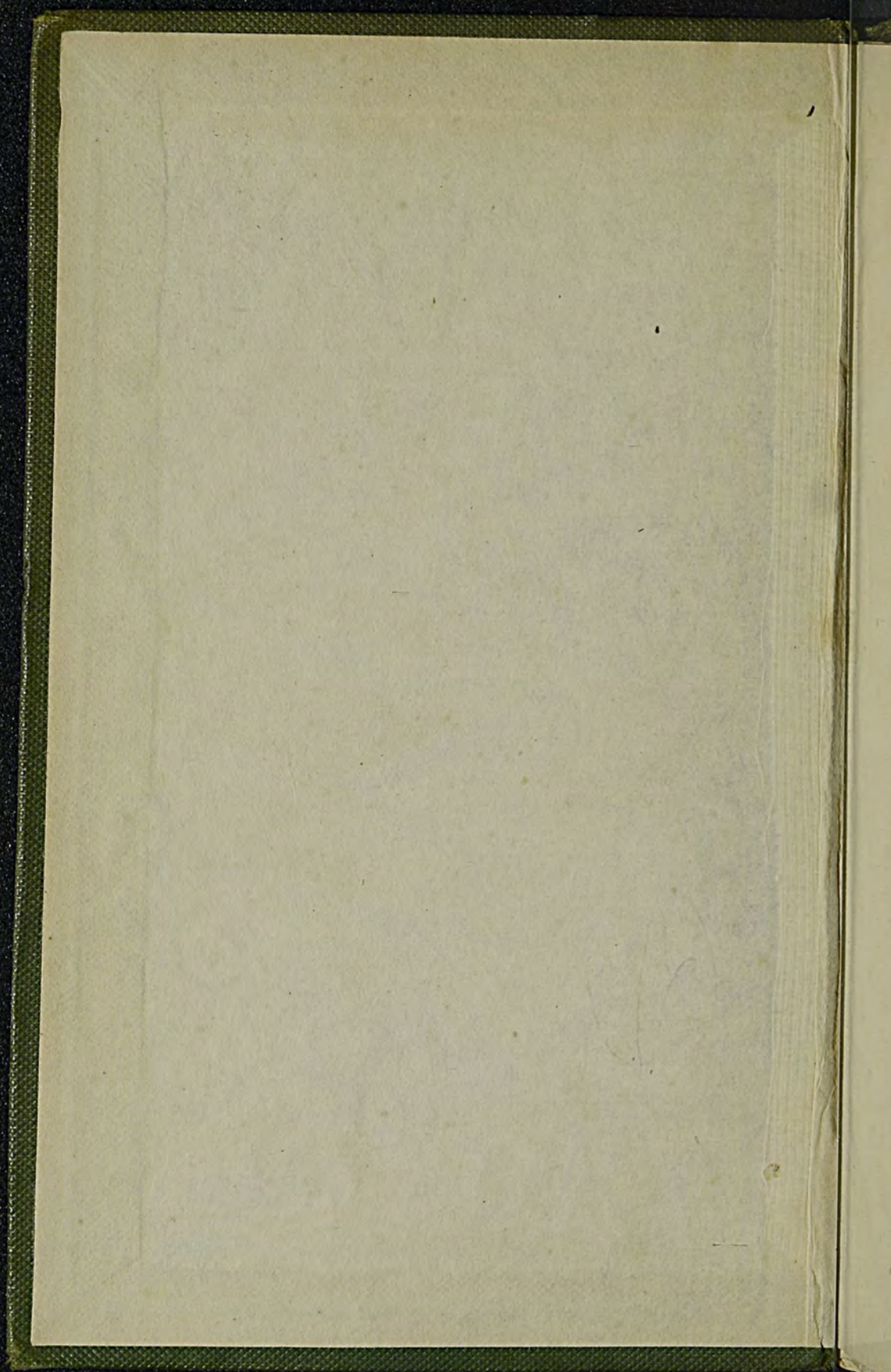


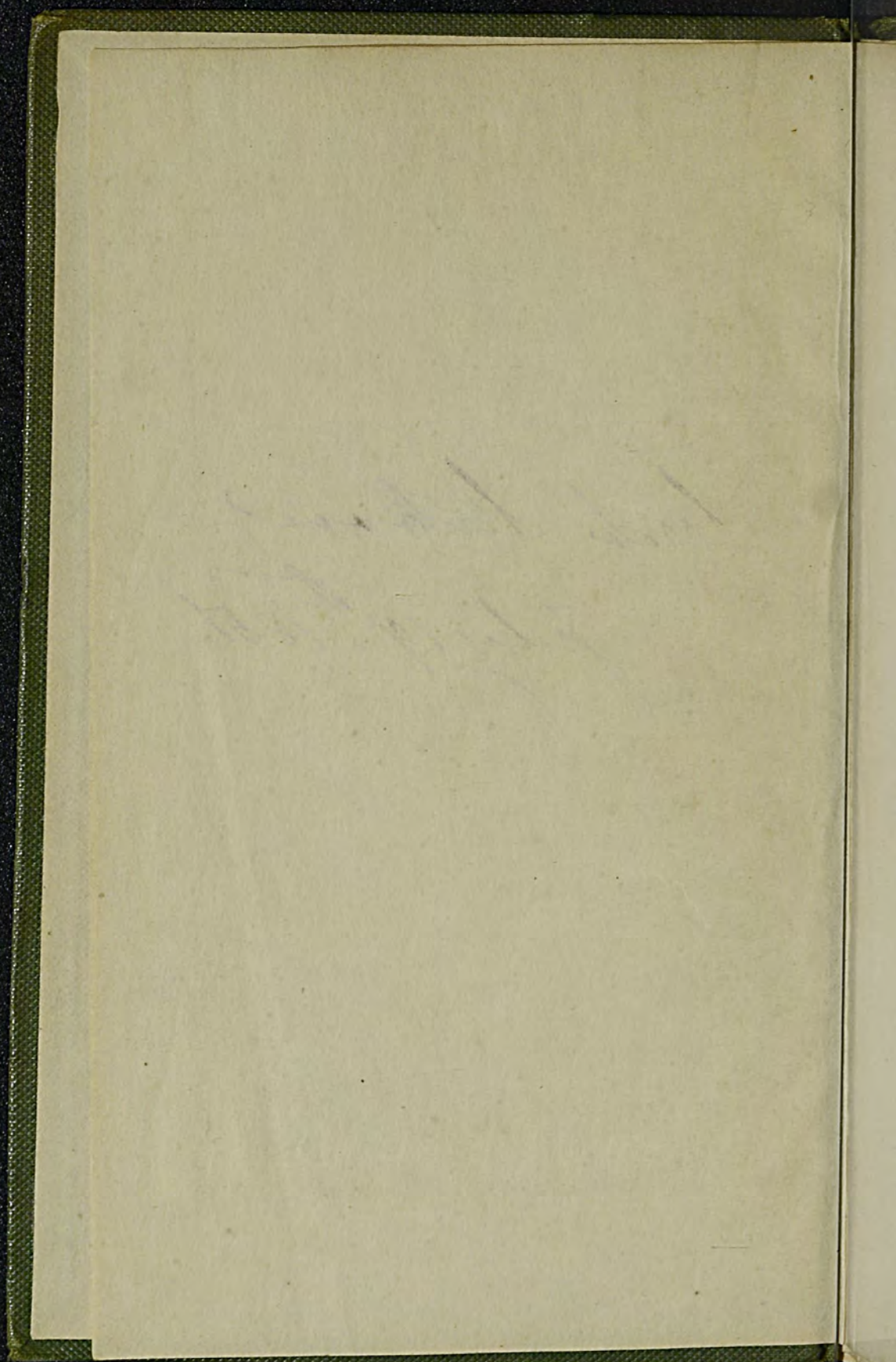
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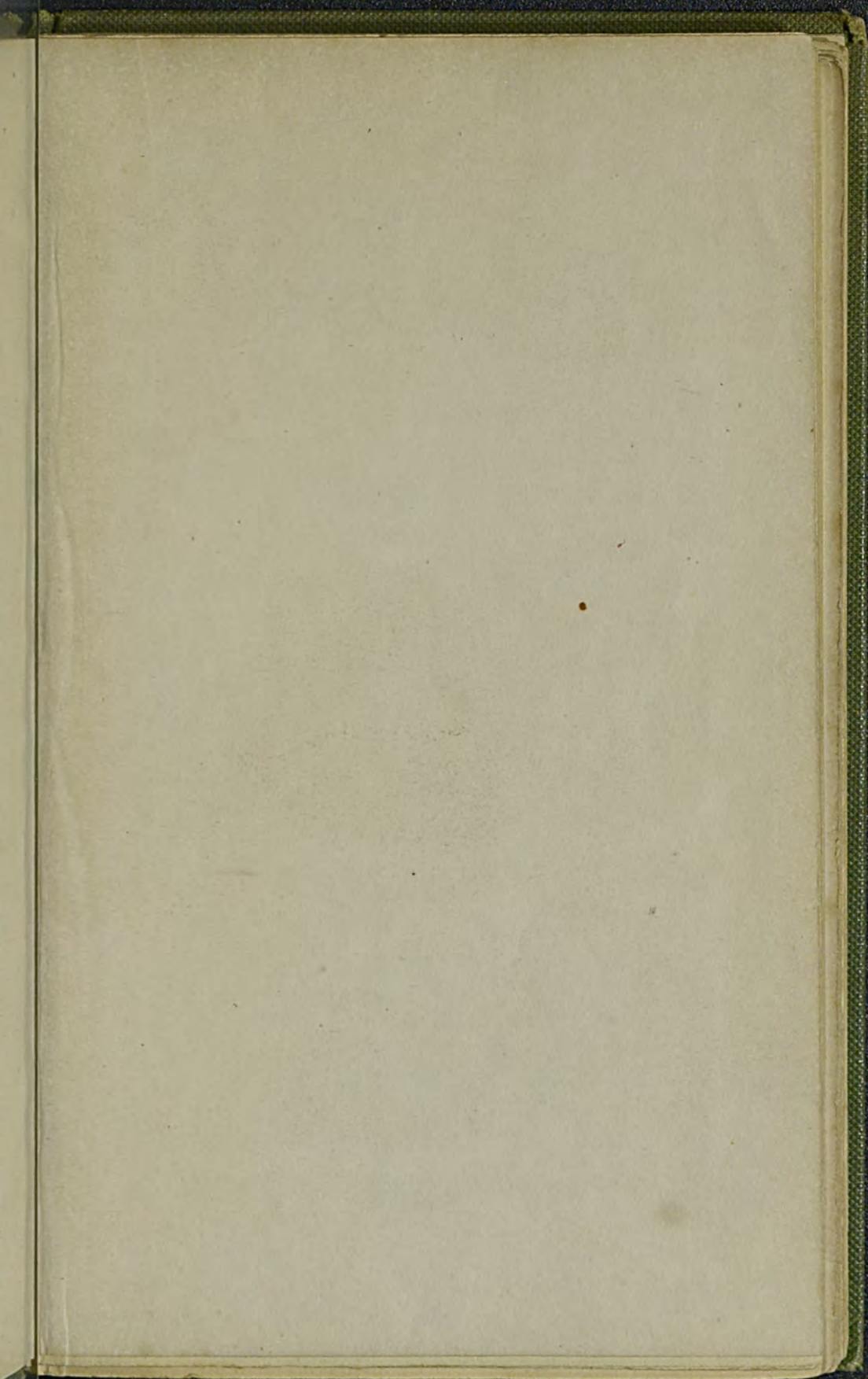
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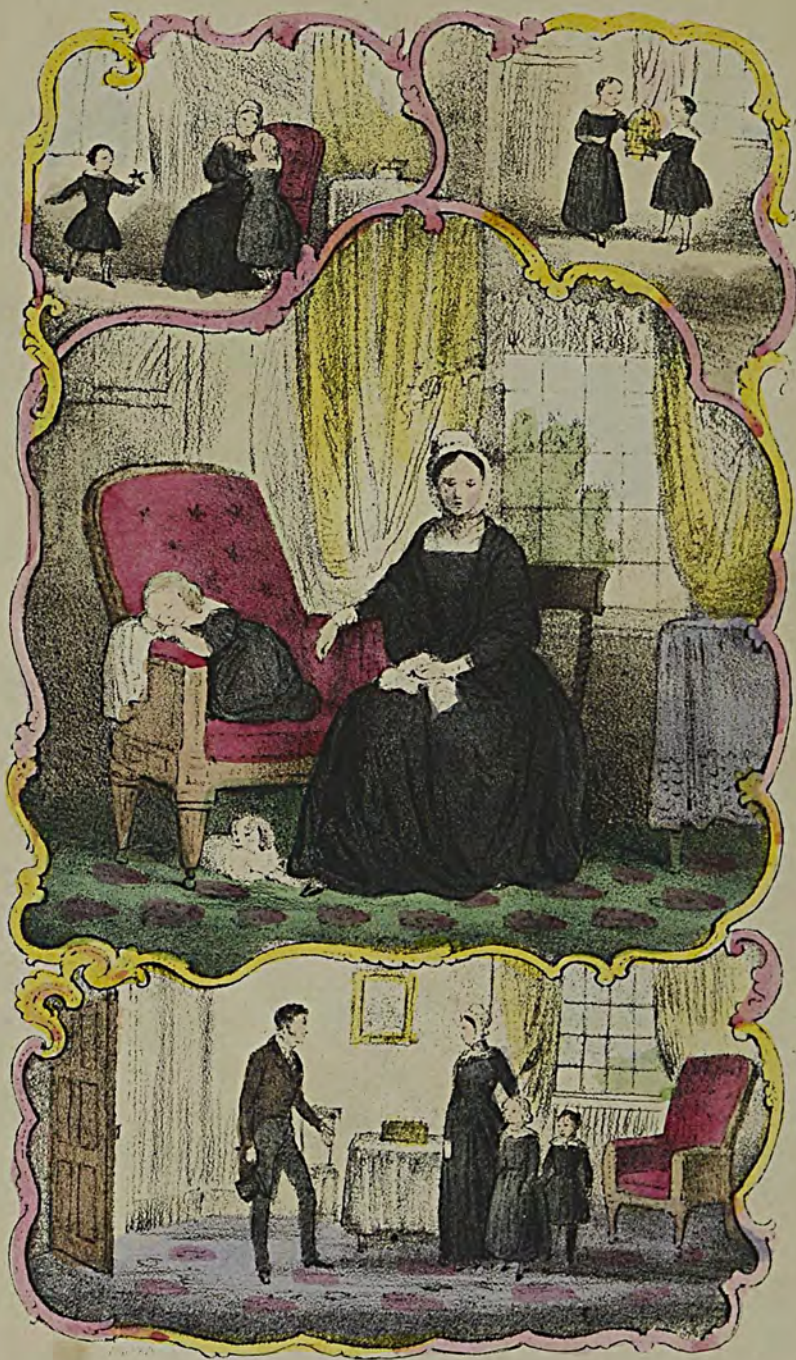


