

He let her alone for six months more—six months during which she accommodated herself without a protest to the extension of their tour. But he spoke again at the end of this time: it was at the very last, the night before they embarked for New York, in the hotel at Liverpool. They had been dining together in a great, dim, musty sitting-room; and then the cloth had been removed, and the Doctor walked slowly up and down. Catherine at last took her candle to go to bed, but her father motioned her to stay.

"What do you mean to do when you get home?" he asked, while she stood there with her candle in her hand.

"Do you mean about Mr. Townsend?"

"About Mr. Townsend."

"We shall probably marry."

The Doctor took several turns again while she waited. "Do you hear from him as much as ever?"

"Yes, twice a month," said Catherine, promptly.

"And does he always talk about marriage?"

"Oh yes. That is, he talks about other things too, but he always says something about that."

"I am glad to hear he varies his subjects; his letters might otherwise be monotonous."

"He writes beautifully," said Catherine, who was very glad of a chance to say it.

"They always write beautifully. However, in a given case that doesn't diminish the merit. So, as soon as you arrive, you are going off with him?"

This seemed a rather gross way of putting it, and something that there was of dignity in Catherine resented it. "I can not tell you till we arrive," she said.

"That's reasonable enough," her father answered. "That's all I ask of you—that you *do* tell me, that you give me definite notice. When a poor man is to lose his only child, he likes to have an inkling of it beforehand."

"Oh, father! you will not lose me," Catherine said, spilling her candle wax.

"Three days before will do," he went on, "if you are in a position to be positive then. He ought to be very thankful to me, do you know. I have done a mighty good thing for him in taking you abroad; your value is twice as great, with all the knowledge and taste that you have acquired. A year ago, you were perhaps

a little limited—a little rustic; but now you have seen everything, and appreciated everything, and you will be a most entertaining companion. We have fattened the sheep for him before he kills it." Catherine turned away, and stood staring at the blank door. "Go to bed," said her father; "and as we don't go aboard till noon, you may sleep late. We shall probably have a most uncomfortable voyage."

IS IT ALL THERE STILL?*

SHE sat where the great elm's shadow
Across the doorway fell;
She heard the drip of the bucket
In the hollow of the well,

The pleasant rasp from the garden
Of busy spade and hoe.
Beyond, in the sunny meadows,
Her mates ran to and fro.

The chirping robin on the bough
Was for one moment still,
Deep dipping into cherries' wine
His thirsting yellow bill.

A whirl of pale gold butterflies
Alighting on the stone,
With flicker of their filmy wings,
In quivering silence shone.

Thousands of them in the meadows
Before her mates had flown:
I know not if she understood
These were for her alone.

At eve, when the cows and children
Came home from field and vale,
In the wonder of the sunset,
The child sat dumb and pale.

They clamored for the evening meal;
She neither asked nor stirred,
But took what the housewife gave her,
And ate without a word.

* Among the poor children who were sent into the country last year by the Children's Week Association was one little waif who in all her life before had never seen anything pleasanter than the noisy, dirty streets of the lower portion of the city. Sickening of a fatal disease, the scenes of that one bright week haunted her, and she begged to see the farmer's wife in whose care she had been; and when the good woman entered the bare garret where the little sufferer lay, the child cried out, feverishly, "Is it all there still?" and wanted to hear about every place and creature she had there seen. The kind woman took the child back with her into the country, where, in the midst of loving care, surrounded by the beauty of early summer, she peacefully died.

Such morns and noons and nights were
hers

For six glad summer days;
Then back to the city's groping life
Of dearth and fret and frays.

Six breathless days of mute delight,
And then—the blinding pall!
Six days!—and just to think for whom
The good God made it all!

* * * * *

She lay where the dull wall's shadow
Fell on her bed of straw,
With the largest eyes in the thinnest
Face that you ever saw.

"Is it all there still?" she murmured,
And wrung her feeble hands—
"The woods, and the long bright meadows,
The door where the elm-tree stands?"

"Do the cows come home when the sunset
Makes that great fire at night?
Do they give you pails and pails of milk?
Is it just as sweet and white?"

"When I've been selling my papers,
I've tried to see it all;
But I couldn't, for the dirty street,
The noise, the dingy wall—

"They staid with me always—always;
They shut out field and sky.
Tell me, those things you planted,
Did they come up by-and-by?"

"The stream that ran by the road-side,
The lambs asleep on the hill,
I want so much—so much—to know
If it is all there still."

"Why shouldn't you come to it, my
child?"

The kindly housewife said;
And soon the shadow of the elm
Fell on that patient head.

The farmer took the wasted hand
Upon his own broad palm,
And cleared his throat ere he could say,
"You're welcome to the farm."

He held her while the goodwife milked
The sleek and healthy kine,
He made her pleasant seats beneath
The oak and fragrant pine,

And carried her from place to place.
She seldom spoke a word,
But smiled and gazed, and grew, he said,
"No heftier'n a bird."

Of summer's scents and sights and sounds
The child's soul drank its fill,
Till berries darkened on their vine
By field and wood and hill.

And then, one night—the sun had built
Its great fire in the west—
"Yes, I have seen it all," she sighed,
"And now I want to rest."

O Life, so bright when thou art free!
In bonds, so drear and dim!
Who frees thee to one little child
Hath loosed its bonds from Him!

"BAD PEPPERS."

I.

"YOU see, I want to strike down to
Bad Peppers."

These words were pronounced by the
third person at my right on the bench.
The bench, it must be explained, was covered
with red velvet, and situated in the
cabin of a steamer. And the steamer was
the *Weser*, bound for Bremen.

I could not imagine at the moment what
"Bad Peppers" meant; and the remark
—uttered at our first dinner on board—
came out with such ludicrous distinctness,
in the midst of the clatter at table, that I
made haste to observe the individual from
whom it proceeded. I beheld a rough but
impressive head, with cheeks of a settled
red, and beetling grizzly hair, looking out
over the board in a dogged, half-perplexed,
but good-humored way, though the
owner of the head was evidently unconscious
that he had said anything open to
comment. He was a man, I should say,
of forty-six; but as I looked at him now
in the glare of the skylight above, there
was so marked a simplicity and frankness
in his face that I could not help
imagining the short gray curls turned to
golden brown, and feeling the momentary
pity that comes over one in looking
at an elderly person who reminds one of
childhood, yet is so hopelessly far removed
from it. I felt a little sorry for a man
with this kind of a face attempting so large
a task as crossing the ocean to Europe,
and I was a little amused at the idea, too.

He was talking earnestly to my handsome
friend Fearloe, who sat on this side
of him; but I observed that he was watched
with a certain patronizing scrutiny by
a young German opposite.

"Yes, you see I couldn't get rid of this