the box was once more placed upon the ground, the key applied to the lock, and the lid thrown back. A childish scream of delight greeted

me as I was dragged from my hiding-place ; and in an instant I found myself in the grasp, and hugged to the heart, of a pretty little girl of seven or eight years old, who in about five minutes had kissed me so vehemently and continually that every particle of colour had disappeared from my cheeks and lips.

“ As soon as I had an opportunity of doing so, I began to look about me with a good deal of curiosity, as you will readily imagine ; and my disgust was extreme when I discovered that my new home consisted only of two rooms,—clean and neat enough, it must be confessed ; but, compared to the apartments in Grosvenor Square, they were mean, shabby places after all—though after what I have since seen, I have learnt to consider them almost magnificent. A teakettle was boiling upon the hob ; a solitary strip of carpet covered the hearthstone ; and through the open door of a cupboard I saw cups and saucers, plates and dishes, and even bread and meat. My heart heaved, for I had always a delicate stomach, as I have already told you, and I began to wonder how I should be

able to exist in such an atmosphere. However, as I could not control my fate, I wisely determined to make the best of it. Of course, I reflected that coming as I did from Miss Tantrum, whose favorite I had been so long, I should be treated with every respect by the good folks who had been fortunate enough to become possessed of me: personally I could have no indignity to apprehend; and it was evident that my new mistress valued me highly. In fact, like a doll of sense, I endeavoured to console myself in the best way I could; but still I felt very much inclined to wish that I could close my eyes for ever, so tightly that no officious wire might ever open them again.

“While I was thus brooding over my own unhappiness, Mrs. Pulson was very busy emptying the trunk, and examining more closely than she had before been able to do, its various and interesting contents; and it was really wonderful to see with what cleverness she found a place for everything. She was evidently a very notable woman! Having at length disposed of all her newly-acquired treasures, she thrust the trunk which had

contained them under her bed, and seated herself by the fireside to survey them at her leisure. The effect which they produced upon her mantel-piece and drawers evidently delighted her; she rubbed her hands together, and murmured something about 'a stroke of good luck'. You may believe that I was glad to see her so happy, as I felt sure that no harm could have happened to her former mistress, of whose kindness she had talked a great deal to Miss Tantrum while she was engaged in packing the box, or she could not have been so light of heart and so easily amused. I judged her by myself, child; for I really regretted my little mama almost as much as I did the splendour that was lost to me. I know the world better now.

“ Well, after having admired everything about her, Mrs. Pulson took me out of the arms of my new nurse, and began to examine me in my turn. ‘ You are in luck, Jane,’ she said; ‘ you were just wanting a new doll, and now you have got a beauty; although her nose *is* rather crushed, to be sure. But, mercy on us! what a frock; that must come off at once, as a matter of course. Well, if

ever I saw such waste ; goodness, gracious me ! Real French cambric, as I live ; and Valenciennes lace, worth at least half-a-crown or three shillings a yard ; and what a cap ! Why, Miss Tantrum hadn't a handsomer one herself when she was a baby. To be sure it is easy to have fine things if people never mean to pay for them—so like my lady ! However, it is no business of mine, and I dare say I shall get a good price for both.'

“ And while she said this, she was busy in undressing me, without the least regard for my feelings, and quite careless of the tears and entreaties of her little girl. ‘ Nonsense, Jane,’ she continued ; ‘ if you are not good I shall put you to bed without your dinner, and lock up the doll. How will you like that ? Now, wipe your eyes, and fetch me the clothes that were made for your old doll. They are smart enough for you, in all conscience.’

“ The child did as she was bid ; but before she had collected the several articles together, her mother had taken off every particle of my apparel, and folded each with a care which convinced me

that there was no hope of my ever wearing them again. I could not help glancing with half-closed eyes at the sharp-nosed, long-fingered, insolent woman by whom I was so insulted ; and never did I see a more determined countenance. I should not have dared to expostulate, even had I possessed the power. Well, at last I was once more dressed ; but I declare to you, that the first time little Jane lifted me up to let me see my reflection in a small looking-glass which stood upon the solitary chest of drawers, I did not know myself. My cheeks and lips were as white as my forehead ; my nose was flattened out of all shape, and my long legs dangled like two sticks below an ill-made frock of common print ! At that moment I felt that my heart was broken, as well as my nose.

“ I little imagined what was to follow.

“ I was Lady Arabella no longer ; I was Amelia Ann ; and, instead of being gently handled by the Honourable Miss Tantrum, or carried on the arm of a footman from the carriage to the house, I was pulled and dragged about by little Jane Pulson, until at length I lost an arm and a leg. It was,

however, some consolation to find that I was just as great a favourite in my maimed and miserable condition as I had been when I was in the full possession of my limbs ; and that, although I suffered cruelly from the violence of my new mistress, it was from no want of affection towards me, but simply from a desire to imitate her mother, by whose occasional fits of fury the little girl was so wonderfully impressed that, after having undergone any unmerited punishment, she always acted the scene over again upon my unlucky self.