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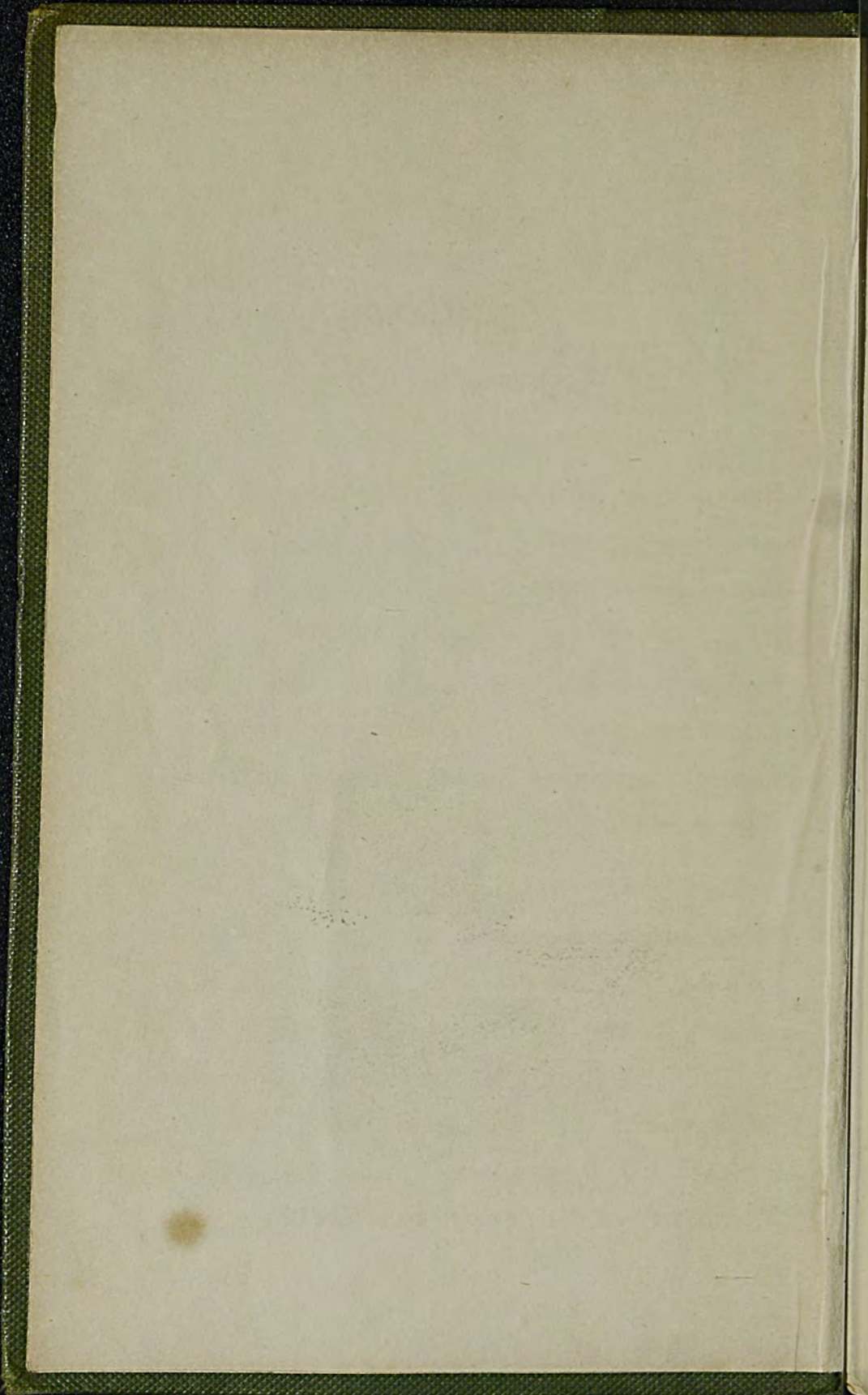


THE
WIDOW AND ORPHANS
OR
THE CHANGES OF LIFE
BY THE REV.^d J. YOUNG M.A.

AUTHOR OF THE
"Perils of Paul Perceival"
"Scriptural Natural History"



LONDON.
THOMAS, DEAN & SON,
THREADNEEDLE STREET.



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Preface.

EVERY writer, in appearing before the public, has some object in view. What that object may be, is exceedingly difficult, from his writings, to determine. That the prevailing one *should* be, to advance the interests of those for whom he writes, cannot be questioned. In the present day, such actions are required, perhaps, more than at any former period.

The writer of the present tale has aimed at this; and, in accordance with his purpose, has adopted what he conceives the best means to accomplish the best end. If the attention is not gained and secured, little hope can be entertained of accomplishing much good. The style now adopted has been resorted to for that purpose. The heart can more easily be reached through the

passions and imagination, than by the judgment. Still he has, in no part of it, sacrificed truth to fancy; it may be said to be

‘A plain unvarnished tale:’

for little embellishment has been given to it.

To His blessing, who only can effectually bless, and the favour of my already-favourable readers, I leave it; and, as its success may be, shall feel disposed again to write, or to destroy my pen.

THE
WIDOW AND ORPHANS;
OR,
THE CHANGES OF LIFE.

The Widow.

Oh! what is death? 'Tis life's last store,
Where vanities are vain no more;
Where all pursuits their good obtain;
Where life is all retouch'd again;
Where, in their bright results shall rise,
Thoughts, virtues, friendships, loves, and joys.

Gambold.

“ Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him,”
escaped from the lips of a solitary being, whose
form and face, although clothed in the garb of
sorrow, supplied abundant evidence that grace and
beauty, of no ordinary character, had been pos-
sessed by her. “ All must be well in His hand,”
she continued, “ who knows the end from the
beginning; although I am unable to form an
opinion of what may yet await me, or when my
present affliction will end.”

A gentle moan broke, at this instant, upon the

ear of the lovely mourner, and she turned at once to the form whence it issued, with sensitive anxiety. All was again still, but her eye fell upon the form of her beautiful child, who, overcome by the heat of the evening, and unconscious of the wretchedness which the fond mother felt, had laid her little head upon her snow-white arm, which rested on the arm of the chair on which she sat, and had fallen into a sweet sleep.

“ My poor, poor Julianna,” sighed the parent, “ Heaven be thy protector, and the Father of the fatherless thy friend.”

All the feelings of the devoted mother rose at the instant, and prevented further utterance. A long deep sigh escaped her, as if the sorrowing existence she possessed was about suddenly to break up. A silent tear stole down her pale cheek, as she elevated her clasped hands and eyes to heaven, and meekly exclaimed, “ Thy will be done !” and then, turning again to her child, she impressed a fond kiss upon her downy cheek, and tears gushed forth freely to the relief of her heart. The warm salute, and the tears which trickled upon Julianna’s face, awoke the lovely girl, and seeing her beloved mother bathed in tears, she sprang upon her neck, and exclaimed, in affectionate solicitude, “ Oh, my mother, my dear, dear

mother! why is it that you weep so much? do give over crying," she continued, looking most piteously in her mother's face, and wiping away, as she spoke, with her little handkerchief, the fast falling tears; "won't father come and see us again, some day?"

These innocent enquiries pierced the fond mother to the heart, and made her feel, more deeply than before, the comfortless state of widowhood. Still, the mother's tears continued to flow, while the child employed all her little arts to divert her mind from its misery, and relieve it of its sorrow.

"Now, if you won't cry any more," resumed the affectionate innocent, "I'll repeat the lines you taught me and brother Harry, and of which I have heard you say you are so fond."

The prattle of the sweet child continued to add to the fond mother's emotion; and Julianna, without waiting for her bidding, and with the view of allaying her parent's grief, recited the following stanzas:

THE ABSENT SIRE.

My dear, my loved father, how long he's away!—
 Oh! where is he gone, and why does he stay!—
 Has he gone to the field, to seek flowers of spring?—
 And will he return, and a nosegay bring,

Or some rosy-ripe fruit from the garden ; and then
Stay at home with us here, nor leave us again ?

Oh, no ! oh no, my girl.

Does he know that your heart is breaking with woe,
And that I and my brother are weeping so ?—
How cross and unkind our friends have grown
To you, and to us, since he left us alone ?—
Or how oft we ask bread, and you've none to give ?—
Does he know all this, mother, and yet from us live ?

Oh, no ! oh no, my girl.

And won't he come back, and love me again,
And kiss me, and call me his own, when in pain ?—
Won't he pray by my side, as he used to do,
And teach me to sing, my dear mother, to you ?—
And tell us of heaven, of God, and his Son ;
Of how He has loved us, and what He has done ?

Oh, no ! oh no, my girl.

He will never come back, my dear child, and we
Shall no more, in this land, your dear father see ;
He knows not our sorrow, he feels not our woe :
He is living with those who but happiness know,
In the heaven he spoke of, and told you the way,
When, kneeling before him, he taught you to pray.

He's there ! he's there, my girl.

As the child concluded the last stanza, the
mother's bursting grief almost overpowered her.

She shuddered, and half wildly repeated, "He's there! he's there, my girl!"

