Alice May, and Bruising Bill

J. H. Ingraham

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CHAPTER I.

One cheerful autumnal morning, six years ago, a group of lovely girls was assembled in a window of a fashionable boarding school in one of the handsomest streets crossing Mount Vernon. One or two of them were seated with embroidery in their hands, but the rest were standing and talking, and amusing themselves by watching the passers by; for there was yet an idle quarter of an hour to recitations.

`Do see that poor old man! how white his hair is, and how he bends beneath his years, while that empty bag he carries seems a load for him,' said a pretty blue−eyed girl in a tone of deep sympathy, with which the expression of her face sweetly harmonized. `Open the window Ann, and let me throw to him a quarter of a dollar. I never see an old silver−haired man, but what I think of my dear grandfather, and for his sake love and pity him.'

`I can never see any thing romantic in an old ragged beggar,' said a tall, grey−eyed girl with a very high forehead, and a look like one of Miss Radcliffe's heroines: `if he was an aged minstrel, with a robe and staff, and flowing locks of silver, and had a harp in his hand, and sandals on his feet, how delightful it would be! I wish I had lived in days of chivalry, these modern times are too common place.'

`I am content to live when and where my life will be most a blessing to those around me,' said the first speaker with animation. `Do open the window, Aunt, as you are near the spring, and let me throw him the money. See, he has stopped and lifts up his aged eyes. Did you ever behold such a look of eloquent pleading?'

`How much enthusiasm for a mere every day pauper!' said Miss Letitia, the romantic girl, with a toss of her head.

The window was thrown up; and the example set by the benevolent girl being followed by the others, the old man received into his torn hat a shower of silver pieces. How lovely is charity in the young and beautiful!

The aged beggar lifted up his venerable countenance with a grateful look, bowed his bared and hoary head low to the pavement, and saying in a trembling voice, `God bless you, young ladies,' went on his way.

While the window was still up, and they were looking after his feeble steps for we all feel an interest in the objects of our charity a young gentleman, well mounted upon a dark bay horse came dashing along. He was handsome, of a manly figure, and dressed and rode well.

`Do shut the window down, girls,' said one of the young ladies, laughing and retreating; `he will certainly think we have opened it on purpose to look at him; and I don't choose to let any young gentleman have such vain thoughts of himself for they are vain enough now. See he is looking this way.'

The young horseman seeing a bevy of pretty girls at an open window, could not well help looking at them very earnestly. Suddenly he half reined up, his features became animated with a look of surprise and happy recognition, and bowing with the deepest reverence while his face crimsoned with embarrassment and joy, he continued on his way towards the avenue, at the same pace at which he had been before going.

`He bowed to some one of us! who knows him?' said they all.

`Not a soul I believe he thought we were foolishly admiring him, and so impudently acknowledged it,' said another.

`No, he looked as if he recognized one of us. Let us see who looks conscious, as no one will speak,' said Auna Linton; `look at Alice May's face. See her blushes and confusion. She is *the one*.'

Instantly every eye was fixed upon a young dark−eyed brunette not more than seventeen years of age, whose delicately olive shaded complexion was incardined with the richest blood. Her long−fringed eye−lids were cast to the floor, and she stood silent, beautiful, conscious her pretty fingers picking in pieces a rose bud. Never was a maiden of seventeen lovelier than she who now stood confessed before them, the shrine of the handsome horseman's adoring reverence. The raven hair which the womanly comb had never descrated, flowed darkly beautiful in glossy waves about her finely shaped head and throat. Her form was singularly graceful, every motion yielding to the eye a new shape of beauty. The exquisite finish of her arm and hand would have made Canova an idolater. her features were faultless. Her low, gentle brow, with its dark, arching eyebrows, `like two delicate feathers plucked from the black breast of the singing ummill,' was a throne of serenity and beauty. Never were such eyes as beamed beneath; large, languid, gentle, and, but for the purity of the soul within, voluptuous. Passion was there, but in the shape of love yet vestal and unawakened. The young and happy heart with all its guileless emotions unveiled and open, was ever drawing in them, to gladden the hearts of all around her. None beheld her but they loved her. She was the idol of the school, and the friend of all.

All conscious the lovely girl stood before them, and her downcast eyes and attitude told a tale each was dying to get at the mystery of.

`Oh, where did you see him?'

`Where did you know him, Alice?'

`Is he from the south an old lover?'

`Don't stand there blushing and making yourself look so wickedly lovely. Do tell us,' were the questions with which she was over−whelmed.

Alice, however, laughed and blushed only the deeper, and breaking away from them fled to her room.

CHAPTER II.

Perhaps the curiosity, raillery, and playful interference of others often induces a young girl to think seriously of the individual about whom she is teased, and to believe she is in love with him, whom perchance she has met but once; when, in reality, if he had not been named to her again after the first accidental meeting, she would never have given him place in her thoughts. This was not, however, the case with lovely Alice May. While she is confidentially confessing her meeting with him to her young friend, Auna Linton, who had followed her to her chamber and playfully teared her secret out of her, we will give it to the reader in language of our own.

About a month previous to the period on which our briefly−sketched story is opened, a young gentleman of fortune, recently a graduate of Harvard, whose name is Edward Orr, and who was a native of Boston, was one morning riding on horseback, as was his favorite custom, in the direction of Mount Auburn, when seeing a funeral train coming out of the arched gateway, he was prompted by the momentary impulse to alight and enter. Without any definite object in view, save to enjoy in the quiet of his soul the solemn repose of the place, he wandered on from tomb to tomb, through dell and winding walk, enjoying the romantic seelusion and experiencing that calm and intellectual delight, (in which the more hallowed feelings always might,) which the solemn loveliness of the place inspires in every properly cultivated mind.

Suddenly he emerged from a narrow path, thickly shaded by larch trees, upon a secluded spot in the most lovely and quiet portion of the cemetery. Before him, within a few paces, was a young girl arranged in simple white, her straw hat fallen back from her head, her hands folded before her, and her eyes directed towards a name upon a small, exquisitely sculptured monument of white marble. The grace of her fingers, the gentle earnestness of her bending attitude, the rich beauty of her face, on which rested an expression of intellectual admiration in which much of the heart was visible, charmed, surprised, enraptured him. The dark trees were bending over the spot; the white marble rose from the verdant sward in strange beauty amid the dark shades cast by them; and she, in her white robe bending over it, seemed like an angel watching the tomb to receive and bear heavenward the `arisen,' when at length the trump of Gabriel should rend it open.

He feared to advance lest he should intrude upon hallowed ground. His eye fell upon the inscription, upon which her soft dark eyes were gazing so thoughtfully. It was simply.

"To my Wife Mary. 20.

`What beautiful and touching eloquence in those few simple words,' she said in a low sweet voice that came from her heart, while he saw that a tear glistened from her cheek. `There is a sad story of love aud hope and joy and woe and death, couched beneath them. How perfect the taste of the husband who in one simple line records the volumes of his love. Thus would I be buried. My memory graven on the hearts of those I love, my name simply carved on my tomb.'

At this moment her eyes were uplifted with the consciousness of being intently observed, and they met those of the young man, whose earnest admiring gaze, was not difficult to be translated by any maiden. She slightly blushed, and instead of flying or betraying any foolish weakness, smiled with great sweetness, and with a just propriety that charmed him.

`I fear, sir, you have heard some pretty nonsense. But I was not aware I had an auditor. Yet what can be conceived more touching than what has brought forth my soliloquy,' and casting her eyes upon the inscription, she replaced her bonnet and was retiring.

`It is indeed beautiful and touching,' said Edward lifting his hat as he stood by the monument. Will you have the kindness to tell me what young bride lies buried here?'

The question was put so respectfully, his manner was so pleasing, his face so intelligently handsome, his voice so rich and low, his eyes so reverential yet so brilliant, that she could not resist a reply:

`I am ignorant, sir.' She then added apologetically, `I have strayed here, away from my party, who, calling me till they were tired left me to myself. I must hasten to find them.'

`I fear you will not find them easy in this labarynth of walks,' said Edward, seeing her retire. `Allow me to escort you.'

`No ' she answered playfully, yet blushing; `I think I shall not get lost;' and bounding away he lost sight of her in a bend in the avenue.

For some moments he stood gazing where she had disappeared, and then with a deep drawn sigh, and with a sensation of gentle melancholy stealing over him, the first dawning of love, he slowly resumed his ramble. Deep was the impression she had made upon his heart, and as he walked he was lost in a brown−study, of which she was the mystic volume.

He had wandered how far and how long, whether five minutes or an hour, he did not know, when he was aroused by the side of `the terrace of tombs,' by a figure crossing his path. He looked up and saw it was the maiden of the monument, whose image love was busily graving upon his heart. She was approaching him, and he saw that she looked warm, hurried, and a little alarmed.

`I am overjoyed to meet you sir,' she said, coming near him with a hurried step. `You will think me a very strange person; but I have, as you predicted, really lost myself! I have been wandering the last half hour through a hundred paths, and this is the third time I have reappeared before these tombs.'

`Will you do me the honor to accept my guidance,' said Edward.

`You will think me a very foolish girl. I certainly have been very imprudent. As I cannot hope to find my party in this wilderness, you will oblige me by conducting me to the entrance where I will wait for them in the carriage.

The young man never felt so happy in his life, as at this moment the lovely wanderer frankly placed her hand on his arm, and walked by his side.

Edward was not familiar with the avenues, but, listening and hearing the distant roll of wheels along the turnpike, he carefully noted the direction of the sound, and struck into the paths that he believed would lead them towards the highway.

The birds that twittered and chirped in the branches that over−hung their way, have not betrayed to us their conversation as they walked; and we leave our readers to imagine what two young, ardent, intellectual, enthusiastic persons, thus romantically cast upon each others companionship, discoursed about at such a season.