“ We were indeed a very unhappy family ; for Mr. and Mrs. Pulson, who had both lived in great families, he as valet and she as lady’s maid, had all the arrogance and vanity of their superiors, without any of the refinement which helps to make such vices endurable. At the period when I so unwillingly became their inmate, she earned a very tolerable living by dressing hair, a profession which compelled her to be constantly practising all sorts of fashions before the glass ; and in this also she was imitated by the child,—with one difference however, that while the mother tortured her

own hair, Jane tortured mine ; until, owing probably to the delicacy of my constitution, I gradually lost nearly the whole of the beautiful curls of which I had naturally been very proud ; but still I was combed and brushed as vehemently as ever, until one day, while endeavouring to accomplish a particular plait, which was beyond her skill, the human monkey who had me at her mercy, gave my hair so violent a pull that it all came off together in her hand, at which she was so enraged that she threw me down in a passion, and my head coming in contact with the fender, my skull was fractured, as you see.”

“ Poor thing ! ” sobbed little Mary, unable to restrain her tears.

“ Mr. Pulson,” pursued the doll, “ who, by the bye, was a much finer looking man than my Lord Breezeby, was seldom at home after breakfast, as he supported himself by acting as butler or head waiter at dinner-parties ; and was, as I have heard him boast a hundred times, in *excellent practice*. He certainly earned a great deal of money ; and was frequently, as he also declared, better dressed

than the gentlemen by whom he was engaged. There was one inconvenience, however, attendant upon the profession to which he had devoted himself; it afforded him perpetual opportunities, not only of filling his pockets—a breach of honesty that supplied the family with numerous luxuries to which they could not otherwise have aspired, and also ruined the health of his little girl, who was constantly making herself sick with rout cakes, and ratafias, and sponge biscuits,—but likewise caused him to return every night in a state of demi-intoxication, which made him anything but a pleasant companion. I really had no respect for either husband or wife; and sometimes, when for a few instants I forget my own sorrows, I find myself wondering what will be the future fate of the poor child whose nature has been corrupted by such bad examples.

“In spite of her violent temper, I must, however, do Mrs. Pulson the justice to say, that she was a very industrious woman; and as she made herself useful and agreeable in the houses where she was employed, not only to her employers themselves,

but also to the upper servants, it was wonderful what presents she received, and what gay parties she occasionally gave. How often have I laughed in my sleeve at the second-hand airs which were played off in her little parlour by ladies' maids and gentlemen's gentlemen; and how painfully my heart has beat whenever I recognized among the guests the stately Mrs. Lenox, who, although she had, as I heard her state, 'accepted another situation', still reminded me of my past happiness and my present degradation. No longer fondled and caressed; no longer dressed in French cambric and Valenciennes lace; there I lay, thrust away in a corner of the bottom cupboard, the door of which, fortunately for me, would not lock; and thus I was enabled to see all that passed. It was, however, as you will easily believe, a very melancholy pleasure after all; for I took little interest in the Tompkinses and Jenkinses, who assisted in consuming the 'perquisites' of Mr. and Mrs. Pulson; my previous existence having altogether unfitted me for less refined society: nor could I, moreover, forget that in my present dilapidated

state I was not fit to be seen by anyone, and was consequently much better out of sight. I thought of the days when I swept through the streets in a well-hung carriage; was laid to sleep on the satin cushions of a gorgeous sofa; was called by a name which never ceased to sound in my ears like music; and occupied a position which would have killed all the dolls among whom I had come into existence with envy. Now, little girl, not only did I regret my splendid home in Grosvenor-square, but even my glass-case in the shop window that I had been foolish enough to despise, and the tawdry dress which, extravagant as it was, I could not help contrasting in my own mind with the printed frock that scarcely covered my legs, and was smeared all over with the marks of dirty fingers. Ah, we never know the value of anything until we have lost it. I did not amuse myself now by half-closing my eyes in order to look interesting; I was very glad to leave them in peace, either open or closed, whenever I could do so; for I suffered such agonies from the unfeeling manner in which little Jane pulled at the wire by which they were

worked, that I often expected they would drop out of my head. In short, my vanity was at an end ; and I had learnt to look at both myself and the world with very different feelings to those with which I had commenced my career. It is wonderful how much circumstances operate upon our judgment. Perhaps, had I continued to be a member of Lady Breezeby's family, I might have continued to the very end of my existence a mere fashionable trifler ; although, I confess that I scarcely think, with my extraordinary intelligence, that I should have been so weak ; however, there is no telling ; and it is possible that it *might* have been so : certain it is, at all events, that bitter experience had made me wise, and I no longer attached so much value to beauty as I had done when I was the admiration of all who saw me."