For a moment she cast her fine dark lashed eyes, now swollen with weeping, up to heaven, and meekly breathed a fervent prayer to Him who is a father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widow, in His holy habitation,—and who has commanded—"Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in me."—Jer. xlvix. 2. "Leave me not," she supplicated, "neither forsake me in this my time of desolation." And then, with all the indiscribable fondness of a mother's love, she pressed the little orphan to her beating heart, and thus answered her child's last enquiry.

"No, my dear; your father, your dear father will come back *no more*; he is gone from us for ever!"

"Gone for ever, dear mother," responded the innocent girl, with undissembled astonishment, not as yet comprehending her parent's meaning, or understanding the loss the family had suffered. "But he will return, one day, mother?"

"No! never, never, my child; he is ——" Deep sobs prevented her further utterance, she would have said "dead!" but she could not. Her tears fell fast on the shoulder of her child,—

a pause ensued. It was but a brief pause of only a few moments duration, but it was an awful one. Anguish seemed to have poured itself out in a torrent, filling, with unmingled asperity, her agonized bosom, and threatening immediate destruction.

Julianna perceived the fearful alteration her mother's countenance had suddenly undergone; the fixed rigidity of her late placid features, and the vacant gaze of her once bright eye; and she felt alarmed.

"Oh, mother, mother!" cried the child, "speak to me; are you not well?"

Suddenly the parlour-door flew open, and in bounded the laughing Harry, shouting, with unrestrained mirth, as he entered: "Only look, mother, what a pretty bird our Tiney has caught;" and as he said so, he held out to his poor mother the little fluttering captive, which he had rescued from the tiger-like claws of the cat. "I'll buy a cage for it, and—"

This hasty-formed purpose and joyous prattle suddenly broke off, as his eye caught the tears that flowed down his mother's face, and which, until that moment, he had not perceived. The affectionate boy stopped short, gazed a moment, and then rushing fondly towards her, in a soft,

subdued tone, enquired, as his sister had before done, "Are you not well, dear mother?"

"Ye- - yes, my dear boy," answered Mrs. Somerville, as she roused herself from her stupor, and bent over her child to kiss his dimpled cheeks. "Yes, Henry, I am well;—at least I am better, much better than I was."

This was indeed the case; nature had partly relieved herself by the tears which the fair mourner had shed, while the unexpected appearance of Harry, had for a moment directed her mind to other subjects, than those which had before entirely possessed it.

The minds of children are soon and easily affected: smiles and tears are often seen, as if striving for the mastery in their countenances. The most trifling circumstance frequently either depresses or elates them. They think not deeply, and hence they feel not acutely. The past and the future are, in their happy experience, swallowed up in the present. Thus it was on the present occasion. Julianna felt happy to see her mother smile again,—although the smile which played upon her features was a faint one, and seemed to partake more of sorrow than of joy;—and sharing with her brother in the delight which the posses-

sion of a bird had produced, she looked upon it with tearful pleasure.

"Don't hold it so tight, Harry," cautioned the thoughtful girl; "I am afraid you will hurt it; I will run and fetch the cage which our dear father's canary-bird died in. I know where it was put, after poor Charley was buried."

Harry, in the fullness of his delight, had forgotten this, or doubtless he would have procured it himself, before now. "Yes, do, Juli," cried the enraptured boy; "run, make haste."

The last words he uttered were not heard by his sister, for she ran, like a little fairy, up to the lumber-room, where the cage was, and in a few seconds returned with the poor bird's intended prison-house to the parlour.

"There," said Harry, as he caged the fluttering thing; "now you can sing to us."

"My dear," said Mrs. Somerville, as the af-frighted creature flew wildly round the bars of its confinement, seeking, in vain, some friendly place of escape; "your bird will never sing; it is, I perceive, a poor Robin."

"Not sing, mother?" rejoined Harry, who was leaning on the shoulder of Julianna, gazing with transport on his prize; "why won't it sing?"

he enquired, with evident astonishment; "don't Robins ever sing?"

"In their wild and unconfined state, my dear," returned Mrs. Somerville, "they have some beautiful notes. Some, indeed, have been known to sing in cages, but then they had been taken while very young."

"Well, dear mother," hastily interrupted Harry, "this is only a young one, and——"

"Be patient, my dear boy," observed his mother, "and I will explain to you: those to which I have referred, were much younger than this."

"But won't it look pretty in the cage?" asked Harry, "although it won't sing."

"Would it then afford pleasure to my Harry," rejoined Mrs. Somerville, "to witness the unhappiness of another creature?"

"I should not like to see any body unhappy," replied the artless boy; "but if I feed poor Bob well, he cannot be unhappy,—can he, mother?"

"Yes, my dear," replied his parent, "he *can* and *will* be unhappy;—he would still want *liberty*. The love of liberty is natural to all inferior creatures, as well as to man; and however well you may provide for this poor bird, such provision would not be equal to his liberty; the most splendid cage, and the most abundant food, would not

form a substitute or compensation for freedom. Besides, Harry," continued the kind teacher, "should you retain him, you will find he will not eat; he will pine away and die."

"Will he, indeed, mother?" asked Julianna, whose eyes had been fixed upon the lips of her parent, while her ears had listened to the sounds they sent forth. "Then you had better let it go, Harry," she said, turning to her brother, who still held the cage in his hand, gazing upon his trembling and fluttering prisoner.

"So I will," exclaimed Harry, "for I do not like to see any thing unhappy; and when I grow a man, if I have the power, I'll let everybody have liberty, and make them happy too. Poor Bob shall fly abroad again; he shall, dear sister, he shall." So saying, he left the room with as much haste as he had entered it, and apparently with as much pleasure, to perform his promise.

Scarcely had Harry quitted the apartment, and Mrs. Somerville resumed the work she had for a short time laid aside to give vent to her violent grief, while Julianna took her seat by her side, before a loud knocking at the outer door announced some unexpected, and apparently haughty visitor.

"Who can this be?" thought Mrs. Somerville,

while a nervous sensation crept over her, which seemed to presage some approaching evil.

A few seconds only passed, when a person of gentlemanly appearance was introduced, who, after a short, and not very interesting preface, acquainted the mourning widow that he was a professional,—of the law,—and had been instructed by Sir Manwarring Somerville to inform her that the premises she now occupied would be wanted immediately, and that, therefore, at the expiration of one month from the present day, she must positively vacate them.

“As thy day is, so shall thy strength be,” is the promise of unchangeable truth; and in no case has the promise failed in the experience of those who have believed in the faithfulness of Him who hath promised; and the correctness of it was now experienced by Mrs. Somerville.

With a degree of composure far beyond what she had enjoyed since the tidings of her beloved husband's death had reached her, she now listened to the cruel purpose of her hard-hearted father-in-law. She saw, in this moment of trial, an invisible arm outstretched for her defence and support, and relying upon it, she silently said to herself:

Good when He gives, supremely good,
 Nor less when He denies;
 E'en crosses from His sovereign hand
 Are blessings in disguise.

His purposes will ripen fast,
 Unfolding, every hour:
 The bud may have a bitter taste,
 But sweet will be the flower.

Be silent, then, each murmuring thought,
 Base, doubting cares, away;
 Him whom I trust, has wonders wrought,
 And on His aid I'll stay.

With sweetness and grace, such as at once astonished and charmed the legal adviser, and who, it is probable, had seldom, if ever, before, *felt* the greatness of soul, and the power of piety, which is breathed forth from the lips of female weakness, when supported by the power of Divine grace, and standing firm in conscious innocence, she assured him, that great as the inconvenience would be to herself and family, the commands of Sir Manwarring should be attended to.

Mr. St. Belmont looked his surprise at the widow, and after expressing his sorrow and regret at her circumstances, with a measure of sincerity which did not always characterise him, bowed and retired.

Perhaps no situation that can be known by a young female of respectable habits and delicate constitution, is more distressing, lonely, or painful, than that of widowhood. Alone, unprotected, and too generally unpitied, she is the jest of heartless wittings, and the scorn or derision of empty flirting hunters after admiration of her own sex. The hand of injustice is often reached forth to oppress her, and the monsters of cruelty rob her of her rights.

To a considerable extent, this was the situation in which the unfortunate Mrs. Somerville was placed. The only child of a respectable family, more famed, however, for genuine piety than for wealth, she had enjoyed the advantages of a superior education, accompanied with the incalculable disadvantage of being totally unacquainted with almost every thing connected with domestic management. Her mistaken parents had followed, too closely, the example of those around her in easy or affluent circumstances, who imagined that attention to mere household affairs would be a reflection upon good breeding and genteel life, than which, no conception was ever more at variance with truth. Her chief accomplishments, therefore, consisted in such acquirements as made her fit to live rather in an *ideal*, than a *real*,

world. After-experience taught her how great the error was under which her parents had laboured, while the hand of affection and worth removed her ignorance, and taught her that which afterwards saved her from the pangs of poverty.

Before Mrs. Somerville had learned properly to value her parents, she lost them. Death robbed her of the only earthly friends to whom she could look for guidance and protection, except an aged aunt on her mother's side. To the care of this amiable relation, at the age of fourteen, she was confided, and at her hands she learned lessons,

Such as in after life she ne'er forgot,
Which cheered her path, and soothed her painful lot.

Mrs. Stanley, the aunt referred to, was the widow of an officer who had served in the Navy, and lived upon a small pension which the Government had awarded her as a compensation for the loss of her husband, who had fallen in battle, while bravely fighting for his country, against the combined fleets of France and Spain.

This lady had retired to her native place, the small but pleasant village of Upton, which stands about a mile out of the Great Roman road leading from London to Dover. Here, secluded from the bustle of the gay and fashionable world, Mrs.

Stanly held daily communion with her Maker, and by prayer and praise enjoyed a growing preparation for heaven, and tasted some of its sweets, before she entered upon the full enjoyment of that world,

Where all is sublimated bliss ;—where joy,
Pure and seraphic, springs from God's high throne,
Filling each dweller in that holy world
With highest happiness, complete and full.

Anxious to secure, as far as possible, the best interests and lasting happiness of her beloved niece, and to discharge the weighty duties devolving upon her, in the most excellent way, she sought, with untiring diligence,

To point to brighter worlds, and lead the way.

The defects in Julianna's education, in reference to the affairs of active life, over which she had often mourned, she strove immediately to remedy; nor were her attempts vain. *Duty*, under her mild and discreet government, assumed another form, and required a new name, to explain it; while the notions which Julianna had acquired of religion were, from the bright example, and under the happy influence of her aunt, changed for its actual enjoyment.

Between two and three years had passed away
in this happy retreat, where

Nature, at each turn, her lovers meets
In fairy prospects and ambrosial sweets;
Fields, groves, and orchards, fruits, and flowers, and
bloom,
Regalè the sight, or ravish with perfume.

Time continued to move on with unnoted celebrity, and Miss Julianna Richmond was ripening fast into womanhood, when an unexpected circumstance brought her into the company of the youngest son of Sir Manwarring Somerville.

Few could have gazed upon so fair a person, and so much unassuming gracefulness as Miss Richmond possessed, without acknowledging her power. She was no coquet; no arts were employed by her to win an object. To such practices, fraught with so much evil, and so disgraceful to female character, she needed not to have recourse,—

She was as nature made her; not as art.

The son of the knight beheld the beautiful girl, and at once yielded up his affections to her. A mutual attachment soon was experienced, and modestly confessed. A similarity of views, and oneness of sentiment and taste, characterised the

interesting pair. What the poet wrote, they felt:

They to each other were a world ;—
 Each for the other seemed to live ;
 And the whole world, beside, to them
 Seemed nought ;—but still to give
 Bliss to each other was their whole employ,
 And each felt happy in each other's joy.

Frederick had paid his regular visits to Myrtle Cottage, at least twice a week, for several months; and there, in the company of his beloved Julianna and her amiable aunt, for a while forgot the imperious temper of his father, and his dependence upon him, in some degree, for his future prospects in life.