`There is Spurzheim's tomb, and not far distant and visible from it is the gateway,' said Edward as they emerged from a shaded avenue which they had been sometime slowly traversing. `I must now part from you; but to bear with me the recollection of this hour as the happiest of my life.'

His eyes sought hers, but they were downcast, and her blushing face was averted. She suddenly withdrew her hand from his arm, for footsteps and voices were heard. The next moment several young girls preceded by two elderly ladies appeared conducted by one of the party.

They were looking earnest, anxious and hurried.

`Your friends?' asked Edward.

`Yes.'

At this same moment she was discovered; and they all came flying towards her.

Amid the exclamations, embracings, chidings, wonderings, and joy at recovering her, Edward retired unperceived. Alice, after being told a hundred times by half a dozen dear voices, how much she had been sought for, how they believed she had been drowned in `the lake,' or had been spirited away, or had eloped with some lover, was triumphantly escorted along the turnpike towards the city.

CHAPTER III.

A year elapsed and Alice May left the boarding school to return to Louisiana, for she was a dark−eyed child of the sunny south. She returned home with her father a betrothed bride! During the year that ensued her first interview with Edward Orr, in Mount Auburn, and the bow she had from him at the window, he had sought her acquaintance, and intimacy grew to love. They parted in the drawing−room of the Tremont, where he had called to bid her good−bye the evening preceding her departure. He promised in the spring to come out and be married for till then he would not come into possession of his estate. Their engagement was known to and approved of by her father, a tall, handsome man, with a haughty air, and manners something cold and unprepossessing. Edward did not like him from the first; perhaps because his arrival in Boston was the signal of his departure from Alice. He was, however, tender and affectionate to his child, who seemed to be devotedly attached to him. Of him, Edward had learned that he was a wealthy planter who resided near Lauvidais in the vicinity of New Orleans, that he was a widower, and that Alice was his only child.

The parting between the lovers was favored by the voluntary and judicious absence of Colonel May from the room, and with the usual protestations of love, in this case, painfully sincere, and a promise mutually drawn from each other to write once a week. Alice at length received the last lingering kiss and the next moment was left weeping, *alone*.

It was the evening of the 22d of February. It was to be celebrated by one of the most magnificent assemblies that had ever been in the capital of Louisiana. In a planters' villa a few miles from the city was one fair inmate preparing for the brilliant scene. It was Alice May. Four months had elapsed since she had left Edward, and her love burned clear and pure and steady. He was her idol her heart of hearts. She wrote to him oftener than he had stipulated, and was thinking of him daily, hourly. Her letters were transcripts of her heart's deep, holy and fervent feelings. Her life was wrapped up in his, and she knew from his letters that he loved her with the same unwavering devotion.

She had been much courted, caressed and flattered since her return home. In every place she was the star of all eyes. But her love for Edward Orr was the polar star of all her regard, and the compliments, the flattery and homage she received, made no impression upon her. If she had had her own will she would have withdrawn from society; for she cared for no pleasure that he did not share with her. But her father, proud of her extraordinary beauty, and flattered by the attention paid her, carried her to every public place of amusement, with which the city was then rife. On the present occasion she had entreated to remain at home, as she had felt all day unusually depressed. But he had a motive in urging her compliance with his wishes, and she consented to prepare and accompany him to town in the carriage.

She was seated at her window which looked out upon a spacious lawn, ornamented with noble elms and sycamores, with a glimpse of the river beyond. The moon was filling her shield with light as the twilight deepened, and shone broadly down between the light trellised columns of the piazza. A mocking bird near by was

making the air musical with a hundred stolen songs, and at intervals from the *quartier* of the slaves came the low chant of some African air.

Behind Alice was kneeling a young female slave braiding her long raven hair; for she had for some months ceased to let it have its freedom. Reclining on a couch beside her, lay a beautiful quadroone about thirty eight years of age. She was an invalid, and her large black eyes seemed to beam with unearthly beauty. Her hand was thin and transparent, and a deep rose seemed opening beneath the olive delicacy of her cheek. She was a consumptive, and lay there like a child unconscious of her danger, and as interested in the trifles about her, as if death had not lifted his finger and beckoned her away.

Her name was Desirée, and she was a slave. Many years before, struck with her beauty, while she was yet a child, Colonel May had purchased her for his wife's attendant. The lady educated her, and made her rather a friend and companion than a slave. When the handsome Desirée had reached her twentieth year her mistress died, since which period she had been a housekeeper and overseer of the other female domestics. To her, Alice was greatly attached, and the affection of the quadroone for her young mistress was like that of a mother to her child.

`Ah, Miss Alice, your hair is already as long as mine,' she said, admiring for some time the raven tresses of the maiden; `and I have been said to have the most beautiful hair in Louisiana!'

`Was my mother's hair like mine, Desirée?'

`Mistress' hair was fair brown,' answered the slave, with a hesitation in her manner, and looking as if she would have avoided replying to the question.

`I wish I could have seen to recollect my mother. She died, alas, when I was born! Motherless I have been from my birth, and oh, how have I sighed to lean on a dear mother's bosom!'

The quadroone sighed; then her eyes suddenly sparkled with animation; she half rose from the couch, and with parted lips eagerly bent towards her young mistress as if she would speak! but the words died in her heart as she sank back upon her couch and hid her face in her hands.

During the remainder of the toilet she remained silent; and at length Alice being richly yet tastefully dressed drove off with her father.

CHAPTER IV.

The loud, crashing music of the orchestra, pealed through the gergeous halls of the St. Louis, and sounds of mirth and festivity reached their ears as they alighted at the thronged door. As they reached the hall the floor was already occupied by the dancers, and the noise and glare of chandeliers, and the motion of the restless crowd was bewildering.

`Come this way, Alice,' said her father, `I wish to introduce you to the Count Bondier, who has expressed a desire to become acquainted with you. He is of a distinguished French family, and I wish you to be civil to him. Perhaps I may as well tell you that I wish him to make your alliance, and that for so good a match your Boston lover had best be no more thought of.'

This was whispered in her ear as the crossed the hall to an alcove where Colonel May had discovered the foreigner.

If Alice had not been a girl of a strong mind and independent native character, she would have sunk through the

floor at this annonncement. As it was she trembled like an aspen leaf, and internally resolved to hate him. He was presented to her, and coldly yet politely received. He was a good looking Frenchman, about thirty with an air of high fashion. He was at once struck with the charms of which he had heard so much; and Colonel May taking an opportunity to desert his daughter, left her dependant on the Count for a protector in the throng. He offered his arm which she knew not how to decline in her unprotected state, and accepted. He found her disinclined to converse, and proof against his compliments. After trying his best for half an hour to entertain her and get into her good graces for the Count's estates were under mortgage, and the young Louisiana belle was an heiress he began to despair. At length her father reappeared, and she flew to his arm in a way that convinced him of the difficulty of getting a titled son−in−law. In her presence he invited the Count to dine with them the next day; an invitation which he accepted, it seemed to her, with great pleasure.

This event so embittered the hours of the assembly that Alice at length prevailed on her father, on the plea of ill health, to retire with her. The ensuing day the Count came, and Colonel May studied to leave him alone with her. But coldness and distance alone characterized her manner in his presence.

Day after day he was a visitor to Lauvidais, and daily pressing his suit by every attention and every gentle device in love's armory but in vain. At length he made a bold stroke and addressed her. She refused him civilly but firmly. This enraged her father, who threatened, unless she gave her consent to marry him within three months, he would deprive her of her inheritance, and shut her up in a convent.

`Give me half that time to decide,' said she with firmness.

`I grant it Alice; and expect at the end of the period that you will be prepared to comply with my wishes, and those of Mr. Bondier, who is devoted to you. Your alliance with him will place you in the best society in Paris!'

On her father's departure, Alice fastened her chamber door, and setting down to her escritoire, wrote the following letter;

`Lauvidais, − *March 20.* Dearest Edward,

I write to avail myself of my privilege and duty as your betrothed wife, to throw myself, at a crisis which has just occured in my life, upon your love! A certain Count Bondier is persecuting me with his attentions, and althogh I have in every way, not absolutely to insult him, shown him my repugnance to his suit, and also distinctly and firmly declined his addresses, yet he pursues them encouraged by my father, who is warmly in favor of an alliance with his powerful family through me. My father has just left me with the menace that unless I will consent to marry him at the end of three months, that he will immure me in a convent, which God knows is to be prefered. I have asked and obtained six weeks to decide. This letter will reach you in two. It will take three for you to reach here. I need not ask you to fly for my love tells me you will soon be here to claim your own lover's *bride*.

Alice.'

This letter was received by Edward Orr in less than two weeks after it was penned, and its perusal gave him intense agony. He made instant preparations to proceed South, to rescue her from her fate but before his departure he received another letter it was but a single line.

`Lauvidais, − *March 21*

I have just heard something that has frozen my blood! I write, I know not what! Do not come! I am lost to you *forever!*

Alice May.'

Edward gazed at the words with a glazed eye. What fearful mystery was this! What had happened? `I will know the worst. Lost to me forever! No! she cannot be false! I will fly to her for assuredly some dreadful evil hath befallen her. How wild and large the writing! so unlike her usual hand yet it is hers! Alice, I heed not your command! I fly to you!'

With this determination the almost phrenzied lover sprang into the carriage and drove to the depot, his mind tortured with the mystery, his heart bleeding with the agony of suspense.

CHAPTER V.