"That was very lucky, indeed !" exclaimed Mary joyfully ; "for if you had, how miserable you would have been, you know, after you had grown such a fright."

"Child ! child !" cried the doll angrily ; "how often am I to tell you of your rudeness and your

ignorance? Learn from me, that what has once been beautiful can never become wholly ugly: it may be a wreck; that much I am willing to admit; but there must always remain something of its former loveliness to show you what it has been."

"I did not know that, ma'am, I am sure," said the little girl, wondering in her own mind what there was left about the wretched object before her to indicate its past beauty.

"I really do not understand why I take the trouble to relate to you the sad story of my life," continued the doll; "for it is evident that you are not able to appreciate either my past or my present condition; however, as I have promised to tell you all that I have suffered, I will not forfeit my word. I lived then in the Pulson family for several months; not happily—that was of course impossible under the circumstances,—but, at all events, in tolerable comfort, if I except the pains and aches which constantly tortured my broken limbs. When Mr. and Mrs. Pulson had had what they called a good week, we were always very gay on a

Sunday; for we had either company at home, or they dined out, or we took a walk into the country; and on every occasion, as little Jane was really attached to me, her mother allowed me to be of the party, in order, as she said, to keep the child quiet; and as, fortunately, the bonnet of my predecessor fitted me very tolerably, and that by wrapping me in an old shawl of her own she succeeded in making me appear tolerably respectable, I confess that I always looked forward to these excursions with considerable pleasure. It is true that I had no longer the command of a handsome carriage, and that I did not see the eyes of every little girl that we passed turned towards me with admiration and envy,—all *that* was over, but still I could look about me, and enjoy the green fields, and the sunshine, and the tall trees with their leaves dancing in the wind, as I sat upon the arm of my young mistress. In short, life had even then some interest for me, and I struggled bravely to bear up against the mortifications of my fallen condition.

“One day, while Mrs. Pulson was laying the cloth for dinner, Jane rushed to the window with

a scream of delight on hearing the sound of a cracked violin and tambourine which stopped in front of the house; and catching me up in her arms, she mounted into a chair to look out. Of course I did the same; and there, surrounded by a mob of dirty and ragged children, I saw a coarse monster of a man, with a red face and huge black whiskers, preparing to exhibit a puppet-show, while a woman as ill-looking and as ill-dressed as himself, was scraping away upon a violin that had lost two strings; and a squalid, sickly child, with her eyes sunk deep into her head, and long bony arms, was twirling a tambourine in the air, and making so horrible a din that had I had any teeth in my head they would all have been ajar. I was thoroughly disgusted; for, accustomed as I had long been to the soft liquid tones of Lady Breezeby's harp, and the grand piano upon which the Honourable Miss Tantrum used to practise, I had, as a natural consequence, acquired some knowledge of music, and with my usual good taste could not endure any but the best. Well, the show began, and Jane was so delighted with it, that, in order to

have a better view, she seated me in a corner of the window-sill, and for a time, as I soon saw, she forgot all about me. As for myself, I would have given worlds to have been comfortably lying in my usual corner, for it threw me back upon old times, and hurt my pride, to see the dingy puppets dancing about in much such dresses as that which I had worn in the toy shop. I really felt degraded; and yet, as I could not help remembering, these shabby tawdry dolls, in their dirty finery, were at least in possession of their limbs, and so far were happier than myself; and if they *had* a string through their heads, and were compelled to jump and twirl about when they would probably have preferred to remain quiet, *I* had only half a head left, and only one leg to dance upon; so that in spite of Jane's exclamations, and the shouting and screaming of the urchins in the street, I felt very miserable.

“ At length the puppet-show moved on, and my little mistress sprang from the chair to describe to her mother, who had been too busily engaged to approach the window, the wonderful things that she had seen; and so eager was she, that she

never remarked, in turning to jump down, that she had given me a touch with her elbow by which I lost my balance and fell headlong to the ground."

"What *did* you do then?" gasped out Mary.

"As I need not tell you," was the reply, "I was dreadfully stunned, and did not know for a time what had happened to me. The sky (for I had fortunately fallen on my back) seemed to spin round, and the windows of the houses, with the noonday sun upon them, to whirl before my eyes like sheets of fire. My brain had never been so much confused before; and it was really wonderful that, with so great a shock, my eyes did not fall into my head; however, it was only afterwards that it struck me how narrow an escape I had had of being blind for the rest of my existence; as my first feeling, on recovering something like the power of thought, was a hope that I should be missed and looked for, before I was picked up by a stranger.

"We never know what we wish for in this world.