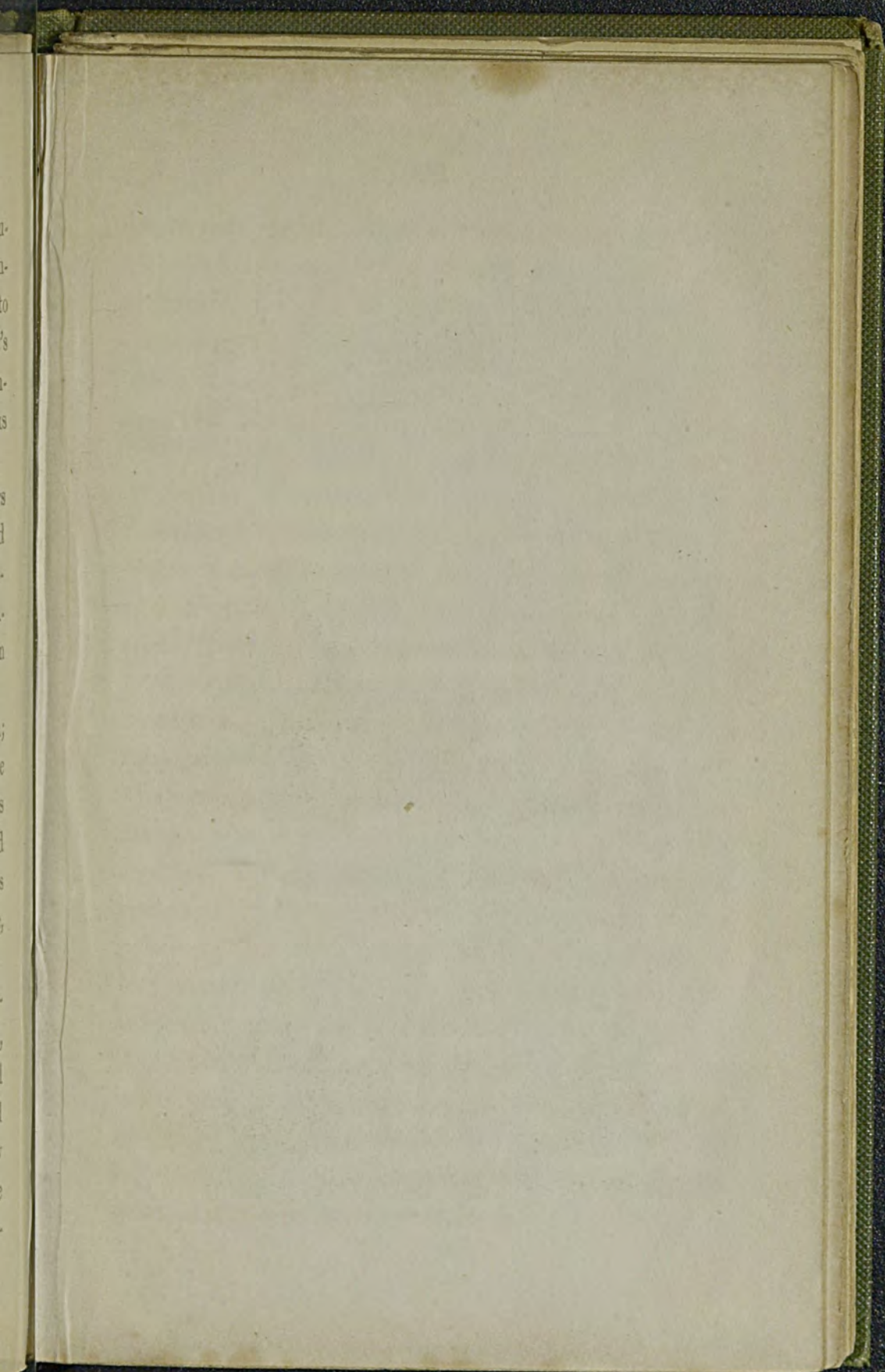
The entire property which Frederick now possessed, was an estate in Sussex, of about two hundred a year, which had been left him by a deceased relation; but which, at his death, would pass into the hands of his father. Upon this, he was aware, he could live comfortably, but not in affluence; and had it not reverted to his parent at his death, he would most cheerfully have, at once, united his fate to his affianced bride. But he paused as he thought on the possibility of involving in trouble and want, those who were dear to him as his own existence.

Hope has ever been a flatterer, and by it thousands have been deceived. Frederick felt its influence, and listening to its syren tones, dared to believe, that the period of his own and Julianna's happiness was not far distant, and in such confidence he continued to spend his most felicitous hours at Myrtle Cottage.

The news of this attachment reached the ears of Sir Manwarring, who immediately summoned his son to his presence, and in the most peremptory manner, commanded that all further connexion with the orphan Julianna should be given up, under pain of his lasting displeasure.

The beauty, worth, and character of Julianna; his powerful feelings, and pledge of honour, were alike pleaded in vain: the haughty knight was inexorable;—either his family, or his intended bride, must be given up. The hard choice was given him, and he was required, at once, to decide, and make his election.

To live without Julianna seemed to him impossible. Love had, for him, more powerful charms, than prudence, wealth, or family, and was heard above the voice of parental authority. He quitted his father's house, and did so for ever. He flew to the humble cottage of his adored Julianna, he laid before herself and aunt his whole affairs;—





he pleaded, with her he so much loved, the sincerity of his affection,—the sufficiency they now possessed,—the hopes he had that Providence would crown their union with His blessing, and that the cruel purpose of his father would undergo a change.

Had no corresponding passion been experienced by Julianna, perhaps such arguments would have been employed in vain; but, as it was, had half the influence been employed, it would have succeeded; they were united, and the doors of Sir Manwaring Somerville's mansion were at once, and for ever, closed against his son Frederick.

It was thus that the haughty father afflicted an amiable pair, when he might have rendered them happy; and fixed a stain upon his own character, which nothing afterwards could erase; as well as laid the foundation for years of misery to himself, which death alone could terminate.

Mr. Somerville, immediately upon his marriage with Miss Richmond, retired to his estate in the neighbourhood of Petworth, in Sussex, accompanied thither by the venerable Mrs. Stanley, who, in a little more than twelve months afterwards, and just before Mrs. Somerville gave birth to her first-born, who, after herself, was called Julianna, expired in the full assurance of faith. The gra-

dual decay and triumphant end of her honoured relative, tended greatly to relieve the minds of Mr. and Mrs. Somerville from the pain which such a separation could scarcely fail to produce.

One year passed after the birth of Julianna, and Mrs. Somerville presented her beloved husband with a son, who, to preserve the memory of the kind relative from whom Mr. Somerville had received his property, was named Harry.

‘A man’s life consisteth not in the abundance he possesseth,’ is, like all other statements found in the same record, a verity which experience proves. And by the same rule it may be asserted, that happiness is not necessarily dependent on wealth. The property of Mr. Somerville was far from considerable; and, indeed, considering the sphere in which he formerly moved, and the expectations he had formed in reference to riches, as he rose into life, it might be said to have been small; still all that happiness which connubial love cannot fail to impart, and as much as the heart of man can know, in the present imperfect state, was known by himself and his amiable partner. Every passing day seemed to add to the affection they felt for each other, and so to increase or strengthen the felicity already experienced.

The number of their acquaintance was small,

but select; and hence, all unnecessary expenses, such as numerous connexions involve, were not suffered by them; while their engagements consisted chiefly in training up their offspring, and in ministering to the wants of the indigent and afflicted.

Who knows what shall happen on the morrow? or who can say in confidence, 'To-morrow shall be as to-day;' or, 'I shall die in my nest; I shall never be moved.' The tide of human happiness, alas! often changes; and those who have enjoyed the most flattering prospects, and revelled the most in worldly delights, have generally found them uncertain and short lived:—

The morn that ope'd with brightest glow,
 With sunny radiance gleaming,
 Has, ere night came, been dark with woe,
 No twinkling night-star beaming.
 All has been dark and gloom around,
 Where not a ray of light was found;
 The heart with sad despair has sunk,
 Which erst at pleasure's fount had drunk.

The property of Mr. Somerville, from various causes, became considerably lessened; still they murmured not; neither had it the least influence upon the temper of either. They continued to

enjoy an earthly paradise in the growing affections of each other. They had learned to act under the spirit of the noble sentiment which Job uttered: 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.'

Six years of almost uninterrupted felicity had passed away, when Mr. Somerville judged it proper, in consequence of the repeated losses which he had sustained, and the determinate hostility maintained by his father towards him, to make some additional effort to secure a provision for his family. The intention was a laudable one; and considering the uncertainty of human life, and the frail tenure upon which his present income was held, it might be almost said to have been imperative upon him that an attempt, at least, should be made to provide a support for them.

In accordance with such views, he determined to speculate, in person, with some property which rigid frugality had laid by out of their annual income: and accordingly after the afflictive scene of parting, betwixt himself and wife and children, had taken place; and which all attempts at describing, would fail to pourtray; he embarked at Portsmouth with a rather valuable cargo, for the distant colony of New South Wales.

After encountering a variety of weathers, and escaping innumerable dangers, he reached the place of his destination, and news was received by his wife of the delightful fact. With gratitude she read the tidings, and blessed the power that had preserved him.

In a few months after, another communication was perused from her dear husband, which detailed his complete success in the object of his voyage, and, at the same time, expressed the most lively hope of, in a short period, rejoining his beloved family.

This was, indeed, a precious medicine to the wounded spirit of Mrs. Somerville. The weeks, days, and hours, were now counted by the anxious, loving wife. Daily she taught her lisping infants to lift their hands in prayer to Him

Who rides upon the stormy sky,
And manages the seas.

that the life of their dear father might be preserved.

The ways of God are inscrutable and mysterious, and he renders account of none of his actions to his creatures. The most mighty angel that stands in his presence, and the most insignificant insect he has made, are alike ignorant of his deep

purpose, but as he pleases to make them known ; while the reason why he acts as he sometimes does, neither the one nor the other is able to explain. Still we are assured, that even the most dark and fathomless are founded in eternal righteousness ; and that ' what we know not now, we shall know hereafter,' and knowing, shall reverently and fully approve.

Ten months had elapsed since Mr. Somerville left the bosom of his beloved family, and he was now returning with an unclouded prospect of increasing happiness, having with him wealth sufficient to render himself and offspring as secure against want as the insecure things of time can be said to be so ; when the spirit of the storm spread his dark wings over the vessel in which he sailed, threatening it with instant destruction. Impelled by its fury, the ship became unmanageable, it flew before the roaring hurricane, like a feather hurled by a tempest ; and dashing upon a rock, it ' sunk like lead in the mighty waters ;' and out of a crew of thirty men, besides a female and other passengers, the carpenter and second mate alone escaped to tell the dreadful tale.

The overwhelming tidings of this most disastrous event, reached the now forlorn widow, about one month before the cruel message sent by Sir

Manwarring Somerville was received; the property upon which she now lived passing, by virtue of the will referred to, from Mrs. Somerville and his son's children to himself.

At the early age of twenty-four, Mrs. Somerville found herself a widow, with the weighty charge of two small children, one of whom was little more than five years old, and the other a year younger. Her prospects of happiness, in this world, were all completely blasted. To no point could she turn her active thoughts; and, in spite of herself, thought would dwell on

Joys gone by, and never to return,

without feeling most sensibly the wretched state of loneliness and dependence to which she was reduced.

Deprived of the husband of her heart,—persecuted by a relentless father-in-law,—and, after settling her affairs, possessing only about eighty pounds; it was now she experienced, in a peculiar degree, the value and reality—the consolations and supports—of religion; while the domestic habits inculcated by her aunt, produced advantages which exceeded all calculation.