The fifteenth day after entering the cars at Boston, Edward Orr was landed from the Pontchartrain line at the New Orleans depot. During the whole journey he had been in the greatest fever of excitement and suspense. That some fearful evil hung over Alice he knew; and he feared that he might hear on his arrival the most fatal results. Driving to the St. Charles the most magnificent hotel in the world he alighted, and, after taking a room, sent for the gentlemanly proprietor, Mr. Mudge, whom, very fortunately, he had known in the north. To him he communicated only so much of his urgent business there as was necessary; and what he most wished, learned from him the direction to Colonel May's plantation, and obtained from him fleet horses. Mr. M. had heard nothing of his daughter, though he had seen Colonel May in the hotel only the week before in company with a Count Bondier, who had lately lodged there.

At this name Edward started to his feet.

`Is he here now?'

`No.'

`He is he is that is, is he *married?*'

`No,' answered the proprietor, witnessing his agitation with surprise. `He had bachelor rooms. He has left for New York.'

`Alone?'

`Yes.'

This reply was a great relief to the agitated lover. As soon as the horses were at the door, he sprang into the carriage, and soon left the city behind him. His horses flew as if winged along the level causeway by the river side. The scenery of villas, gardens and lawns was beautiful and novel; but buried in his own thoughts he heeded nothing. At length after they had been driving about an hour the coachman drew up at a spacious gathway, and said,

`This is the gate to Colonel May's villa, sir.'

Aroused by his voice, Edward looked around him. It was already sunset, yet a soft twilight made every object beautiful and distinct. Through the avenue he caught a glimpse of the dwelling. His heart wildly palpitated with the consciousness of being near Alice. He waited a moment to collect his thoughts and deliberate on what course to take. He had left the St. Charles hotel without any decided plan, and driven forward without reflection. As the coachman was about to drive into the grounds he bade him stop.

`I will walk to the house. Remain in the highway ready to receive me at a moment's warning. Probably I shall

bring a young lady with me!'

Thus speaking he entered the avenue, and took his way by a cross path to the house. All was calm and serene. The birds that had sought their boughs, twittered as he disturbed their repose, and hopped higher in the tree; a nightingale, startled by his step, would utter a shrill note of alarm, and fly into the depths of the grove. The heavens were of a mellow roseate hue, and the golden atmosphere fused by the lingering sun−glow, was like transparent amethyst. He rapidly walked forward until he came out of the path near the southern wing of the mansion. He surveyed the piazza and portico, but no one was visible but an old African smoking his pipe beneath a pomegranate tree that grew before a Venetian window. All around wore the air of luxury, taste and wealth. It was the beau ideal of the villas and grounds of a Louisiana planter. He could not help being attracted by the beauty of all that met his eye. But he was too intent upon his object to heed anything that had not a direct bearing upon that.

He now reflected that it would be fatal to his hopes if he should meet Colonel May. Yet how he should avoid him and see Alice he could not tell. It became him to be secret, cautious and bold. He therefore remained sometime in the covert of the path until the shades of evening deepened, and then stole across the lawn to a ground window which was open. The negro was asleep beneath it, his pipe gone out and still held in his lips. All was still. Encouraged by the silence he looked into the drawing room, and through the opposite door a faint light glimmered. He stepped into the room and traversed the carpet with a noiseless step. He crossed another apartment, and came to the door which led into the lighted room. As he came near he heard a faint moaning, and looking in he beheld lying upon a now French couch, Colonel May. His face was distorted with mental rather than physical suffering; and he was turning from side to side restless, and betraying great agony of spirit. A high fever burned his cheek. He looked also haggard and worn, and at once excited Edward's pity. By his side knelt two slaves, one of whom, an old man, was soothing him with many kind words, and the other was bathing his hands.

`Where could Alice be?' was Edward's mental inquiry. That she was in some way the cause of this mental suffering, he was assured. But how in what way? What should keep her from her father's bedside if she were '

He dared not carry out his fearful and agonizing foreboding. His first impulse was to enter the chamber and demand of the prostrate father his daughter his betrothed bride! But the majesty of the poor man's suffering awed him; and he remained gazing upon him uncertain how to proceed. Suddenly Colonel May sprung from the couch to his feet.

`It is no use struggling with this feeling!' he said in tones of deepest human emotion. It is hell here it can be no worse! I will end it! Alec bring me my pistols!'

`Massa oh good Massa!' implored the slave casting himself at his feet and clinging to his knees.

`Slave! obey me!' he cried in a voice that made the African release his hold and rise to his feet.

The pistols were brought and placed on a table by his hand. He opened the ease and took one out and examined it.

`Yes, it is in order. Alec, my faithful servant, see me decenfly buried; and I know you will shed a tear for your master when he is gone. I am weary of the madness in my brain, and must end it. My Alice! thus will I atone to thee for the wrong I have done thee!'

The slaves cast themselves on their knees by him, and covered their faces. He raised his hand, cocked the pistol and presented it to his heart, when his hand was caught by Edward Orr.

`Hold, take not the life that is not thine own!'

`Ha, ha, ha! Thou art come too late for thy bride, sir,' said the suicide; and forcibly disengaging his arm, he placed the muzzle of his pistol against his temples, and discharged its contents into his brain. He fell instantly dead at Edward's feet!

After the horror and intense excitement of the moment had passed, and his slaves had laid him, by Edward's order, upon the couch, he inquired of Alec the cause of the dreadful scene he had just witnessed.

`It is Miss Alice, massa,' said the sobbing African.

`And she oh, tell me where she is?' he asked with eagerness; for in his horror at the deed he had witnessed, he forgot the object which had brought him there.

`Miss Alice went off to some conven', Massa, and left behind a letter dat make Massa crazy when he read it, and he never had his sense since, but keep all de time walk up and down de house or lay down groanin' and takin' on most pitiful.'

`Alice fled to the convent! Where? What convent?' he asked, feeling relieved; for he had rather a convent's walls should hold her than the chateau of Count Bondier.

Finding that nothing more was known either by the African, or any of the other slaves who now flocked into the room, save that `Miss Alice had fled to a convent,' he shortly after left and reaching his carriage drove to town. He was now in a state of most intense solicitude. All was mystery inscrutable! She had not been united to Count Bondier, this at least was a relief. But why should she have fled to a convent, when three weeks yet remained for her to make up her decision? What could have led her to pen such a letter to him? The more he reflected upon the affair, the more perplexing it became. His determination, however, was to ascertain what convent had become her asylum.

He learned on reaching his hotel that the only two convents in the state was the one a league from the city, called the Convent d'Ursuline, and another in the interior, on Red River, known as the Convent of del Sacre Coeur.

By means not necessary to detail here, be learned that she was not at the former convent; and while the whole capital was astir with the news of Colonel May's suicide, and his daughter's disappearance, he proceeded to the latter with a letter of introduction he had obtained to the superior of the convent. On reaching Alexandria, he secured a guide and galloped across the nine leagues of beautiful prairie to the convent. It stood in the bosom of a lovely country, and with natural woodland, copse, and lawn. Its walls rose to his eye above a group of majestic oaks and were reflected in a lake. Herds of wild cattle were grazing on the plain, and squadrons of hurses of the prairie, startled by his approach, lified their proud beads, shook their arching manes, and with a cry like the clanging of the bugles of an armed host, galloped thundering across the plain.

The sun was an hour high when he reached the convent gate, and rung for admittance. An aged portress opened a lattice in the gate and gravely inquired his business.

`I bear a letter to the superior, and desire to present it in person.'

She retired, and in a few moments returned, unbarred the gate, and admitted him into the outer corridor of the convent. A tall and majestic female approached him, and announced herself as the Lady Superior.

`I am the bearer of a letter to you from the Rev. Pierre Du , a Roman Catholic priest of New Orleans, and have visited the convent of the Sacred Heart, to learn if a certain young lady, named Alice May, has sought asylum here.'

Edward watched the grave countenance of the Lady Superior, as her cold eye moved along the lines; but her features, schooled to conceal expression, betrayed nothing upon which he could base hope or fears.

`Follow me, young man!' she said in a low, deep voice, that he thought trembled with emotion. She led the way along the corridor, and as he walked the solemn sound of a dirge fell fitfully upon his ear and sunk to his heart. He followed her across the court to a door that opened into the vestibule of the convent chapel. As he approached, the deep, solemn strain rose and swelled now loud and startling like a human wail, now low and painfully plaintive. With a full heart, and his spirits weighed down by a gloom that he could not throw aside, he entered the vestibule.

The superior now stopped, threw open the door of the chapel, and placing one hand upon her bosom with a look of woe and pity, pointed in silence with the other towards a bier which stood before the altar!

`What means this? Speak!' he cried, half the truth rushing upon his brain.

`There lies the Sister Martha, she whom you named Alice May!'

He rushed past her broke from her heedless of her warning that no man ever entered there save God's priests, and making his way through the group of nuns that surrounded the snowy bier, stood before it. The face of the dead was uncovered, and a single look told him that it was Alice May's. Calm, peaceful, lovely still in death she lay there, while he who loved her dearer than life, was kneeling in agony unsupportable under her.

She was borne to her grave in a beautiful and secluded cemetery of the convent. The lover was permitted to follow her remains for by all he was regarded as a brother. There was a mystery to all the sisterhood about the dead, and they knew not her living ties.

The grave was closed over her remains the funeral procession returned to the convent, and yet Edward kneeled beside the fresh sod, which enclosed all he loved. Night at length came on in her solemn silence and starry beauty. Its influence calmed his troubled spirit, and he arose and slowly left the spot. He sought the convent, and solicited audience of the Lady Superior. To her he revealed his passion all her history as interwoven with his own and then besought her to tell him what had brought her to that sudden death.

The Lady Superior was deeply affected by his narrative and his intense grief; but she replied that she would give him no information. That two weeks before, she had arrived at the convent with only a single black servant, who had instantly turned from the gate and returned to Alexandria. That she applied for admission in the name of charity, and the portress opened to her.