"I cannot say how long I lay upon the pave-

ment, for I was so much agitated, and so very anxious, that no doubt the minutes appeared hours to me, when at length I saw somebody stop beside me, move me gently with the point of a well-shaped little foot, and finally pick me up. It was quite a relief to my feelings when I discovered that I was in the hand of a pretty, neat, modest-looking young woman of nineteen or twenty years of age, who carried a large parcel carefully pinned up in paper, and whose soft blue eyes wandered for a moment in every direction, as though in search of my right owner. And such in fact proved to be the case, for after having convinced herself that there was not a child to be seen in the street, she walked into two or three little shops to ask if any one would claim me. Once or twice she was answered civilly enough, but at length a fat red-faced woman, who sat in a dirty doorway in the midst of coals and cabbages, potatoes and coke, was so rude to her that her face became as red as a peony, and, placing me under her shawl, she walked on rapidly without making another attempt to give me up. I need not tell you, child, that I felt glad of this ;



for, although, while uncertain of my future fate, I had certainly hoped that little Jane would remember in what a dangerous situation she had left me, and understand at once the accident that had occurred, still, as I lay snugly under the shawl of this gentle-looking stranger, I could not help believing that, after all, I might be about to find a happier home than the one that I had lost."

"And did you do so, ma'am?" inquired Mary eagerly.

"Yes, my good girl, I did indeed, although it was a very melancholy one; but you shall hear. My new protectress walked very rapidly, like a person anxious to make up for the time that she had lost; and at length she stopped at a house which, although evidently much out of repair, and in a very poor-looking street, was nevertheless of considerable size. At the door she was met by a decent and good-tempered looking woman, who addressed her as Miss Simmons, and informed her that her brother had inquired for her incessantly during the last half-hour.

"'Poor Robert!' was her hurried reply; 'I know

that he misses me sadly when I am obliged to leave him; but has he been more unhappy than usual, Mrs Preston ?

“ ‘ Why, I can't say exactly that, miss,' said the woman; ‘ for you see he never is like the same person when you are out of the house, though I do all that I can to pacify him, I'm sure.’

“ ‘ You do indeed, and very grateful I am for your kindness,' replied the young girl; ‘ you are the only friend I have left now in the world, Mrs. Preston.’

“ ‘ Oh, don't say that, my dear,' expostulated her companion with a smile, that even to me, stranger as I was, seemed full of meaning. ‘ You forget George.’

“ ‘ No, Mrs. Preston,' sighed Miss Simmons; ‘ I cannot afford to forget anyone who cares for me; but your nephew has been aware a long time that I cannot ——’

“ ‘ Oh, well, well, we will say no more on the subject at present,' interposed Mrs. Preston; ‘ there is no knowing what may occur; and, meanwhile, you have only to make yourself as easy as you can.’

We are told, as I need not remind you, that a good Providence helps those who help themselves, therefore you must never despair, for I am sure that you do your duty in all ways.'

" ' Hush, Mrs. Preston,' said the young girl, blushing, but smiling at the same time, ' if I listened to you I am afraid that I should learn to think too much of myself ; and then, you know, I should not do my duty at all ; for, even now, here I am lingering to listen to my own praises, when I ought to be with Robert ; but it is only the orphan and the friendless who know the value of words of kindness and encouragement like yours.'

" ' You have got some more work, I am glad to see, miss,' broke in her companion.

" ' I have indeed ; for, thanks to your recommendation, Madame has trusted me with a splendid ball-dress, which she will allow me to complete at home, in order that I may watch over my poor brother while I am at work. The flowers are, of course, to be tacked on under Madame's own eye ; but I have quite sufficient to occupy me for three days, so that for that time I shall not be obliged to

leave him. And I have had another piece of good fortune,' she pursued, 'as she drew me from under her shawl; 'only look here! I picked up this poor shattered doll on the pavement as I came along, and as I could not find an owner for it, although I tried to do so in the neighbourhood, I brought it home, thinking that it might perhaps amuse Robert.'

“ ‘ Perhaps it may,’ said Mrs. Preston; ‘ it is, at all events, as well to try the experiment. Poor young fellow! You don’t often hear of men going mad for love of their wives. I’m sure I love him as if he were my own son, and I’ll be bound that *she* would have gone mad for *him*, if he’d been taken away instead of her.’

“ The girl burst into a flood of tears.

“ ‘ There, don’t cry and fret, my dear,’ pursued her kind-hearted but not very judicious companion; ‘ it might have been much worse, you know: he might have been violent and dangerous, instead of being like a lamb, as he is; and then you must have been parted, which would have been very hard on you both, now that you are left alone in the world: so

you see there is never a bad but there's a worse ; and this reflection ought to keep up your spirits.'