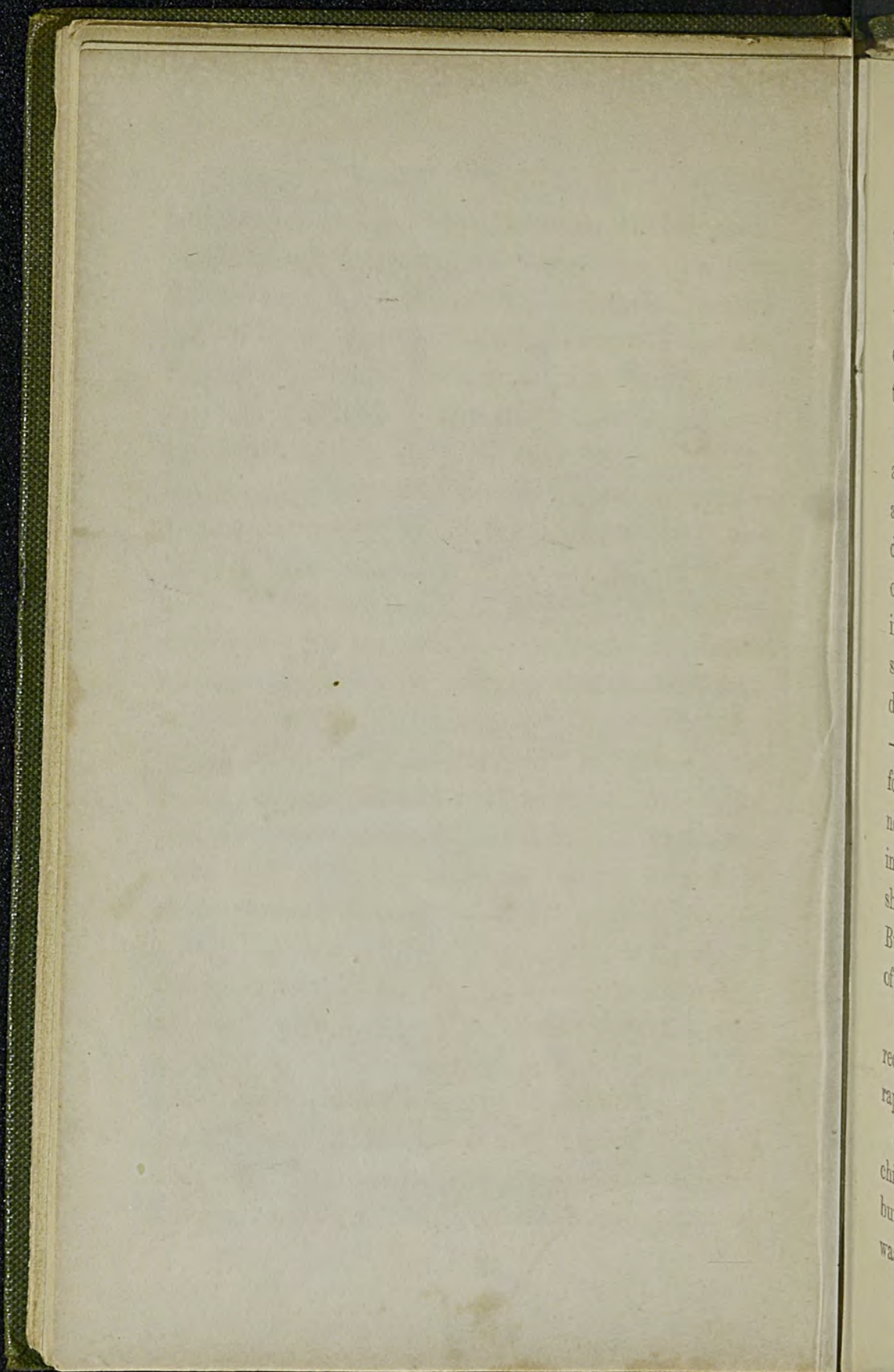
The arrangements which the cruel message of Sir Manwarring rendered necessary, were soon

made, and with a bleeding heart, as she looked, for the last time, through the apartments, and over the grounds, in which she had enjoyed so much felicity with her beloved Frederick,—she bade a final adieu to the home from which she was expelled by him, who, of all others, should have consoled and protected her; and with her children sought again the humble village of Upton, and engaged a cottage suited to the reverse of her circumstances.

Two years she struggled against the adversity and sorrow which pressed upon her. The little she had possessed, had greatly diminished; her shattered constitution and almost broken heart, unfitted her for great exertion, and yet some efforts she was obliged to put forth. Some little needlework which she obtained from the surrounding gentry, and the instruction of a few children, with her own beloved Julianna and Harry, filled up all her time, and engaged all the energies she was able to exercise.

Time rolled on, bringing with it changes of the most important character, but to Mrs. Somerville it brought none that relieved her misery, or advantaged her circumstances. The cloud of sorrow, by which she was surrounded, appeared to gather blackness; and as she reflected on the rapid scenes





through which she had passed, her mind seemed bewildered by the survey she took of them. "Oh! what a change has not a few years effected!" she exclaimed, mournfully: "to what additional affliction am I to look forward!"

She pressed one hand to her throbbing forehead, and with the other drew forth her handkerchief and wiped away the tears of agony which rolled down her pale cheeks; and then, sinking into a chair, unable longer to restrain the almost choaking grief under which she laboured, exclaimed in sorrow's deepest tone: "Oh, my own, my dear, dear Frederick! we are indeed separated for ever!—for ever!" She resumed: "oh, no, no! not for ever; forgive the thought, and pity the weakness which induced the expression!" she added, imploringly; "we shall meet again. Yes! we shall meet, and soon,—never to be parted again. But my children, my poor children:—Oh! Father of mercies, befriend and bless them!"

Nature at length yielded to the shock it had received, and she sank gradually, but with fearful rapidity, toward the tomb.

Julianna, the affectionate Julianna, was still a child, being little more than seven years of age, but the thoughtful and active care of riper years was displayed by her. She watched around the

bed, and met the frequent wants of her dying mother, with unwearied attention.

The sensitive heart of the sinking widow now felt all her sorrows blended in one, and that was for her children. She mourned the destitute situation in which she felt assured they would soon be placed.

All the feelings of the fond and anxious parent were experienced, while the holy resignation of the Christian was strikingly displayed. The promises which the book of inspiration possessed, bore her above the rude billows of worldly sorrow, which, "breach after breach" had broken upon her.

The children observed the grief which she strove in vain to conceal, and wept most piteously at her bedside. "My poor, poor orphans!" she said, as mournfully she looked upon and pressed them, by turns, to her bosom, "who will comfort you?—Oh, God!" she added, convulsively, "be thou a father to my fatherless children; save them from the paths of error, preserve them from the ways of sin:—to Thy hands, as thou hast commanded, I now commit them;—they are thine."

Julianna attended the sign of her fainting mother,—for she could only make a sign,—bent down upon her knees, and received her blessing and her

parting kiss. Harry followed her example. The children wept with increasing bitterness; their eyes were almost blinded by their tears.

“Thy will be done!” faintly uttered the expiring widow; and then, still holding each child by a hand, she meekly raised her eyes heavenward, for a few seconds, and silently implored its blessings upon them; after which, with an affectionate mournful smile, she gazed ardently upon her children, whispering, “My work is done; into Thy hands I commend my spirit,—protect my orphans.” And then—

Calmly resigned her soul to Him who gave it,
And, with a gentle sigh, rose up to heaven,
To join the triumphs of the host redeemed,
Where sorrow is not known, nor pain, nor death.



The Orphans.

O Thou, the helpless orphans' hope,
To whom alone my eyes look up,
 In each distressing day :
Father !—for that's the sweetest name
That e'er those lips were taught to frame,—
 Instruct this heart to pray.

Low in the dust my parents lie,
And no attentive ear is nigh,
 But Thine, to mark my woe ;
No hand to wipe away my tears,
No gentle voice to hush my fears,
 Remains to me below.

Collyer.

“ WHAT is an *orphan*, mother?” had once been asked by Julianna, as her fond parent wept over her brother and herself, sorrowing that such would soon be their character, as she exclaimed “ Oh, my poor *orphans* ! who will protect you ?”

That question needed not to be any longer asked :—they now *saw* and *felt* what it was to be *orphans*. Their father and their mother were both taken from them ; the former lay buried

beneath the waves of the ocean, 'till the sea shall yield up the dead which are in it; and all that was mortal of their broken-hearted mother, was stretched on the bed before them.

The still-warm hand of Mrs. Somerville yet retained its gentle grasp of each of her children, as when she breathed on them her last blessing, and committed them to the care of her heavenly parent, just as she bade them farewell for ever.

Nearly an hour had passed, since their mother had breathed her last; and still the orphans were alone in the chamber of death. An agony which appeared to admit of no relief, tore the gentle bosom of Julianna, while the grief which oppressed the heart of the affectionate girl, seemed to possess a stupifying influence over her. Harry, indeed, loved not his mother less than his sister, but he possessed not that shrewdness of mind with which she was favoured. Without fully comprehending what death was, in the first sight he had ever had of it, he conceived only of it as of a sound sleep of a peculiar kind, and feared, for a while, that his sister's convulsive sobs might disturb or awake their mother.

An older child than Harry, now about six years of age, might have mistaken the flight of the immortal spirit for the taking of rest in sleep, so

gently had that tempest-tossed spirit passed to its rest, and so placid was the smile which sat upon her grief-worn face, that the rigour of dissolution appeared charmed away. Her countenance had rather improved than suffered by the change, which the separation of the immortal from the mortal part, might have been supposed to have produced.

"Hush!" said Harry, softly placing his little finger on his lip, as he spoke; "don't cry so loud, sister, or you'll disturb mother."

"Oh, no!" returned the half-distracted girl, "I shall never again disturb our dear, dear mother; she will awake no more, Harry. She will cheer us no more by her kind smile; she will never again instruct us by her advice. She is dead, Harry; she is dead!"

"Dead! sister?—dead, Julianna!" exclaimed the astounded boy.

"Oh yes, yes!" sobbed out the weeping child, "she is dead,—and we are orphans!"

A speechless sorrow, which closed up the young mourners' lips, prevented further conversation. They mingled their tears, and blended their griefs; their infant hearts felt an undefined measure of trouble; it was heavy,—even to crushing,—yet they knew not distinctly its cause; they felt lonely

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and desolate, yet did they not properly understand why. The terror of death was not yet experienced by them, the face of their beloved mother had undergone no change, and they could still love her as dearly as ever.

Julianna at length took the hands of her brother in her own, and leading him to the side of the bed from which they had retreated, knelt down beside the body of their departed parent, and strove to repress the agony which she felt, while in artless simplicity she sought support to bear her sorrows from the Father of the fatherless."

How long they might have remained in this posture, is impossible to say, for they had already been a considerable time kneeling together, uniting their prayers and sobs, when a gentle tapping at the door aroused them from their grief.

Julianna arose, and hastened to ascertain who had called. Upon opening the door, the kind voice of an old widow woman, who resided something less than half a mile off, soothingly enquired "Well, my child, how is thy dear mother? I should have called before, but business has detained me at home."

Julianna could only reply with a flood of tears, but taking the offered hand of Mrs. Harlington, she led her to the bed-side, and exclaimed in a

tone which pierced the heart of the sympathising old woman, "I have no mother, now!"

"Ah! well-a-day, well-a-day!" cried Mrs. Harlington, "is then the blessed lady gone from all her troubles; but," she added, turning to the still crying children, "don't cry so, dears; your dear mother is happy, now."

"Is she happy?" enquired Harry; "are you quite sure she is happy?"

"Oh, yes," returned the kind-hearted widow, "she is an angel in heaven, and therefore you must not take on so."

All the little art which Mrs. Harlington possessed, she employed to soothe the weeping orphans, and at length she partially succeeded; although, more than once, while exhorting them "not to take on, and cry so," a tear ran down her aged cheeks, and frequent sighs burst from her heart.

The first care of the old visitor was, to remove the children from the chamber of death, which having done, she returned, with a near neighbour, to perform those services for the dead, which propriety rendered necessary.

I have frequently been charmed with the beautiful lines of the poet Gray, in which he has, with

an exquisite simplicity, introduced to our notice that amiable virtue, gratitude:

Sweet is the breath of vernal showers,
The bee's collected treasures, sweet;
Sweet music's melting fall; but sweeter yet
The still, small voice of gratitude.