`When I beheld her,' said the Superior, `as she was conducted before me, I was struck with her beauty, and also with a look of intense suffering. She simply asked me to give her asylum from the world, and to conceal from it her refuge. She said she wished to take the veil and never more to be seen, but pass her life in prayer and preparation for heaven. She then placed jewels in my hands to a large amount, which she said had been hers, but which she now gave to the church. We received her as sister Martha; and from that day I became deeply interested in her. But she communicated to me nothing of her history, save her name. I watched her closely, for I feared, so deep and silent was her secret sorrow, that she might lose her reason and take her life. She spent nearly all her time in the chapel before the altar, and was always seen in tears. Day after day I observed her wilt and fade like a flower, till at length a fever seized her, and three days since she died like an infant falling asleep, in my arms. Earth has lost a child but Heaven has gained an angel.

The feelings with which poor Edward listened to this simple narrative cannot be described. After he had become somewhat composed he asked if she had left nothing to lead to the cause which drove her to the convent. The superior said that she had not, and that all to her was wrapped in mystery.

`All is, indeed, mystery inscrutable,' said Edward, as he mentally recurred to the dreadful end of her father, of her strange letter to him, and of her extraordinary flight and sudden death.

CHAPTER VI.

The mystery that involved the death of Alice May seemed to Edward impenetrable. He could obtain no clue to the motives which led to her strange flight from her father's roof, or her seclusion in the remote convent of Sacre Coeur. The cause of her father's suicidal end was equally inscrutable. Lost in mystery and burdened with grief, he left New Orleans, and after traversing the rivers and lakes of the west, at length reached Boston. A settled gloom was upon his mind, and with his clouded brow and grave and sad countenance he seemed ten years older than when he left three months before. The mystery in which Alice's fate remained wrapped had preyed deeply upon him, and kept him in a state of feverish anxiety and nervous expectation. His health was suffering, and his mind wandering and unsettled for night nor day did it rest; but was ever active, ever seeking some clue to unfold her destiny.

It was night when he reached his native city. The carriage which bore him to his lodgings was whirled rapidly along through lighted and thronged streets, and at length drew up at his door. He alighted, and scarce returning the congratulations of his family, he hastened to his rooms'. Every thing seemed as he left it. He cast himself into a chair, and for a few moments remained with his head buried in his hands. Suddenly he recovered himself as his servant entered with his baggage.

`Thomas!'

`Sir.'

`Has any letter has any package arrived for me, since I left?'

`Yes sir a dozen nearly. I have kept them locked up here.' As the servant spoke, he deposited his master's valise upon the floor, and unlocking a draw in his secretary, handed him several letters and parcels. With a trembling, hurried hand, Edward turned them over, glancing at their addresses, and throwing each successively aside with a gesture of impatience. He looked at the last, and then with a look of painful disappointment, cried:

`What did I hope for? She wrote me no more after that letter which led me to fly to her! Why should I hope to find another from her? No, no! the cause which led to her flight and death, must forever remain in mystery a mystery, that like an internal fire, will feed upon my brain till reason perish! It will make me so mad! I have had since the hour of her death but one thought one burning, overwhelming thought! and that is to find the key to these fearful events.'

`Here, sir,' exclaimed Thomas, who had returned to close the drawer, `here, I have found another letter; perhaps it is the one you want. It was edge−wise up, and I did not discover it before.'

Edward sprang to snatch it from him; and the instant his eye rested upon the superscription, he uttered a cry of mingled joy and anguish, and sunk almost insensible into his chair. Thomas flew to assist him.

`No I need it not! Go go, Thomas; I am better now. Leave me, I wish to be alone all alone with my heart and *her!*' He waved his hand faintly yet resolutely, and his servant, after casting upon him a look of pity and wonder, quitted the chamber.

For several minutes the lover remained seated with the sealed letter grasped in his hand. He seemed to want energy to break it open. At length he raised it to his eyes, and read the address with evident anguish.

`Yes, dear Alice those grateful characters were traced by thy own fair fingers. And you did not forget me at the last moment of your flight! How shall I read this?' he cried, starting up. `Here is evidently the key of all that I would learn of all that ignorance of which has been driving me melancholy mad! And yet my hand trembles to open it and read! my heart shrinks! I feel that I have not the courage to come to the knowledge of all I would most learn. It is a double sheet, and perhaps contains a narrative of all, to read which may fire my brain with I know not what terrible passions! I will put an end to this suspense, and *thus* relieve my mind from the load of uncertainty which has so long borne it down!'

As he spoke he tore the seal and unfolded the letter. A lock of dark hair fell from it, which he caught and pressed to his lips and heart with a passionate exclamation. He again seated himself, but again and again he had pressed the dear signature of `Alice May' to his lips, and many was the hot tear that fell upon it, ere he commenced reading; and often did he interrupt himself, and rise and pace the room, now in tears, now in resentment, before he came to the close.

In the preceding chapters to this story, the reader has seen Alice May the loveliest among the beautiful of her school companions, and winning all hearts equally by the attractions of her person, and the excellencies of her heart and mind. He has seen her the betrothed of a young gentleman worthy of her, and beheld her on her return to the `sunny south,' the idol of a doting father, and surrounded with every luxury that wealth and taste could contribute. He has seen her there, in the midst of those means of enjoyment happy only in the love of her betrothed; living only in him; and looking forward to the spring when he was to come and claim her as his bride. The reader has also seen how happy Edward was in her correspondence, and how hopefully he looked forward to his meeting and union with the lovely Louisianian. He has witnessed the sudden termination of this happiness by his reception of her two letters, filled with mysterious words, and imploring him to forget her `that she was unworthy of his love or of his thoughts.' He has seen that, tortured by suspense, and apprehending every evil, he had immediately started south, and after finding her father's house deserted, Colonel May dead by his own hand upon the floor, and Alice flown, he at length discovered her in a convent laid upon a bier, and ready to be borne by virgins to her grave; that to this moment all concerning her from the time he had got her letter was wrapt in the most impenetrable mystery. To find, therefore, a letter dated, as he now saw it was, on the day of her flight, which promised to unravel these strange things, was an event calculated to rouse the most painful curiosity in Edward's mind. The letter was as follows:

`I know not how to address you. `Dear Edward,' was flowing from my pen but I am unworthy to give you any endearing title. In my last letter it was a wild strange one but I was nearly mad when I wrote it I told you that events had transpired that rendered it necessary for your honor and happiness that you should forget me! I left all in mystery. But reflection has come to my aid reason has returned, and after hours of terrible insanity I can think and write calmly. I did intend, Edward, to keep the dreadful secret forever locked up in my own bosom. But this is pride; and with pride I have no more to do. It would be cruel to you, whom my soul loves! Oh, if I could forget but no! I must live and remember. How shall I relate my shame. I have sat down to do it that I might relieve your mind from suspense, and show you I have not lightly trifled with your love for me; for too well I know how fondly you love me. Alas, that your noble heart had not been bestowed upon a worthier object. But I will no longer avoid the painful subject. In three hours tonight at midnight I fly from my home, leaving no trace of my flight. Before I take this step I wish *you*, Edward, to do me justice. Therefore do I now write to you. You saw me first at the boarding schools and knew me as the daughter of an opulent southern planter. You offered me your noble love, and in return I gave you my heart. Oh, the happiness of that hour when I first learned that you regarded me with favor that you loved me! But I cannot dwell upon these days of happiness fled forever. Alas, why has heaven made me to be accursed! Let me speak of more recent events. Let me explain to you the meaning of the dark language of my last letter. I told you that the only alternative of my union with the Count was to be immured in a convent for life. I entreated you to fly to my rescue, ere the time given me by my father for deciding between the two, elapsed. This letter was followed in two days by another recalling my request, and telling you that an event had occurred which rendered it necessary that we should meet no more, that I was going to fly and hide from the world, for I was unworthy your love or slightest regard. It is this letter which now I am on the eve

of flight I feel it my duty to explain; then farewell forever, and forget that I have ever lived. Oh, how can I relate my shame to him whose approbation and love I regard next to Heaven's? But I must to my painful duty.

The evening of the day on which I wrote you that if you wished to save me from the persecuting attentions of the Count, you must fly to me, Desiree, the beautiful and affectionate Quadroone nurse, of whom I have spoken to you, as having been with my mother when she died, and who had been my nurse through childhood, was taken suddenly ill. I flew to her with affectionate anxiety, for I had loved her us a mother, and she had always shown me the most affectionate attachment. I found her suffering under a severe attack of typhus fever; and as my father was absent with the Count in town, I prescribed what I thought would relieve, and was about sending for the family physician, when she called me to the side of her couch, and said:

`No, Alice, it's no use! I feel that I am death−struck; I am dying! Come near, I have something to say to you.'

I threw myself upon my knees by her bedside, in tears, and kissing her hands bade her live for my sake.

`You are the only mother I have ever known! If you die, I shall be wretched indeed!' I cried, and bathed her burning hands with tears.

`Miss Alice,' she said, placing her hand upon my forehead, and putting back my hair, while she looked into my eyes with the fondest affection, `I have but a short time to live! Yet before I die, I would give utterance to the tide of maternal affection which for years has been pent up in my breast. Yes, Alice, for seventeen years I have kept locked in my breast the secret which is a mother's life and joy to utter in each hour in kisses and caresses upon her child. But I have been denied this! Fear and love fear of your father and love for you, for I knew it would make you unhappy, has kept me from it. But death has now come, and is stronger than your father's threats and stronger than death is a mother's love! Alice, you are my own child! Bend over me and let me fold you to a mother's heart, that for years has yearned to empty itself upon your bosom. You are my child, my long cherished, fondly loved child!'