“ ‘It might indeed have been as you say,’ was the meek reply ; ‘but still it is very sad even to see him as he is ; and to think that just when he was looking forward with so much pride and pleasure to the birth of the baby, he should have lost both wife and child.’

“ ‘Poor soul ! poor soul ! it was a terrible thing, sure enough,’ said Mrs. Preston compassionately ; ‘but to think that he could not bear up against the blow was worse still, when one comes to remember how many men have gone through the same trial, and been none the worse for it a month or two after.’

“ ‘But Lucy was so pretty and so sweet-tempered,’ sighed the sister ; ‘and they had not been a year married.’

“ ‘Oh, don't fancy for a moment, my dear, that I don't feel for you both,’ exclaimed the kind-hearted landlady, ‘because I can't help wishing that poor Robert had got over his trouble like other people. But when I see *you*, a weak, delicate girl of eigh-

teen, obliged to work your fingers to the bone to keep him as well as yourself, why, I can't help —'

“ ‘I am quite sure that you mean it kindly, ma'am,' broke in her companion, ‘but, pray don't talk in that way again, for it almost breaks my heart. If I had not Robert with me, I should be alone in the world; and if I had only myself to work for, I don't think I should care to live.’

“ ‘Oh, fie, Miss Simmons,' said the old lady; ‘you must not say *that*. You were sent into the world to do your duty; and while you can make another person happy, you have no right to think about dying.’

“ ‘It is that very feeling that gives me courage to bear up against my troubles,' replied my new mistress; ‘and that is why I cling to my poor brother: while he lives I am not quite useless, and I have still something to love.’

“ ‘And so you would have if he were taken away,' persisted Mrs. Preston, with a slight shade of annoyance in the tone of her usually clear and cheerful voice; ‘you seem to forget that George is ready to work as hard for you as you are doing for your brother.’

“‘I quite believe it; and I am very, very grateful to him,’ said the young girl; ‘although I hope that he has too good an opinion of me to believe that if I were ever to be his wife, he would be allowed to work alone; but, pray do not talk to me of George,’ she continued mournfully; ‘I have told him more than once that I will never consent to burthen him, not only with a sickly wife, but also with her afflicted and helpless brother; therefore, so long as my dear Robert is spared to me—and he is young and strong, and may outlive me, you know—we will, if you please, say no more on the subject.’

“‘That may be all very well, as far as you are concerned,’ was the quick retort; ‘but I suspect that you will not get George to consent to be put aside in that way. Are you quite sure, Miss Simmons, that you are not too proud to content yourself with my nephew, and that that is not the true reason why you will not listen to him? Because, if so ——’

“‘No, no, my dear Mrs. Preston; indeed, indeed, I have told you the exact truth. If I loved

him less, perhaps I might be selfish enough to escape from part of my sorrow by letting him bear the burthen with me,' said the girl, with a fresh burst of tears; 'but, as it is ——'

" 'Well, well, my dear,' soothingly interposed the pacified landlady; 'wipe your eyes, and I will promise in future to leave George to manage his own affairs. All will come right in time, I dare say.'

"The two friends then parted. Mrs. Preston retreated into her little parlour, where the kettle was singing upon the hob, and the firelight was flashing upon the bright metal teapot and the gay-coloured crockery that covered the table; while my new owner, after carefully removing every trace of the tears that she had just shed, and smoothing the rich bands of dark brown hair that descended low upon her cheeks, slowly ascended the stairs, flight by flight, until we could go no higher; and then, softly opening the door of what I at once perceived to be a garret, she walked in, holding me in her hand.

"I have said, little girl, that it was a garret, and so it was; the ceiling slanted sharply down to the

solitary window, which opened upon the parapet of the roof: the room was small, and scant of furniture; no lady's maid's perquisites, or butler's dainties, lent a false look of luxury to its neat and cleanly poverty; the white-washed walls were without stain or spot; the narrow grate, in which a few cinders were smouldering away, was a model of comfort, from the care with which it was swept and brightened; while the very chairs and tables, all of the cheapest and most simple sort, nevertheless seemed so perfectly adapted to the room, that the eye rested upon them without remarking their want of grace or beauty. Indeed, it was only afterwards that I made these observations; for my mistress had no sooner carefully deposited her work upon a table which stood immediately beside the window, than she turned towards a corner of the room, where, seated in the only arm-chair that it contained, comfortably supported by cushions, and amusing himself with a collection of toys and trifles, such as might have pleased a child of six years old, I saw a fine young man of apparently three or four-and-twenty, who, had it not

been for the vacant expression of his large blue eyes and the unmeaning smile upon his lips, would have borne a great resemblance to his sister. As it was, however, his beauty was painful to look upon; and even if I had not overheard the conversation downstairs, I think that I should have understood at once that poor Robert Simmons was an idiot."