Mrs. Harlington evidently felt it, although, in all probability, the poet's illustration had never met her sight. She had been herself left a widow, many years; and although she once enjoyed even more than a mere competency, yet the reverse was suffered by her at the time when Mrs. Stanley and her niece came to reside at Upton. The kind attentions of Mrs. Somerville, then Miss Richmond, were unceasing towards her; she not only assisted the widow to the utmost extent which her then slender finances would allow, but, at the same time, employed all her influence to procure assistance for her from others. Nor were her endeavours fruitless. Her recommendation had procured for her the situation of housekeeper in the family of a gentleman of very considerable property, with whom she resided several years, and at his death, received a bequest of thirty pounds a-year for life, with a cottage on the estate, in which to reside. In this cottage she still lived,

and enjoyed, in her old age, a comfortable asylum from poverty and want.

Evil tidings are swift-winged,—and whether delight to propagate tales of distress, or sympathy with the unfortunate sufferers, induces the disposition to make it known, is hard to determine; the fact, however, remains the same; and the news of grief and loss, is found to travel much faster than of joy and prosperity. The tidings of Mrs. Somerville's change of circumstances soon became known, and met the ear of the pitying Mrs. Harlington; and instantly upon her return to the village, she hastened to her humble dwelling; and again and again, by her cheerful and pious conversation; soothed and cheered the spirits of the young widow; and by her matured counsel, assisted greatly in the management of her affairs.

During Mrs. Somerville's illness, Mrs. Harlington had been an almost constant visitor, scarcely allowing a day to pass, without making at least two calls. On the morning of the day on which Mrs. Somerville died, she had not called, as she had been wont to do. Something she could not control, had prevented her. The rapid change, therefore, which had taken place in her beloved friend, she had not witnessed; and, hence she felt the great surprise when, as we have seen, she

called in the afternoon, and found that the happy spirit had been taken to join the church of the first-born in heaven, where sighing and sorrow are unknown; but where

In blest communion of his love, in praise,
 High choral praise, strung to the golden harp,
 In union eternal with the throng,
 Thousands of thousands, who surround His throne,
 And feel His praise their glory and their bliss.

Prompted not only by gratitude for her past obligations to the mother of Harry and Julianna, but actuated by the spirit of pure philanthropy, Mrs. Harlington determined that the orphan children of one so dear to her in life, should share with her, during her stay in this world, the little which she enjoyed. Her gratitude to her late patroness, was now transferred to the Giver of every good, that He had furnished her with a small ability, at least, and with an enlarged heart, to return the kindness she had received from Mrs. Somerville, upon the heads and hearts of her dear offspring.

In accordance with the determination she had formed, Julianna and Harry were immediately removed to her cottage, emphatically called, from the situation it occupied,—“The cottage of the

grove," where all that kind attention and affectionate zeal could do, to render the orphans happy, was attended to by the grateful old widow.

The whole management and expenses of Mrs. Somerville's funeral, were readily undertaken by Mrs. Harlington, who, after disposing of those articles of furniture and apparel, which it did not appear desirable, or necessary to preserve for the children, and settling the whole of her affairs, found that a few pounds only remained as the rightful property of the orphans. Small as the sum was, she received it as *theirs*, and sacredly deposited it for their benefit, when her own aid might fail, by her removal to the future state.

The light heart of Harry soon forgot the keenness of his sorrow, beneath the endearments of his adopted mother, whom he now invariably hailed by that familiar and endearing name. The grief he had felt was of a transitory kind,—it had not affected his nature. As yet he knew sorrow more by name, than by positive experience, for

Years had not his pillow planted
 With care;—as yet the gloom
 Of grief came not: for pleasure granted
 To every thing a bloom.

With Julianna, however, it was far otherwise.

The tender and sensitive-hearted girl, mourned in secret the loss which she *felt* could never be repaid; and frequently, while gazing on a beautiful miniature picture of her mother, which hung round her neck, by a black ribband, and which she constantly carried in her bosom, she would exclaim with mournful enthusiasm, pressing it to her lips,—

O never can my heart forget
 Thy love, or in another
 Expect those varied rays to meet,
 Which met in thee, my mother.

* * * * *

Thine eye spoke deep intelligence,
 With softest pity blended;
 Thy voice was music's self, and thence
 Praises and prayer ascended.

But ah! that voice I hear no more,
 Which made my young heart love her;
 That eye of fire which blazed before,
 Is closed for aye, my mother.

Whatever a kind and ingenuous heart could do to supply a mother's place, Mrs. Harlington cheerfully did; and Julianna felt how much, how very much, she was indebted to her, and in every

way she could think of, or devise, or that her youthful ability could perform, she strove to furnish evidence of how much her heart knew of gratitude; yet still she could but feel that Mrs. Harlington was not her mother.

It was a happy circumstance for the orphans, that the providence of God had given them in charge to a pious woman; one, who although she had never herself been a mother by nature, was, nevertheless, "a mother in Israel," and therefore, while she evinced her concern to afford them all those accomplishments of a personal and mental character, which she conceived their birth entitled them to; she was desirous, especially, that that adorning, which is least of an external order, or even of an intellectual kind merely, but the adorning of "the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible," should be possessed by them.

In this peaceful and happy retreat, far from the follies and snares which abound and reign with so much destructive influence in large cities, the widow, with Julianna and Harry, like the famed and interesting family at Bethany, had spent four years together, and as time continued its onward course, their friendship and love continued to increase. Discord had not once entered the happy circle. Peace was their constant guest,

and the blessings of the day, were acknowledged with adoring gratitude every night; when suddenly, and unexpectedly,

Like the baseless fabric of a vision,

the scenes of happiness with which they had long been favoured, and the felicity they had enjoyed, passed away,—

Leaving not a wreck behind.

At the close of a day which had been unusually fine, the widow and her orphans, as she affectionately denominated Julianna and Harry, strolled round the vicinity of the cottage, to a greater extent than usual, led on in their ramble by the beauties of the setting sun, and the lovely scenery which every where met their view. The may-bush, the hawthorn, and the honey-suckle, perfumed the air with their sweets, while the variegated hues of numberless fruit-trees, captivated even the aged widow, and bore back her mind to the days when with the same agility as those who now tripped by her side, she strolled among those very scenes. By a circuitous way, they reached their cottage in the grove, and after a frugal meal, closed the day as others had been closed before. The voice of

joy and gladness sounded in that humble dwelling,
while the song of gratitude rose like incense
upwards, to which angels might have listened with
delight as they sung,—

THE CLOSE OF DAY.

The calm of even-tide has come,
Sweet hour of rest, and comfort too ;
Joys pure and sacred crown our home,
Lasting as time, and ever new.

Bring forth the Holy Book of grace,—
Let every heart to praise be strung ;
And, while JEHOVAH'S acts we trace,
Love shall make vocal every tongue.

All hallowed by Thy glorious name,
Father of spirits, Lord of all ;
In every place, and age, the same,
Hear us, while at thy feet we fall.

So let us close each passing day,
And fleetly as the periods roll,
Heaven's light, with purer, brighter ray,
Will shine, and cheer each thankful soul.

“That's well, my dears,” observed the old widow,
approvingly, to the orphans; “that's well, I think,”
she added with more than usual spirit and anima-

tion, "we shall become singers, yet.—Now my love," she continued, addressing herself to Julianna, "Bring forth the Holy Book of Grace." *The Book* was brought, and the saintly matron perused with solemn reverence the last chapter in the book of Ecclesiastes, offering, as she went on, some brief occasional observations upon the sacred text to her youthful and attentive auditors, and then, commending herself, and her household, to His care, who, "neither slumbereth nor sleepeth," the happy family retired to rest.

For some time past, Julianna had been in the habit of rising first, and preparing the morning repast, before Mrs. Harlington left her chamber. She had done so on the morning in question. Harry had returned from the little plot of ground behind the cottage, where he had been busy for a couple of hours, with his spade and rake, and was wishing for his breakfast. Awhile he waited with something like patience: but his wants got the better of his philosophy,—his patience was soon exhausted; he turned his eye anxiously towards the clock, which clicked behind the door, and perceiving that nearly half an hour had already passed beyond the usual time of Mrs. Harlington's appearing, he became somewhat restless. Julianna was quite happy, and had almost forgotten the

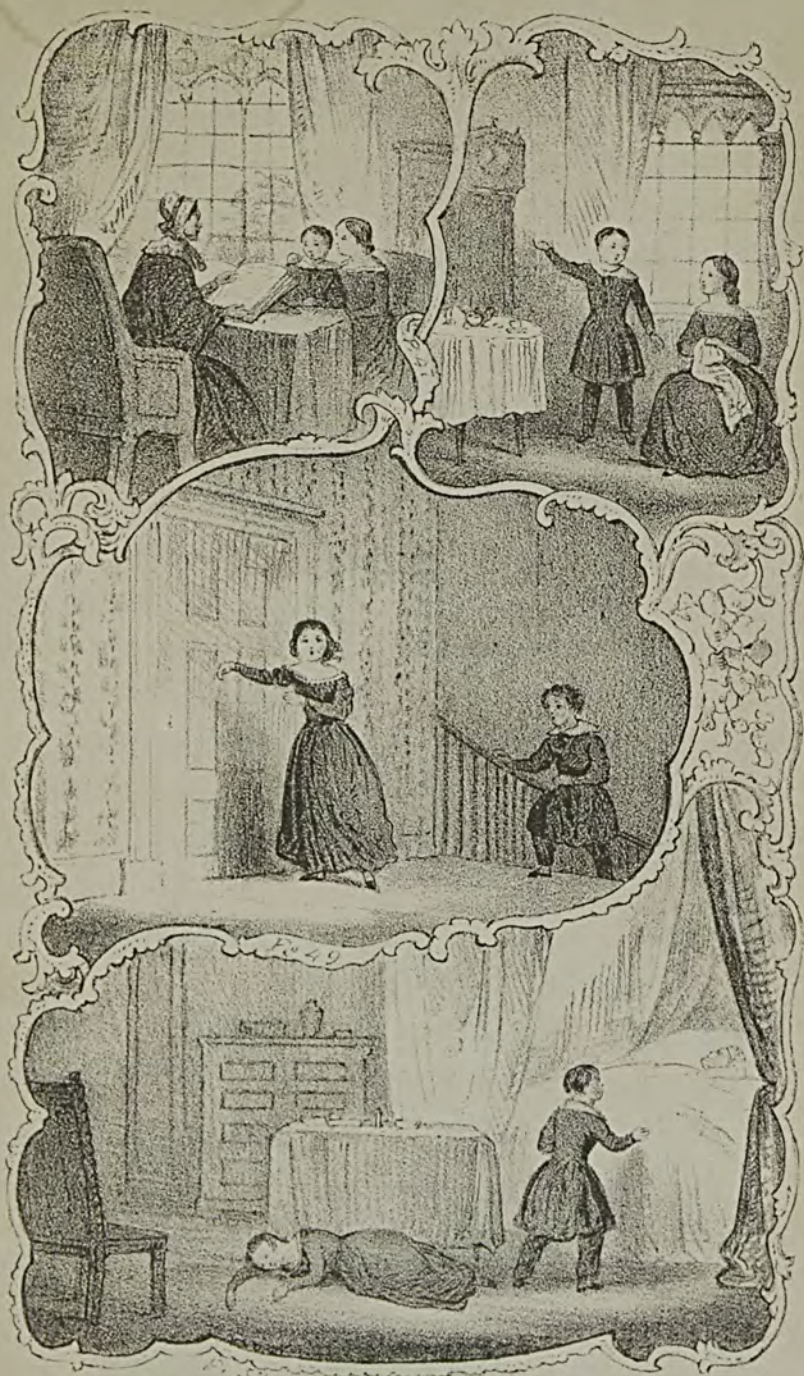
hour. She had taken up a piece of work she was performing, and as she worked, she hummed to herself, the following lines on