I listened to her without power to stir. I did not doubt for a hundred things of the past, never understood before, now rushed upon my mind to corroborate her assertion; and while I listened I *believed*. She ended and would have clasped me to her heart. I shrunk from her with a cry of mingled leathing and anguish, and should have fallen but for the support of the couch by which I knelt. I remained for several minutes in a state of stupor, with only one sensation, and that one of misery unutterable and scarce comprehended.

`You refuse to embrace me!' said Desiree nay, I will call her what she was *my mother*. `I knew this would he so and therefore that I might not have your hate has been one of my motives in keeping so secretly your birth from you. But it matters little now, Alice, whether you hate or detest me! I have relieved my heart; I have eased my conscience; and death will come less heavily upon my soul! Will you kiss me but once, my child?'

`Oh, tell me tell me,' I cried, shrinking from her embrace, and burying my face in the curtain, `tell me the whole fearful tale! Who was she, then, whose memory I have been taught to reverence as my mother's?'

`She was the lawful wife of your father. When she was a bride, I was purchased to be her attendant. But I have few words to give to the story, Alice!' she said, suppressing a cry which her physical suffering wrung from her; `a year after your father's marriage with her she gave birth to a daughter, and in giving it life gave up her own. The infant lived but a week, and the morning of its death I gave birth to a daughter. The two children, I need not say, had but one father.'

`And I was that child?' I asked eagerly.

`Yes, you were a lovely babe, and your father proposed to me to let the dead babe pass as mine, and to raise you as his own. Tempted by the offer he made me, and ambitious to have you placed in such a position in society as would be the lot of a daughter of Colonel May, I promised it. Seventeen years have I kept the secret, daily yearning to give you a mother's love. Death has now approached, and my breast would hold the secret no longer. The mother's love would find its channel ere the fountain of her heart dried up forever. You will hate me you will curse my memory. But we are alone no ear but thine has heard, and beyond this death−bed the secret never need reach. My desire is gratified in acknowledging you as my child, and my conscience lightened of a load it has too long borne. Nay, will you not give the mother one of the kisses you were ever ready to bestow upon the supposed nurse Desiree?'

I remained motionless. My bosom was agitated by a hundred conflicting emotions. That all she said was true I believed. I did not for an instant doubt that I was her child. I felt the most intense resentment toward my father, which then was transferred to her, for suffering me so long to remain ignorant of my degraded birth. For I was not only a Quadroone, but a slave for such Desiree still was to my father! Horror filled my mind and rendered me almost insensible! For an instant only an instant, and once, the idea of concealing my birth as she had suggested, occurred to me; but I immediately banished the temptation. Your love was to me at that moment the anchor of my integrity. I could not deceive *you*, Edward! Under other circumstances that is, if I had not loved, and been loved by you that instinctive fear of the world, that innate love of the world's good and honorable opinion, might have made me hesitate. But I rejected the suggestion! I resolved that, however great the sacrifice, I would willingly be the victim rather than you should be deceived. My mother seemed to be reading my thoughts as she fixed her large lustrous dying eyes upon me.

`Alice, breathe not the secret, or you will perish. Live and be happy! Only by secresy can you hold your present position.'

`I will perish, then!' I said firmly. `Mother, if such I must now call you you have poisened my existence! Nay, I do not blame you. I loved you as my nurse I love you as my mother! I will embrace you! There, I acknowledge you to be my mother! I will acknowledge it to the world!'

She seized my hand, and weeping implored me to preserve the fatal secret. At length I promised to conceal it from all but my father and you, and then fly to a convent. She spent her last breath in endeavoring to prevail upon me to lock it in my own breast; and finding all her tears and entreaties ineffectual, began bitterly to reflect upon herself for making the disclosure. But these regrets were now unavailing either for herself or me, and she shortly after expired, imploring in her last appealing look my forgiveness. I could only cast myself upon her body and weep.

It was near sunset she died, and an hour after my father came home I heard his step on the portico. He was alone, and seemed from the tone in which he spoke to his servant, to be in a cheerful mood. I was kneeling weeping by my mother's couch, but instantly rose on his entrance, as some one told him that Desiree was dead!

He merely glanced at me, and approaching the bedside fixed a few moments upon the face of the once beautifol, and then sinking upon his knees bent over it, laid his head upon the pillow and wept. The sound of his manly sobs in an instant suppressed the fierce purpose in my breast with which on hearing his step I had impulsively determined to meet him, charging him with my shame. I stood by in silence till he rose up, kissed the lips of the dead, and walked to the window. I knew then that he had loved loved her more (as she had told me) than his wife. Yes, or he would never have taken her child, and thus assumed her as his own. At length he approached me and asked me why I wept? Instantly my spirit awoke within me, and I answered:

`I weep my mother's death! Doth it not become a daughter to show respect for a mother dead!'

He started, less I suppose, at the unusual tones of my voice, than at the expression of my face! He gazed on me an instant with a look of suspicion, and then said fiercely, while he pointed sternly towards the body,

`How has she dared to confess '

`Nay, father, words and rage are useless,' I said in as firm a tone as I could command. `I know the whole truth! It is graven with a pen of fire upon my soul! I am the daughter of that woman, and my father's slave!'

He cast himself at my feet and implored my forgiveness implored me to keep the secret and save him and myself from ignominy and contempt. I was resolute to divulge it, and that I would do so to the Count and to you! He menaced and entreated me by turns, when finding me determined, he said in a low deep voice that sunk to my soul,

`Then since you will be my slave, you shall know the power of a master!'

He took me by the arm. I followed him unresisting; and he locked me up in a strong room, and there left me. The next morning he came to me early, and entering cast himself on his knees, implored me to regard my own happiness and keep the dreadful secret of my birth. At length I told him I would not divulge it (which he most feared,) to the Count nor but to one person in the world. Who that person was (yourself) I declined telling him. With this he was better satisfied, and releasing me desired me to breakfast with him. After breakfast he wrote two notes, and despatched them hurriedly by two slaves in opposite directions. While he was at the door sending off the servants, I secretly despatched an intelligent slave on foot to meet them at the gate of the avenue, and learn where they were going. He returned and said one was to Father de L , the priest, the other to Count . I suspected this, and knew my father's object to be to unite me to the Count at once. I pleaded illness, and shortly retired to my chamber. In a few minutes afterwards I had packed all my jewels and secreted them about my person, and escaping from my window upon the gallery. gained the stables and saddled my own riding horse. I mounted; several paths led in various directions from the stables, and taking one of them that led by the river, I galloped along its banks until I came to a woodman's cabin, where I had frequently been before. I knew steam−boats almost daily stopped there for wood, and I intended to go on board the first. One was in sight as I came near the hut, and soon approached. I told the woodman I wished to go on board, and that he must accompany me and take my passage. The boat was bound I may not say in what direction, lest you will hope to discover my retreat. In two hours after leaving my father's roof I was on board, and in the state room, from which I now write you. This letter will be mailed to you from the first town.

I have now written you all, dear Edward. I feel you will, while you acquit me of rudely trifling with your honorable affection, do me the justice my painful position challenges. In sacrificing your love I have sacrificed myself. Do dot hope to find my retreat! I am going to bury myself in a convent, where I shall at least have serenity of mind. Happy I never expect to be in this world! Farewell. dear Edward! We shall meet again in Heaven!

Alice May.'

Singular and unusual as the foregoing incidents seem, they are taken from the life of one, who, not less hapless than she was lovely, now rests in a flower−adorned grave in the little cemetry of the Convent of the Sacred Heart.

BRUISING BILL.

It was about twilight on a summer's evening of the last year that Edward Cassidy, a young Cambridge student, found himself in his rambles near a poor cottage on the banks of the Charles. Its site was beautiful; for there was a fair prospect of the sunny river gliding by, of green banks and groves and pleasant farms beyond, and in the distance the gothic towers and spires of the University. But the exterior of the hut bore signs that its occupant was too wretchedly poor to enjoy at leisure the beauties of scenery, or to have time to improve by taste the natural capabilities of the situation. Yet there were no signs of that filthy and disgusting poverty which so often offends the eye. There was an air of neatness about the hut that is never seen about the abodes of vice. Attracted by the

beauty of the spot to which he had wandered, the student lingered for some time enjoying the prospect, and did not at first notice, save by a passing glance, the hut in his foreground. His attention was drawn to it, as he was about to proceed on his walk, by the sound of a human voice in suffering, that proceeded from some place near it. He listened a moment; and then satisfied some one was in need of help, he hastened forward to the dwelling. As he came near, he found the sounds of pain which he heard, came from the further side of it, near the water. He went round the house, and a few steps brought him to the verge of a precipice elevated fifteen feet above the beach. Looking over it, he saw an aged woman lying at the bottom and groaning in helpless suffering. By her side was an unturned water−pail; and, from the appearance of the low cliff in the side of which rude steps had been cut with a spade to make a path to the river, it was plain she had fallen either in ascending or descending it.

Prompted by that generous feeling of sympathy which is one of the noblest attributes of humanity, young Cassidy hurried down the steep to her aid.

`Are you much hurt?' he inquired tenderly as he attempted to raise the aged woman up, who, though poorly, was neatly clad.

`I fear, my good young man,' she answered with difficulty, `that I have broken my ancle, and otherwise injured myself.'

`Can you get to your dwelling think you, with my assistance?' he asked, having with great difficulty got her to her feet.

`God bless you, young man! I will try,' she answered gratefully, `I am very bad. I must have lain here more than an hour. If it had not been for you I should have been here all night, and the sun would have shone on my poor old dead body. Well, God is merciful, and has a little longer spared my life.'