"What is an idiot, ma'am?" asked little Mary.

"An idiot, my dear," replied the doll conceitedly, "is a person who has lost his wits, without being mad. A madman has a sort of mind of his own, or at all events a fancy, or a set of fancies, that enable him to live in a world where no one can follow him; to think that he is a king, or a great general; or, it may be, an animal, or a tree, or any other object for which, before his madness, he had either an extraordinary fondness, or an extraordinary hatred. But an idiot is a being who has lost his wits without having them replaced by any such notions; and who is consequently only a human being in outward form. You don't understand me, child!"

“No, ma’am, I don’t, indeed.”

“Well, then,” pursued the mutilated orator, with all the condescension of one who, in the plenitude of her talent, vouchsafed to abase her intellect for a moment to the level of her companion’s nullity, “I will suppose that you have a doll at home ——.”

“I have four, ma’am.”

“Well, then, my dear, tell me,—do they resemble me?”

“Not a bit, ma’am.”

“So I thought. Now, tell me what is the difference between us.”

“Oh, that is easy enough,” said little Mary, delighted to do the honours of her wooden family: “they have all got arms, and legs, and eyes; their noses are a good deal battered, to be sure, for I can’t help letting them fall sometimes, you know; but none of them have broken heads or ——”

“Silence, child!” exclaimed the doll angrily, her one eye flashing in the light as if it would start out of its socket; “I am not talking of their arms

or legs ; for every village carpenter could replace *them*, if he was paid for it ; but do they talk like me ? reason like me ? in short, have they ever shown such a knowledge of the world, and such good sense—not to speak of good manners—as I possess ?”

“ Oh no, ma’am, I never heard one of them speak a word in my life. They are quite common dolls.”

“ So I thought, child. Well then, those dolls are idiots ; they have no mind, while I ——”

“ Yes, I understand it all now,” said the little girl ; “ for mother has often told me, when I scolded one of them for not doing as I bid her, that dolls couldn’t walk and talk and eat like children. But how is it then that you ——”

“ No matter, no matter ; you now see that *I* at least am no common doll, though I am lying here upon a heap of dust, with my head on a cabbage-stalk and my foot in a pool of dirty water : that head has rested on a cambric pillow, and that foot has been cased in a satin shoe ; but both duchesses and dolls have their troubles in this world, and all must alike learn to bear them with dignity.”

Fortunately for the effect which her self-constituted Mentor was anxious to produce, Mary Lawson heard her last remark with perfect gravity, having no idea whatever of the meaning of the high-sounding word which terminated the sentence. How should she, poor child!

“ You now understand, I suppose, what I meant when I told you that Robert Simmons was an idiot,” she continued; “ but if I shrank with dislike and fear from his cold eyes and joyless smile, it was far otherwise with his sister. She, poor thing! had no sooner assured herself that her precious parcel was safe, than she approached the unhappy young man, and throwing her arms about his neck, kissed him tenderly upon the cheeks and forehead. Something like a gleam of intelligence passed over his face as she caressed him; but he remained silent until, holding me towards him, she whispered softly:

“ ‘ See! Robert!’

“ Never, my child, so long as I exist, shall I forget the wild scream of delight with which he stretched out his arms as, with convulsed and

trembling lips, he struggled for utterance ; nor the awe-struck countenance of his sister when he at length faltered out :

“ ‘ Come at last ! Come at last ! Give me Lucy’s baby.’

“ She obeyed in silence ; and no mother ever received her first-born in her clasp, and folded it to her bosom with more rapturous delight, than that poor idiot received and fondled me. It was evidently the first time that, since his great trial, he had ever seen any object which had power to penetrate the darkness of his spirit. He did not discover that I had been maimed and disfigured by ill-usage ; he only seemed to feel, and even *that* half-unconsciously, that he was clasping to his heart something that he had long missed, and that was very dear to him. Nay, there were moments when I verily believe that poor Mary Simmons, who watched his every look and motion, ventured to indulge a hope that the wretched doll, which she had picked up upon the pavement, might at last have power to recall his wandering mind : but this was not to be ; for although at times, while rock-

ing me to and fro, and murmuring beneath his breath a monotonous word, which he probably imagined would lull me to sleep, his eyes wandered anxiously round the room as if, having recovered his child, he had a vague idea that its mother could not be far off; he constantly relapsed after a while into his former placid and patient unconsciousness of surrounding objects. Even when he slept I was still in his arms, or hid in his bosom; and when waking, his touch was so gentle that, had I still preserved the luxuriant curls of which I had been so cruelly deprived, he would not have disturbed a hair of my head.