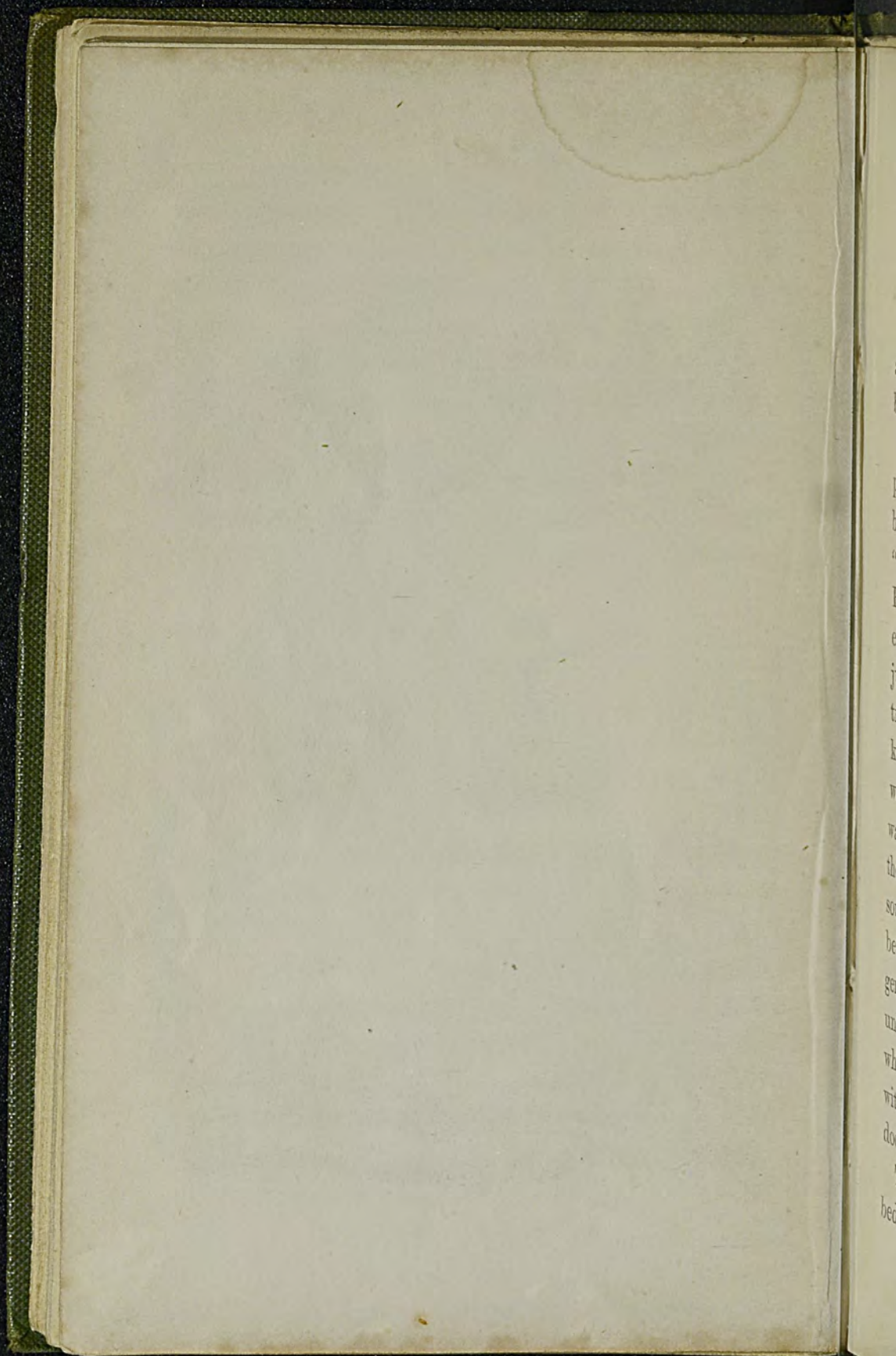
MORNING.

Hark ! the universal song
Rolls the arch of heav'n along,
As the first faint blush of day,
Chases night and gloom away.
Gushing from a thousand springs,
Earth her free-will off'ring brings ;
All who live in sea and air,
Swell the song, the tribute share.

Join we in the chorus now,
While we at Thy footstool bow—
Maker, kind preserver, friend,
With their sacrifice we blend
Hallelujah !—thanks be given
Here, on earth, as 'tis in heaven ;
Pealing anthems thus we raise,
Prelude to eternal praise.

On each morn that greets our eyes,
We will pay our sacrifice,—
Noblest of Thy creatures, we
Will 'bove others grateful be ;
And while nature's praises rise,
Incense perfumed to the skies,





Still our Morning Hymn shall be,
God of Heaven, pour'd forth to Thee.

"Hadn't you better put down your work, Julianna?" inquired Harry, "and call mother to breakfast."

Julianna cast her eye towards the clock, and perceiving it was getting late, arose to do as her brother had suggested, observing as she did so,—
"Our dear mother is getting old, you know, Harry, and is, I suppose, fatigued after her last evening's somewhat long walk,—however, I will just let her know what the time is." With a soft tread she ascended the stairs, and gave a gentle knock at the door, but received no answer,—She waited, listened, and knocked again,—and again waited,—still all was silent. "It is strange," she thought to herself—"she is not used to sleep so soundly." Once more she knocked, louder than before, but still, no voice was heard. She called gently, and then more strong; silence still reigned unbroken in the widow's chamber. An alarm which she could not account for, shot through her; with a trembling hand she tried the latch of the door, and half opening it, looked in.

The curtains were drawn down on one side of the bed, as when she left it three hours before. She

approached—drew them aside, and in a moment discovered all that her fears had conceived.—A loud piercing shriek burst from her unconscious lips, and she fell senseless on the floor. The noise occasioned by her fall, reached the listening ear of Harry, who immediately flew to his sister, to enquire the cause of her alarm, when he beheld the pale face of his adopted mother, as she lay a lifeless corpse in the bed; and saw at the same moment his beloved Julianna, laying, as he conceived, dead at his feet.

Scarcely knowing what he did, he sprang down the stairs, and rushed out of the house, and almost breathless entered one at some distance, and could only articulate;—"My sister, my mother;—help, help!"—before he fell, and lost awhile all sense, and consciousness.

The assistance which he had solicited, was promptly afforded, and when those who went entered the chamber, Julianna was just recovering from her swoon. A scene not only past description, but even above conception, immediately followed. Julianna beheld and *felt* herself motherless a *second* time. Delirium followed;—wildly she called upon her dear, dear mother, and then for her brother Harry. For two or three weeks, even her life was despaired of, and it was expected

that the grave which had but recently closed upon her last earthly friend, would soon receive her into its cold recess. Youth and vigour, however, triumphed over disease and dissolution. He in whose hands are "the issues of life and of death;" commanded, and the half-crushed plant recovered and revived.

In the mean time, the remains of Mrs. Harlington had been conveyed to the silent mansion of the dead, in which solemn procession, where most of the villagers attended, Harry followed as chief mourner, and then hastily returned, to strive to comfort his beloved sister.

The first symptoms which were afforded of the maid's recovery, produced in the mind of her affectionate brother feelings of the most extatic kind; with floods of undissembled tears of joy, and with a thankful heart, he thanked God for her recovery.

Information of the widow's death was at once conveyed to the heir of the estate; and as he had never approved of her possession of the cottage and garden,—although, as he possessed no power of depriving her of them, she retained their occupancy;—he rejoiced that the barrier to his wishes was thus removed, and he instantly desired his steward to take possession of them. Hence the

orphans were once again thrown upon the world. Those who had been born amidst plenty, and whose first years enjoyed all the delicate and fond attentions of parents and servants, were now made to feel that—"the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel." Julianna and Harry might have adopted the language of the man of Uz, when in the bitterness of his soul he said "He breaketh me with breach upon breach." One wave of sorrow had scarcely passed, before another came, threatening to overwhelm them.

The sudden and unexpected death of Mrs. Harlington had left what little property she had laid by for the benefit of her adopted children, entirely at the disposal of a distant and dissolute relation, as she had died without making a will. With the rapacity of a hungry vulture seizing upon its victim, he availed himself of his legal power, and deprived them at once of every thing they possessed.

One only blow seemed now necessary to complete the orphans' misery, and that was soon experienced. The small sum which remained to them at their mother's death, had been carefully deposited by Mrs. Harlington in the banking-house at Dartford. Two months only passed since her funeral, when a sudden alarm, as to the se-

curity of property, took place. The panic became general, and was attended in many instances by fatal consequences. An instant demand of payment at the bankers' hands followed, and the result was, the stoppage of payment, and the failure of the bank altogether.

By this sad circumstance, the last earthly dependence of the helpless orphans was destroyed, and they became houseless and homeless wanderers, realizing, most fully and fatally, the soul-touching lines of Young,—

What numbers, once in fortune's lap high fed,
Solicit the cold hand of charity;
To shock us more, solicit it in vain!

While these tragic scenes were performing, the eye of Omniscience was not closed, nor did His displeasure sleep. The inscrutable providence of God had indeed permitted acts to be performed of the most revolting kind, but He did not approve them. That He could have prevented them, is most certain; but the agency of His creatures would thereby have been so far invaded as to have removed from them the accountability of their nature. But who are we, that we should presume to arraign the ways of Infinite Wisdom? The end always makes plain what the present cannot explain.

The proud and cruel spirit of Sir Manwarring Somerville was noticed, and punished by the avenger of the oppressed, "Because he remembered not to shew mercy; as he delighted not in blessing, so it was far from him." Against him the decree went forth in the presence of the Judge of the whole earth,—“Write ye this man childless—a man that shall not prosper in his days.”—Jer. xxii. 30.

In vain might power essay or wealth be employed to alter that what had so long been determined. The sentence was irrevocable, the purpose of the Eternal was fixed. The haughty and the proud felt, but could not evade nor change it.

The heir of Sir Manwarring Somerville's extensive possessions, and the pride and idol of his affections, had chosen the profession of arms. A thirst for glory had induced him to become a soldier, and he bore a commission in the army of his native country. Already had fortune crowned him with success. Once and again he had returned from the scene of mortal conflict, to receive the gratulations of his friends, and the rewards which England is never backward to heap upon the titled or wealthy warrior. Neither were the praises and honours which his valour claimed, the