With great care and the most anxious solicitude to keep her from suffering by the movement, Cassidy at length succeeded in getting her up the steep steps in the bank, and conveying her to the cottage. The interior was scantily furnished, yet wore the air of neat and humble poverty. He assisted her to a bed, and then telling her he would soon send a surgeon, hastened from her dwelling on his benevolent errand.

He shortly returned with Dr. , who found the old lady had not only shattered her ancle, but had broken three of her ribs. On ascertaining from her that she was a widow and dwelt quite alone, save on Sundays, when her son who was working at a trade in Boston who always with her, the student suggested that a nurse should be provided for her, saying he would himself cheerfully incur the expense. The surgeon said that he knew a woman who no doubt would come; and he having promised to send her that very evening, Edward said he would remain by the poor woman until the nurse came to relieve him.

The surgeon had set her ancle and otherwise ably performed his duties to the sufferer, and she remained quiet and comparatively free from pain. She was unbounded in her expressions of grateful feeling to the young man, and frequently blessed him with such fervent energy that he could not remain wholly without emotion. To relieve himself from the weight of her gratitude, he questioned her in reference to herself. From her he learned that she was the widow of a house carpenter, who had been dead sixteen years, leaving her a boy three years old. That she had been struggling with poverty from that time until William her son had got to be old enough to earn something for her. Of late, however, he had been out of work, his employers (he was an apprentice to a printer) having failed, and the difficulty of getting work was then very great, so that he had been able to bring her but very little, but just enough to live, for some weeks. `Yet I have not had to complain,' said the old widow; `I have always had something to eat, and William is a dutiful son, and loves and honors me, He always brings me something when he comes out Saturday nights. and it makes him happy when he can add any little comfort to my fare. Poor boy! I don't know how he will feel when he hears of my fall. He will make himself miserable, thinking how he shall get what he thinks I may be in want of, when he has no money to get it. Poor boy! God will provide for the widow

and the fatherless.'

`Do not be uneasy on his account, dear madam,' said Edward; `you shall want nothing that can contribute to your comfort during your illness. Were you bringing water from the river when you fell?'

`No, I was just going down for it, when, my sight being poor, I made a misstep and fell to the bottom. I caught by the way once, or I should have been killed.'

`It is a dangerous path for one of your age to attempt,' said Edward but I trust when you recover, you will be assisted in some other way to obtain what water you need, and not thus risk your life again.'

`You are, truly, a charitable young person, and God will reward you. How grateful William will be to you! This is Friday, and to−morrow he will come home.'

The nurse whom the doctor had despatched to the wounded woman now made her appearance, and the kind−hearted Cassidy resigned his charge to her care.

Edward Cassidy was the son of wealthy parents, and, united to the ample means with which his father supplied him, had a benevolent and generous disposition, and sympathies ever alive to the appeal of the less fortunate of his fellow beings. Though wild and buoyant in spirits, and a votary of gaiety and fashion, these had not touched the generous impulses of his bosom, or rendered his heart less open to the calls of sensibility. Benevolence in him exhibited herself in her simplest and most pleasing aspects. Though he was the most richly dressed young gentleman in the university, and had certain aristocratic feelings that made him exclusive in his associations, he was not ashamed, unlike too many hollow−hearted fools of fashion, to be seen engaged in an office of the humblest charity seated in a wretched hut, by the side of the sick bed of a poor widow. He did not do charitable deeds to other people's eyes. In the walks of charity he was not ashamed to administer in the humblest manner to the wants of the poor, He was not one of those who refuse giving money to a beggar "lest they *be seen speaking* to him.' Uncertain and unstable indeed, must be the social position which such contact menaces!

The following evening a young man nineteen years old, clad in a plain suit of clothes, was seated by the bedside of the widow, her hand held in his. His person was robust and manly; but the healthy hue of his cheek was paled by sympathy with his mother's suffering; his features wore a sad look; his eyes were tearful, and his manner indicated affection and anxious solicitude. His mother had just been telling him of the good deeds of her preserver.

`He was a noble fellow,' the apprentice answered warmly. `I would be glad to see him and thank him. I suppose, however, if he is a student, he would be too proud to shake my hand.'

`He was as humble as a child,' said the invalid with grateful warmth. `But I don't know whether he belonged to Cambridge or not.

`And he sent you this money?'

`No he left a ten dollar bill with this good lady whom he hired to nurse me, telling her to get for me with it whatever I might be in want of.'

`Whoever he is, he has a generous and noble disposition,' answered the son, `and I hope he will have his reward. *I* can never repay him.'

He released his mother's hand, rose, and paced the floor of the narrow cottage with a restless step. At intervals could be heard from his lips, bitterly uttered,

`Oh poverty, poverty! Must my mother be indebted to the charity of a stranger in her sickness when I have hands to work! But what use are hands when there is no one to employ me no work, no wages. So soon as she recovers, I will go to New York and there get something to do. I am now working and earning only my living when I ought to be, in good times, making journeyman's wages. Did you speak, mother,' he asked, turning kindly toward the bed.

`I said, Willy dear, do not fear for me. I know you are troubled about me. But God will take care of me. I shall soon be better and be able to be about. You ought to be thankful that God has put it into the heart of the good young man to help us.'

`I do, mother, and I hope God will bless him. I could go down on my knees and thank him,' answered William with grateful energy. `But I cannot suffer you to be dependent on him! Oh that I could earn something for you. Even we are indebted to him for the needful medicines you require. I do not see what you or I could have done without him. I shall honor him while I have life, for this kindness to you, my dear mother.'

William Martin was naturally a warm−hearted young man, and being fond of the society of those of his own age, would have been dissipated, and perhaps lost, but for his devoted love for his mother, which like a holy leaven sanctified his heart, and saved him from many a fall. Nevertheless, he was a bold and reckless youth, and having by nature a fearless and adventurous spirit, he had often got into `scrapes' which left him with a broken head. There was, however, not a spark of malice in his temper; yet he was found in the midst of all broils among apprentices in town, and in the frequent contests between rival firemen, he (for he was attached to the Neptune engine) often distinguished himself above his companions. He usually went by the soubriquet of `Bruising Bill,' a name sufficiently significant of his exploits; yet as we have said, a more generous, frank−souled, cheerful young man, or one more ready to do a comrade a service, could not be found among the Boston apprentices. Like most of his class and age, he was a great `republican' after his own definition of this term; that is, he believed the world would be happier if all mankind wore homespun and went afoot. He had a hearty, apprentice like contempt for broadcloth and for all young gentlemen of his own age who wore it and got, (or expected to get) a living by the sweat of their brows. Students were therefore particularly obnoxious to him; and he never passed them in his walks to and from Boston without feeling a disposition to insult them and bring about a `fight.' In derision he usually carried, in imitation of their foppish walking−canes, a stout cudgel festooned with tassels of oakum, which he loved ostentatiously to display when meeting them on the bridge.

This morbid feeling originated in ignorance and in a misconception of the true character of those whom he supposed above him. He believed every one of them felt himself his superior *because* he wore a fine coat and did no manful work. He had, probably, from silly pop injays been made insolently to feel this. If he had known that among students and young gentlemen of leisure and fortune, those only feel a superiority over others, (because they may happen to be mechanics,) are those alone who in truth do not possess what they claim, he would have felt and acted differently. True superiority originates in the soul and shines forth in the character, and neither broadcloth can add to its brightness, nor linsey−woolsy obscure it. He only, is superior who is better; he only inferior who is the worst. Character and not the coat, is the true basis of respect and respectability. If William Martin had reflected upon these truths he would have been happier and wiser; prejudice would have disappeared before the influence of reason, and man whether above or below him, conventionally, would have been judged by him with just appreciation of his character and deserts.

The ensuing Monday when William Martin returned to the city, he was met in Court street by a fellow−apprentice, whose first salutation was,

`Ah, Bill, where were you Saturday afternoon? We had a regular row, and only wish you had been with us. Every body was crying for `Bruising Bill.'

To his eager inquiries he leaned that on Saturday afternoon, several of the students of Harvard University had made their appearance in town in a new cloth cap, with a large square top and silk tassels. `Snub Sam, our *devil*,' continued Martin's fellow apprentice, `mounted one, made of paper, three feet across the top, and paraded along Washington street behind two of them, till one of the chaps got mad and turned round and knocked it off. Snub picked it up, put it on, and again strutted after them, every body looking and laughing. By and bye, the student turned back again, and instead of hitting the cap, hit Snub in the eye and knocked him cap and all into the gutter. With that, several of us boys that were following on to see the sport, set upon them, and after they had fought us bravely for half a dozen rounds, they were forced to take refuge in a store.

`They deserved to be well thrashed,' said Bill; `these upstarts, because their fathers have got a little money, must be putting on airs and making themselves above common folks. If I should see one of the chaps with one of them caps on, I would'nt hesitate to knock it off. What right have they to be wearing a peculiar style of cap, as if to make more apparent their assumed superiority. I am not going to succumb to any marks of aristocracy, not I.'

`Nor none of us,' answered Dick Dempster; `we have pledged ourselves to fight `the square caps' wherever we see them. But there was a regular set−to after this. A parcel of us, who knew there was a good many of the `Harvies' in town, mustered near the bridge−end; about dark a dozen of them came along in a body; for they feared to separate. We set upon them and for about ten minutes had the prettiest row you was ever in, Bill, in your life. The Harvies fought well to do them justice, and succeeded in getting on the bridge, when the toll−keeper closed the gates between us. But some of their square tops were smashed a bit, and more than a dozen of us found blood on our fists after it was over.'

`I wish I had only been there,' said Bill with vehemence.

`Next Saturday, they say they are coming in town in force, and mean to defy us,' answered Dick with a menacing gesture.