“ So you see, my dear, that, as I told you before, I had once more a comfortable home, although a sad one; for poor Mary, as if grateful to me for the comfort which I had proved to her afflicted brother, would occasionally pass her soft little hand lovingly over my face while she hung over him; and then he would look up to her with his cold vacant smile, as if he sought to thank her for her kindness to Lucy’s baby.”

“ And did he never find out that you were only a doll, ma’am ?” inquired Mary.

“ Never, my dear,” was the mournful reply. “ We lived on in this way for many months ; Mary worked constantly and industriously to support our little family ; but although Mrs. Preston, when she occasionally came to see us, urged the suit of her nephew, he never once crossed the threshold of our room. Well, to finish this sad portion of my story, I must tell you that I remarked, before even his sister could bring herself to do so, that poor Robert wasted away from day to day ; his breathing became difficult, a low hard cough heaved his chest, and drops of cold perspiration settled upon his forehead and moistened the heavy curls that rested on it. He no longer seemed to remark the absence of Mary ; I had become all in all to him ; and sometimes when we were alone together, he would whisper cautiously : ‘ Come, Lucy, come ; the baby is asleep ; you will not wake her. Come, Lucy, and see how beautiful our baby is.’ I cannot tell you, little girl, how I learnt to love that poor young man, nor how glad I was that he loved me. And still Mary worked on ; often far into the night, with no one to assist, no one to encourage her ; and

although there were times when I detected tears in her gentle eyes, she was always careful to wipe them off before she approached her brother, lest he should see them there.

“ I have already told you that Robert wasted away, and I often thought that as his life failed his spirit brightened ; but it was only by snatches ; before you could convince yourself that a gleam of reason had flashed across his brain, the cloud gathered again and all was dark. As for me, I shall always be of opinion that these momentary flickerings of sanity exhausted his bodily strength ; and I am the more convinced of the soundness of my reasoning from the fact that one evening, when Mary was absent for above two hours with some work, upon which she had been closely occupied for several days, during which time he had remained in the twilight murmuring words of endearment to me, and at intervals holding an imaginary conversation with his dead wife, he was seized with a sudden shivering, which shook his whole frame so violently that he almost crushed me into his bosom lest he should loosen his grasp.

From this attack of debility he never recovered. On the following morning he was unable to leave his bed; and his sister, whose anxious affection immediately took the alarm, sent for a doctor, who, like many others whose practice lies among the poor, being unable to understand, or perhaps careless to remark the depth of her attachment for her afflicted brother, did not hesitate to tell her, without either caution or concealment, that she could not, and indeed should not, hope to have him much longer with her.

“ ‘ I have, however, one comfort to give you, my good girl,’ he said, as he saw her suddenly grasp the back of a chair for support and then sink helplessly into it, ‘ I think it very possible, nay, even highly probable, that he may be able to converse rationally with you for a few moments before all is over; for this is frequently the case under such circumstances; so that your last parting will not be altogether without a certain sort of consolation. And I am really glad to be able to assure you of this: so keep up your spirits, and, if possible, you shall see me again to-morrow.’

“ Mary sat for a time motionless: the tears which had fallen on her pale cheeks rested there; but she shed no more; the blow had been too sudden; and it was clear to me that, devoted as she had been for months to her idiot brother, she had never known how very dear he was to her, until that moment; nor do I believe that she had ever before so keenly felt the bitterness of poverty. Ah! child, it is not only the sordid roof, and the scanty meal, and the shabby garments, that are the worst inheritance of the poor; for they can escape from the one by rushing out into the glad sunshine, and building palaces for themselves among the leafy branches of the forest trees; and decking themselves with the many-coloured field flowers that blossom as brightly for the peasant as the peer; but it is the unshared grief, the lonely heart, which cries aloud in its solitude for support, and listens in vain for a reply: it is the appalling silence of the death-room, in which the mourner watches and weeps alone; while the busy crowd without sweep by, beneath the uncurtained window, reck-

less of the despair with which they have neither sympathy nor fellowship.”

The doll paused, suddenly conscious that her little listener was totally unable to understand her meaning ; and after passing her one remaining hand over her solitary eye, she continued more calmly : “ I need scarcely tell you, my dear, that we passed a very miserable evening. The poor young man was flushed and restless at times ; and at others he lay so still and motionless, that Mary bent anxiously over him more than once, in order to convince herself that he still breathed. At last, midnight struck ; and the sound of the clock in Mrs. Preston’s parlour had scarcely died away, when Robert raised himself in the bed, and, having laid me tenderly in his bosom, beckoned his sister to his side. ‘ Mary,’ he said in a hoarse whisper, ‘ Lucy is calling me, but I cannot go until I have bid you good bye. I always loved you, Mary, though I learnt to love Lucy better. Poor Mary !’ and he passed his wasted hand languidly, but fondly, over her shining hair. ‘ Poor little Mary ! I could have worked for you both, you know ; for

I am young and strong: but she will not let me stay here; and I must take the baby with me. The baby must go to ——. Yes; sorry as I am to take it from you,—for I can see that you are weeping,—Lucy must have her child.’

“ ‘ Robert! Robert! do not talk so strangely,’ sobbed the wretched girl; ‘ you are not young and strong; you are weak and ill; and you must lie down and keep quite still, and try to sleep.’ But her entreaties were in vain: the poor invalid talked incessantly; lived over again the years of his boyhood, the happy period of his courtship, and the brief months of his married life; repeating at intervals his injunctions to his awe-struck and terrified listener not to attempt to separate him from Lucy’s child. A little after daybreak, to my great comfort, Mrs. Preston quietly came into the room, and I saw at once, by the melancholy shake of her head, that she thought all was nearly over. Don’t cry, my good child; I will hurry over the rest of my sad story; for my own grief is still too new for me to seek to dwell upon it. The kind-hearted landlady, after trying to comfort the sister, at last

seated herself beside the dying man, whom she partially soothed into reason, by promising that all his wishes should be complied with ; and, above all, that his baby should not be taken from him. He then slept for nearly an hour ; and on awaking, he recognized both Mary and her companion. His bodily strength was, however, exhausted ; and he could only murmur a few disjointed words to his poor sister, as she supported his head upon her shoulder. ‘ Poor Mary ! poor desolate child ! Who will love you when I am gone ? Pray for me, Mary ; pray for me ; and for Lucy, and for her babe. We will all watch over you, and guard you. Good bye, Mary ; I weary to be gone, and be at rest.’ And so—his head drooping still lower upon her bosom—the unhappy sufferer sank into his last sleep.

“ An hour afterwards all was still and silent in that narrow room. Mary’s work was laid away out of sight ; the fire was extinguished in the grate ; every article of furniture was ranged in its proper place : the outline of a wasted human form could be distinguished beneath the sheet which covered

the low pallet bed; and I was still resting upon the arm of the dead man. I must confess, my dear, that when all was over, and that I heard Mrs. Preston close the door and lock it behind her, and began to understand that she really intended to be faithful to her promise to my poor master, and not allow us to be separated, I began to feel very uncomfortable. It is true that I had long assured myself that I was weary of life; my beauty was gone, my evil fortune had caused me to fall from affluence to poverty; I had lived in a garret, and been clothed in rags; the world had done with me, and I with the world,—so at least I had tried to believe; but now I once more clung to life as eagerly as I had ever done in the days of my prosperity; and therefore I shall not attempt to explain to you the joy with which I again heard the door open, and two strange voices exchange a few muttered words immediately beside me. Alas! I did not know to what new torture I was condemned.

“ In one moment, with a hoarse but suppressed laugh, and an exclamation so coarse that I should scorn to repeat it, I was lifted from the bed, and

hurled through the open window ; while so violent had been the clutch of the ruffian who had seized me in his grasp, that he had driven his thumb into my eye, and blinded me as you see. Then, indeed, I thought that fate had done its worst ; but no ! I was not even permitted to remain in peace where I had fallen, for a merciless housewife, who found me lying near her door, swept me away (after turning me over, and curling her lip in contempt when she discovered the extent of my misfortunes), together with the refuse of vegetables and the other rubbish by which you now see me surrounded.”

“ I have a great mind to pick you up, ma’am, and carry you home,” said little Mary, tears of pity gathering in her eyes ; “ and I am sure that if you told your story to mother, she would let me keep you.”

“ You are a very good girl, my dear,” said the doll, suddenly recovering her spirits ; “ and I really think you might do worse, for, disfigured as I am, you do not meet with such a doll as I am every day ; and although I can see at a glance that you

are poor, still if you promised to treat me well, I believe that I could contrive to be tolerably happy with you."

"You are very kind, I'm sure, ma'am," said Mary; "and if I can only contrive to get at you without making myself dirty—" But before the little maiden could stretch out her arm to accomplish her work of mercy, a dustman's bell rang so loudly, and the wheels of his cart groaned and creaked so heavily over the stones, that she awoke with a start, and had scarcely done rubbing her eyes to dispel the fancies of her dream, when she saw a huge iron shovel plunged deep into the pile of rubbish beside which she had fallen asleep, and the mutilated doll, after flying high into the air, fall back into the unsavoury garbage with which the cart was laden.

"Good gracious me!" murmured Mary to herself; "so it wasn't true after all that a doll could talk, and see, and feel pain when her arms were torn off, and her eyes put out! It was nothing but a foolish dream; and now I am too late for school, and I shall have a bad mark in the afternoon; and

all because I did not do as I was bid, and go on when I was told to do so. I'll take very good care not to be so disobedient again ; though, to be sure, it was very droll after all !”



THE END.

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