`Then we shall have a glorious chance for a row,' replied Martin, his eyes sparkling in anticipation of a regular `knock−down.'

`You'll be here?' inquired Dick.

`Yes,' firmly answered Bill; and the two apprentices parted.

CHAPTER II.

The remainder of the week, the apprentice Will Martin, passed the most of his time with his mother, over whose recovery he watched with the most honorable filial tenderness. He anticipated every wish which a glance of her eye expressed, and with his own hands, rejecting the aid of the nurse, supplied every want; for, thanks to the donation of the youthful stranger, there was nothing she could ask for that they had not the money wherewithal to purchase.

Twice Edward had been to inquire after the invalid, but both times it chanced to be in the absence of the widow's son, greatly to her disappointment. On each occasion he brought with him, tied up in a handkerchief, oranges, dried fruit, or some little delicacies which he thought would tempt the old lady's palate.

`My son is so wanting to see you, sir,' said she as he was leaving her on his second visit. `He says he shall never forget your kindness to his poor old widowed mother. He asked me if you were a student of the College, sir, and also your name. But I told him I did not feel bound to take the liberty of asking you. If I mought not be too bold sir '

`It is of no consequence,' replied Cassidy, smiling, and not caring to have his charities blazoned abroad by either the old lady's gratitude or her son's. `I shall come and see you again on Sunday morning, and will bring some interesting book to read to you. On Monday, if it is a warm fine day, I will take you out to ride a little way, if you should find yourself strong enough. Dr. says he thinks you will be. As I have gone so far in behalf of your misfortune, I shall feel a pleasure in seeing you well again; and I shall take care that you don't relapse by any improvidence. Now, my good woman, if you keep up your spirits and soon get up, I think I can promise you will live more comfortably hereafter than you have done, even without your son's assistance; who will need all his earnings for his own use.'

With these words the kind−hearted young man bade her good evening and left her followed by her grateful blessings. When William came from town and learned his mother's benefactor had been there during his absence, he expressed his regret that he had not seen him; and when she showed him what he had left for her, and repeated his words to her, he felt tears come into his eyes; and if Cassidy had entered at that moment he would have cast himself upon him and wept forth his gratitude.

`I should like to know him that I may not any longer neglect to go and thank him. What must he think of me your son so seemingly indifferent to all he has done and is doing for you. Do you know him, Mrs Firth?' he inquired of the nurse.

`I think the doctor called him Mr. Cassidy; but I wont be certain,' she said. `He did not employ me, but I was sent by the doctor.'

`Yet he pays you?'

`Yes. He has given me already twenty dollars, and I should't ask no more if I should stay a month. I am certain he is a colleger.'

`No he is no student. There is not so much charity and benevolence as he has shown mother, in the breasts of all the upstarts in the university, if it was all compressed and bestowed on one of their number. You will find your student at the tavern, at the scrub−race, at the gambling−table; you will find him prowling about the workingman's windows to lure forth poor innocent girls to their ruin, but you will never see him visiting the sick bed of the aged and indigent, You will see him spending his money in harlotry and rioting, but never in charity and good deeds. No, mother Firth, he is no student, you may mark that, whoever he may be.'

`I have seen a good many charitable young gentlemen in the college, ' said Mistress Firth, `and I have known them to do a deal of good with their money, some of the richer ones.'

The apprentice made no reply, and the subject was dropped.

The ensuing day was Saturday. In one of the chambers at Cambridge College was assembled a group of young men. Several of them had in their hands stout clubs which in courtesy we will name `walking−sticks, ' and all of them had mounted the `trencher−cap.' They were in noisy conversation and appeared a good deal excited. Their number was momentarily increasing. At length a young gentleman entered, in a round hat. Instantly a dozen voices exclaimed,

`Where is your trencher, Cassidy?'

`In my room.'

`Are'nt you going to town?'

`Yes,' he answered, laughing at their earnestness.

`Then, Ned, you must wear your trencher for the honor of the university. For every blackguard will say you left it off for fear of being mobbed.'

`Oh, well, then, I'll wear it,' answered Cassidy. `How many trencher−men are we in all?'

`At least forty.'

`If we go through Boston in such a gang we shall not only provoke attack, but make ourselves ridiculous. I will wear my trencher, but I beg to walk my own way,' he said, smiling.

That day the strects of Boston were quite in shadow with the trencher caps. The students paraded the town in groups of four and six, and save that their novel costume attracted much attention and drew after them crowds of saucy boys, many of whom rejoiced in paper `trenchers' of enormous dimensions, there was until late in the afternoon no open demonstration of hostility. The police had had intimation that a riot was in embryo, and their frequent faces seen in the streets restrained the belligerents. About four o'clock in the afternoon, William Martin, Dick Dempster, and three others, were standing near the doors of the Tremont Theatre waiting for some occasion for opening the war with the `trencher−caps,' several of whom were on the steps of the Tremont House opposite, when two of them crosdes the street and entered the box−office. As they came out again, William Martin purposely thrust out his foot so that Edward Cassidy, who was one of the two, stumbled over it. The indignant young man instantly turned round and struck him in the face. Martin returned the blow, and Dick and his friends then set upon them; the `caps' from the opposite side of the street came over and joined the melée; and for a few moments there was a fierce engagement in which for a while the trenchers held the better hand. The apprentices, however, were soon supported by increasing numbers, and the `trenchers,' after maintaining a vigorous defence, were compelled to retire and seek, from the overwhelming numbers that assailed them, a shelter in the hall of the hotel. The police at length made their appearance and dispersed the rioters now that the riot was over. `Bruising Bill' had maintained in the fight his sobriquet, and had also the satisfaction of getting a black eye from Cassidy at its outset. He retired with Dick and others to the engine house the usual rendezvous of such `boys' at such times. Here it was resolved that the war should be carried into the enemies' camp. The same night, therefore, about fifty young fellows, all apprentices, and most of them about Martin's age, met near the Cambridge bridge just after dark. They were headed by `Bruising Bill,' and led on by him, carried the toll−gate and by force pushed their way in a body across the bridge. In a compact mass they pursued their course along the road to the colleges, three miles distant. They marched at a rapid rate, for they had intelligence that a party of about a score of students had crossed the bridge before them and were not far in advance. With these they hoped to come up before they should reach the college grounds. Half a mile from the colleges they saw them ahead and rushed upon them with shouts. The students, taken by surprise, fled a short distance until they came to a style where they made a stand and shouted their cry of `clubs' and `Cambridge,' to bring their fellow−students to reinforce them. The cry reached the college buildings, and in a moment the courts of old Harvard rung with it from a hundred voices, Inspired by the answering sound which promised succor, the handful of students stood their ground and gave battle.

`On, fellows, on!' shouted Bruising Bill, springing upon the style and dealing around blows with a massive club. `Down with the aristocrats. '

`Stand your ground, Trenchers. Let the villains have the full weight of your sticks!' cried the clear voice of Edward Cassidy above the noise of he conflict.'

`Let me reach that square cap!' yelled Bruising Bill, springing towards Cassidy. `He is the hardest chap! Get him down and we'll drive them like sheep.'

At this instant he and Edward met. Martin grappled him by the throat, but a blow from the club of a trencher−cap caused him to release his hold with a curse. The green in the rear was now alive with students running towards the scene of conflict and shouting, `To the rescue! to the rescue!'

Their numbers momentarily increased, and the apprentices were at length driven back from the style which they had twice carried, and pursued across the highway. Here they rallied and once more became assailants. On all sides clubs fell with merciless fury, brick bats flew, and oaths, shouts and yells filled the air as if a mortal combat were going forward. The roar only of fire−arms was wanting to make it a mortal battle in earnest. As it was, many an apprentice, many a `trencher−cap,' fell, severely beaten and wounded. In the hottest of the fight Martin, who, in the bright moonlight that shone upon the scene, had sought out Cassidy whose voice was heard constantly cheering on his party, and to the weight of whose club many a broken head could that night testify, at length met him. Edward was almost the only one who had retained his cap in the contest, the ground being strewn with those of his party.

`I'll smash your infernal cap for you!' cried Martin as he swung his club in the air; `I'll make you sick of putting yourself above your betters?'

Edward made an effort to catch the blow upon his own club, but was unsuccessful, and the whole force of the apprentice's loaded weapon came upon his temples. He sank to the ground with a groan and lay insensible.

`You've killed him, Bill, said Dick, `we had best be out of this.'

The fall of Cassidy infuriated the students, and while some of them raised him and bore him from the field, the others rushed upon the apprentices with such fury that after making a brief stand, they retreated, Martin advising it, saying,

`We have done enough for to−night, fellows, let us for Boston.'

The retreat was made in good order, to the interception of the turnpike where a small body of police making an effort to arrest the leaders were driven before them and severely beaten. It was near midnight when they re−entered the town, through the streets of which, confident in their numbers, they marched in a body awaking and startling with their heavy tramp many a sleeper from his bed, and from his post many a wondering watchman withal.'

`I wish I knowed whether I *did* for that square−cap I knocked down,' said Martin to his friend Dick as they walked together to their lodgings after the gang had dispersed.

`If you have, Boston will be too hot to hold us,' was the reply. `As it is, I expect the police will take hold of it.'

`Not if there is no life lost. It will be looked upon by them as only an a 'prentice's row, and so let it go. But if I have *done* for that chap, I shall feel sorry. For a young fellow so dandyish he fought like a lion. I didn't know these upstart collegers had so much pluck in 'em. But I see they can fight about as well as 'prentices.'

`Where do you go to−morrow, Bill?' asked Dick as they were about to separate for the night.

`To see my mother. She expected me to−night, and I shall start out early. You know she is sick.'

`Seems to me you think a good deal of your mother, Bill. I never thought so much of mine.'

`Because she is not a widow, and you are not her only child. I love my mother better than any thing on earth. He who injures her, injures me twice, and he who does her a kindness does it to me seven times over. She has always

been a kind mother to me, and I will take care of her and make her comfortable as long as she lives. Good night Dick.'

`Good night, Bill,' and the two apprentices separated, each seeking his own lodging in little rooms in the loft of his own printing office.

CHAPTER III.

The following morning was the Sabbath. William Martin awoke in pain from sundry bruises which now began to make themselves felt. He spent half an hour bathing a swelled eye, and patching up with court−plaster sundry bruises. At length he took his way out of town in the direction of his mother's abode, on the banks of the river Charles.

The sun which had risen without a cloud, shone cheerfully into the cottage window of the invalid widow. The air was still; not a leaf stirred on the branches; the river glided by peacefully; the fields on the opposite shore were clothed with brilliant green; a robin−red breast was singing in a tree near the widow's door. All was harmonious, peaceful and serene. It was such a morning as the convalescent loves.

`Open the door, good Mrs. Firth,' said the widow, `I think I should be better to breathe the pure air of out−doors, and look upon the pleasant fields and skies. Besides I can see William as he comes up the road.'

The nurse complied with her wish, and the widow propped up in her bed, sat gazing with peaceful joy out upon the quiet scene before her cottage. Her eye was fixed upon the distant turn in the road, and its constant searching glance that way, showed she was thinking of her absent son, and was momentarily expecting him to appear. At length a person was seen hastening along the road.

`There he comes! Look, Dame Frith! my eyes are not very clear; Is that William?'

`No It is a student in one of the new−fangled square caps they wear now.'

`It is my benefactor! He promised to visit me this morning. Oh, that William would come home!'

`No it is not Mr. Cassidy; it is another person.'

As the student came near, they saw that his arm was in a sling and that his face was bruised. He approached the cottage door, and asked if Mrs. Martin lived there. On being answered in the affirmative, he said that he had been sent by Mr. Cassidy to say to her that he had met with an accident and should not be able to visit her, perhaps for some days to come, as he was now confined to his bed; but that if she was in need of any thing, to send to Dr. , who was instructed to furnish her with whatever her convalesence required.

`Mr. Cassidy my noble benefactor, ill hurt!' exclaimed the widow, sinking back upon her bed. `Oh, that I could fly to him and do something now to show him my gratitude! But my son Wiliam shall go to him shall nurse him. He will not rest till he can show him how deeply he feels what he has done for his mother!'

In reply to his anxious inquiries the student informed her that he had been severely injured in a broil by the leader of a gang of apprentices, who had assailed a party of the students; that his skull indeed was severely fractured; and weeks might elapse before he got abroad again.

The widow was overwhelmed with grief at this intelligence, and incapable herself of doing any thing, she only prayed for the return of her son, that she might, through his attention, in some measure repay his kindness to her.

Replying in the negative to the students inquiry if she needed any thing, she suffered him to depart after making him promise to let her hear every day from her benefactor.

William Martin was approaching his home by a path across the fields, when he saw the student come up the road and enter. The anger that rose in his bosom at seeing a `trencher cap,' was immediately subdued by the suspicion that he was his mother's benefactor! The idea was unpleasant to him for he felt in his heart that he would not for the world he should prove to be a hated square−cap. To be sure he crept round by the rear of the cottage, and approached unseen and unheard to the back window which looked in upon his mother's bed. Several panes were out, and he heard all that was said. His heart smote him, and he felt as if he would sink through the ground when he heard what evil he had done; for his conscience told him that he was the `leader' of the gang, who had dealt the blow. Yet his mother's benefactor might not have been he whom he struck! This was one ray of hope! There were many a hard blow many a broken head in the fearful combat. But this hope was faint! While he was agitated by these emotions, the student quitted the cottage. Martin made a circuit by the field and met him beyond the turning in the road. He came up to him with such a hurried manner, and looked so wild and disturbed, that the student, who instantly recognized him as the leader of the mob, drew back a step and threw himself into a defensive attitude.

`No I am not going to fight you,' said Martin in a humbled tone. `I came sir, to ask you for I am the son of the widow there, and overheard your conversation in the cottage to inquire of you, if the young man you spoke of as being hurt was the *leader* of the trencher−caps? '

`Yes.'

`Was he the last one struck down?'

`Yes, and *I* saw you do it with your own hand, villain!'

`And he is the same person,' continued Martin eagerly, `that has been taking care of my poor mother?'

`Yes.'

`Then I am a villain! any thing and every thing that is bad! Yes sir, I did strike him down! I confess it. I am willing to undergo any punishment I deliver myself up! He may throw me into prison, if he will. I deserve death!'

Martin's last words were choked with tears of shame, remorse and penitence. The student watched him in silence and wonder. The apprentice stood before him, his arm covering his face, humbled and weeping like a child.

`I did not know he was my mother's benefactor. I did not know it was even a student, or I should never have lifted hand against them. Will you lead me to him, sir?'

`It would be dangerous, my good fellow,' said Harry Powers, the student, feeling for him and sympathizing with him. `It would be as much as your life is worth, to be seen in the College grounds.'

`I care not! I will see him! I wish to acknowledge my fault! I wish to do something by which I can atone for what I have done.'

`This evening he will be removed from the college to a private house. If you insist upon it, I will get his permission for you to come there and see him.'

`If you will, sir, you will make me grateful to you all the days I live!' he cried, taking Harry's hand.

`But what set you against him and the students so fiercely?'

`We apprentices always feel a sort of dislike to students and all rich and well−dressed young men. With us, we are too apt to consider roughness, independance and manliness; and refinement, effeminacy. I see now we are wrong. We looked upon your square cap as assumed to show your superiority to mark you as gentlemanly students, and so distinguish you from the vulgar herd, as we supposed you termed us. We therefore made war against it. Now that I find Mr. Cassidy was a student, and that I have done him an injury, I feel mortified that I should ever have had such feelings, and assure you I shall never be so foolish again. Do you think he is dangerously hurt?' asked the repentant Martin with anxiety.

`It is uncertain how it will terminate at present. He is very ill.'

`You will let me see him?'

`If he will, on knowing the facts, suffer it,' answered Powers. `Come at seven this evening, to Mrs. , on H street, and if he will admit you, I will there receive you. I hope you have had a lesson never to declare hostility against a man for the fineness of his coat, or the cut of his cap.'

`I certainly have, sir. I hope my poor mother will not hear that I hurt Mr. Cassidy. It would be the death of her.'

`She shall not from me; and I am sure, Edward will not tell her.'

After again expressing his regret at his folly, Martin left him and sought his mother's cottage. There, every word she uttered in praise of her wounded benefactor, cut him to the heart; and, to save his own feelings, he had to go out from her presence.

To end our tale. When Edward learned from his friend, Harry Powers *who* it was that had wounded him, and how penitent the widow's son was, he said he freely forgave him, and would see him when he came. The interview between the two we will pass over. From that hour William Martin was a changed man! Day by day he called and passed hours by Edward's bedside, and watched over him with the affectionate tenderness of a brother till he recovered. The humbled, grateful apprentice thought he could not do too much for him! At length, Edward was fully restored to health, and resumed his studies. William now had no further excuse for pressing his services upon him, and returned to remain with his mother, who had also got entirely well. He now wished to go to work, but such a healthy moral change had taken place in his heart, that he trembled to be once more thrown among his former rude companions, and shrunk at the idea of again being saluted as `Bruising Bill,' a name, which he now as cordially hated as he had once taken pride in it. While he was indulging in these reflections, and thinking what he should do, he received the following note:

Cambridge University, − *Oct. 1, 1842* Dear William,

I learn from your mother that you are out of employnent, and from your late employer that you are an excellent printer. I have a relative who is the editor and publisher of a literary paper in New York who wants a partner who is a *practical* printer. But little capital is required, with which if you would like the situation (which is a profitable one and for which I think you are calculated) I herewith make the offer of it. Pray let me hear from you tonight that I may write to my relative.

Yours faithfully,

Edward Cassidy.

After perusing this note, the young man laid his face upon the table and burst into tears. He handed it to his mother in explanation of his emotion. We need not say that he hastened to his friend and expressed from an overflowing heart his grateful sense of his kindness. He accepted the offer, and with his mother shortly left for New York. He is now junior partner in one of the most respectable printing offices in that city, respected by his co−partner, and making friends of all whom he has intercourse with. No one who knew him as `Bruising Bill,' could now recognize in Mr. William Martin that leader in the war of the `Trencher Caps.' Having learned by painful experience that a man's attire is but a cover to his nakedness, and that *the character is the man*, he judges rightly of all men, and neither honors nor despises any one for the fineness or coarseness of his garment, nor make war upon any man for the cut of his cap.

CONCLUSION.

The hostility existing between students and apprentices, is well known to all who have lived in a city or town where there is a college. This feeling of dislike on the part of young mechanics towards those whom they esteem more favored by fortune than themselves, probably has its foundation in envy. Whatever be its basis, it is a prejudice that is foolish and most degrading to the intelligent young apprentices who suffer themselves to be influenced by it. In the foregoing story we have attempted to show the folly of such feelings. If but one of these misguided young men whose eye it is meant to reach, will take a lesson from William Martin without enduring his painful experience, we shall be fully repaid for our efforts to combat a prejudice as pernicious as it is absurd and mischievous. Next in folly to that feeling which leads a well−dressed young man to despise one that is meanly clad, is that which prompts the poor young man to despise the other *because* he is better clad. The writer who could do most to effect a mutual reconciliation of opinion between the two, would do a service which would exert no light influence upon the well−being of society as it is at present organized.