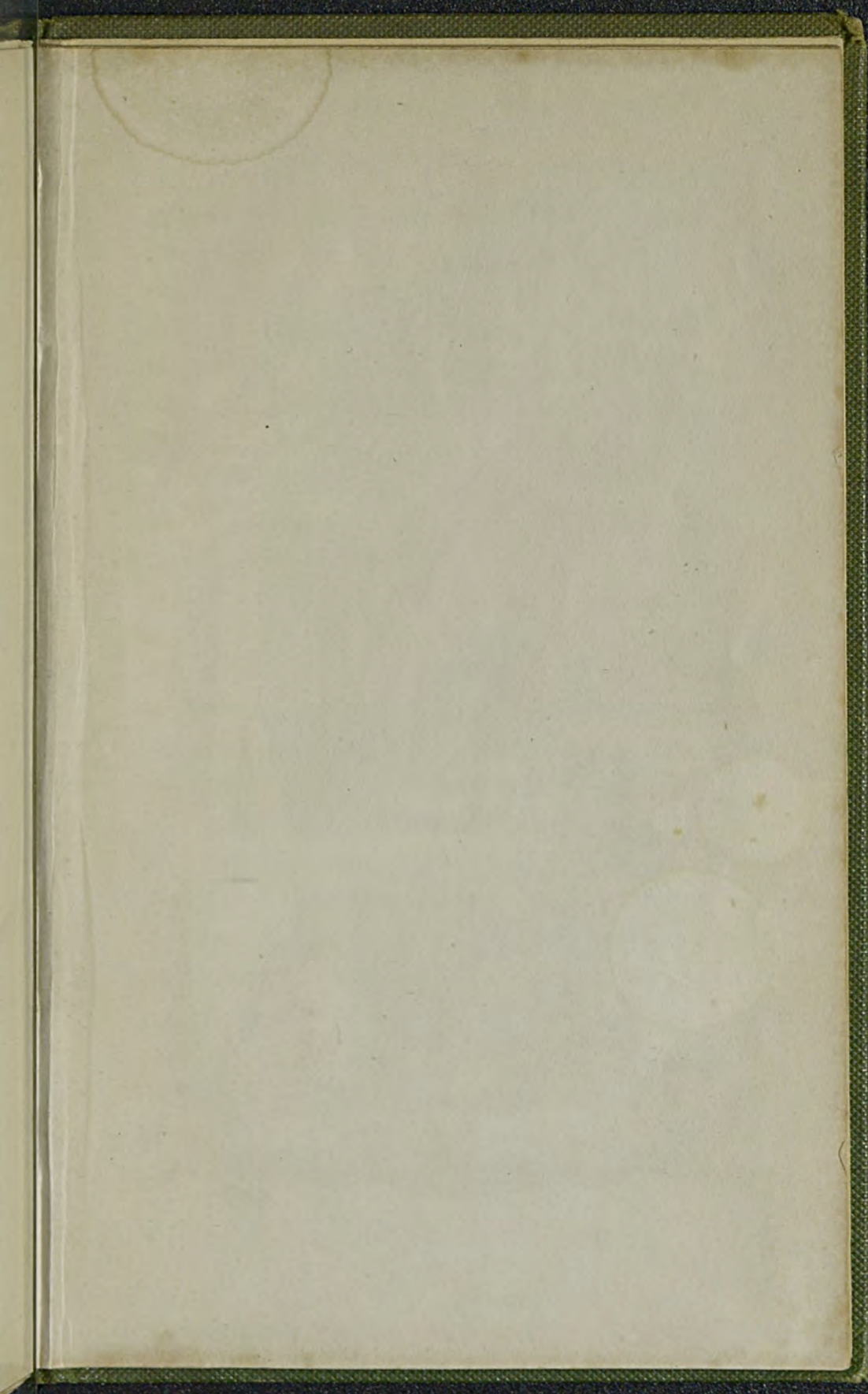
only object which made a return to the land of his birth welcome to him. No, a richer prize than these even caused his youthful heart to leap with exultation, as the lofty cliffs of Albion met his anxious gaze. The hand of one of England's fairest daughters—and the soldier's affianced bride—was ready to be bestowed upon him. The eve of his marriage came, but he was not permitted to wed; suddenly he was called to return to the battle field;—and, in the “pride of his glory” he went forth, calculating on the additional laurels with which he should return crowned, and lead the chosen of his heart to the altar. But his days were numbered; the sins of the father, even in this case, were visited upon his child;—the trumpet which sounded victory to the British arms, proclaimed also the death of Captain Somerville.

The tidings of the afflictive event fell upon the soul of the unfeeling knight, as he listened to it, like ice upon a summer plant. His fondly-cherished hopes of beholding a long line proceeding from his first-born, to grace his family and support his title, were suddenly destroyed, and the prolonging of his name upon earth, appeared a doubtful question.

One only son now remained to the haughty baronet. A youth of no common promise, on whom it now rested to sustain the honour of his father's house. He had just entered his twentieth year, when, like a beauteous opening flower, at whose root a destroying worm lay concealed,—he drooped—and died! leaving the knight childless.

For awhile, Sir Manwarring was inconsolable:—he thought of his son Frederick's death, and his cruel desertion of his children, and his proud heart smote secretly but sorely. His folly in rejecting the virtuous and exemplary object of his son's choice, because destitute of title and wealth, and his cruelty in closing his heart and his doors for ever against him, and his, ever appeared to his excited imagination in monstrous and glaring enormity. But how to make reparation—there was the question. Through the agency of Mr. St. Belmont, his legal adviser, now his only friend, he made secret enquiries after the neglected orphans;—but it was too late;—they were wanderers, no one knew whither, or rather, it was believed that death had removed them from the sorrows and wants by which they had so long been exercised.

The agony of Sir Manwarring's mind, as he re-





ceived this intelligence, became almost insupportable—a retributive providence appeared to follow him. Childless, and without a name to leave behind him; he saw his riches must pass into the hands of strangers, and his honours die with him. The happiness which he might have enjoyed, by making others so, he had ruthlessly put from him. A secret grief prayed upon his constitution, and a misery, which all the wealth which he possessed could neither remove or mitigate, fastened upon him.

It was a cold stormy night, in December, when a sportsman, accompanied by two dogs, wandered over the extensive and wild heaths of Chiselhurst. A heavy fog had enveloped the whole range of country, bringing on premature night. The heavy snow which had already fallen, and which still continued to drive furiously over the common, had closed up all traces of foot-path or carriage-road, and nothing met the eye, but one unbroken sheet of freezing snow.

The sportsman had been led out of his way by his own eager pursuit of a bird which he had wounded; and now felt himself perplexed which direction to take.

The gloom which had for some time obscured

his prospect, was, at length, dissipated by the rising of the moon, and looking anxiously round for some beacon to guide his course; he perceived, at a small distance from him, a rude shed, which he believed stood near the main road, and he made towards it. As he approached the crazy building, he imagined he heard the sound of human voices proceeding from it; he halted, and listened for a moment, and soon became convinced that he was not mistaken.

He advanced slowly and softly, with his finger upon the trigger of his piece, in order to protect himself from assault, in case of sudden surprise. Presently he distinguished shivering sobs, mingled with fervent prayer.

Still he advanced cautiously, and assisted by the clear rays of the moon, which shone brilliantly through the frosty atmosphere, and lighted up the fragile building; he looked through an aperture in the side next him, and discovered, with great surprise, two youths, a male and a female, nestled together in some dirty straw. His heart was touched with pity for them, and making a slight noise, that he might not, by his too sudden appearance, alarm them, he walked to the door, and soon gained an entrance. No necessity existed

that he should enquire if they were in want—he saw they were. The very natural impression instantly took possession of his mind, that they were of the gipsy tribe, (numbers of whom are frequently found in that neighbourhood,) and he asked—

“Where are your parents?”

The girl turned on him a look of mingled astonishment and supplication, and replied, while tears streamed down her interesting face.

“Oh, sir, we have no parents,—have pity on us, and help us.”

There appeared so much ingenuousness in the look and language of the speaker, that all doubt respecting sincerity was abandoned by the sportsman, and unwilling to keep them any longer in the cold, as he had made up his mind to assist them, he desired that they would rise and follow him, and immediately led them to a road-side inn, which now became visible by the clear moonlight.

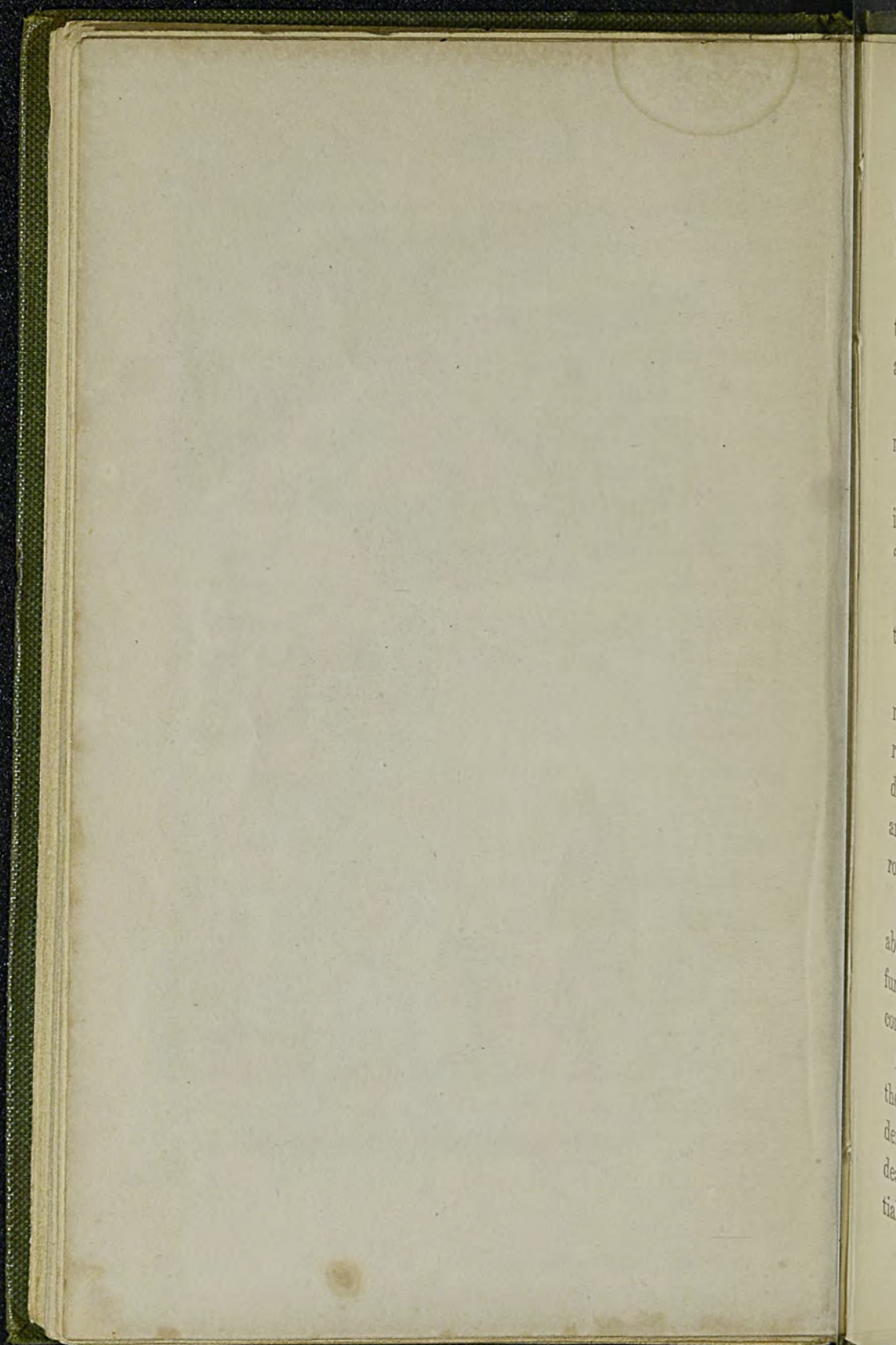
On entering a small room which was unoccupied, he placed them before a cheerful fire, and ordered the servant who attended to furnish them with something to eat and drink. As the appearance of the sportsman was an ample guarantee for payment, no hesitation was manifested, and

the required refreshment was soon brought; and while the girl sought to divide a loaf which had been placed upon the table, with her companion, her benumbed fingers were unable to hold the knife which she employed, and it fell on the floor. She stooped to take it up, and in so doing, a miniature, richly set, fell from her bosom. She strove to return it to its place, unobserved, but in vain; the eye of her benefactor, which had been fixed upon her, caught sight of it; and judging, from her evident confusion, that she had stolen it, he demanded a sight of the valuable trinket. The trembling girl drew it slowly from her bosom, presented it, and burst into tears.

Scarcely had the gentleman fixed his eyes upon the portrait, when he started with amazement at the resemblance of some well-known face, and instantly enquired, in a commanding tone, how and where she had obtained it; charging her, at the same time, with having, as he felt assured, committed a theft.

The lad, who until this moment, had looked on rather with an expression of alarm, than any other, now changed his appearance; a glow of powerful feeling flushed his youthful cheek; his fine and expressive eyes sparkled with unusual





brightness, and in an attitude and tone far above his years, exclaimed, "My sister is not a thief."

"How came you possessed of this?" repeated the gentleman, holding out the miniature, and still addressing the girl; "To whom did it belong?"

"It was my mother's, sir; my own dear, dear mother's," answered the weeping child.

"Your mother's?" rejoined Mr. St. Belmont, in amazement, for it was Sir Manwarring's friend, "what is your name?"

"Julianna Somerville, sir, and this is my brother Harry," was the reply.

"Merciful Providence!" exclaimed Mr. St. Belmont; and then gazing awhile on the orphans, he recognized the likeness of the parents in the children, and kindly pressing them by turns to eat and be comfortable, he wept over them with sorrow and joy.

That night, they were provided with comfortable beds at the inn, and the next day, after having furnished them with a change of dress, they accompanied him, in a post-chaise, to his own house.

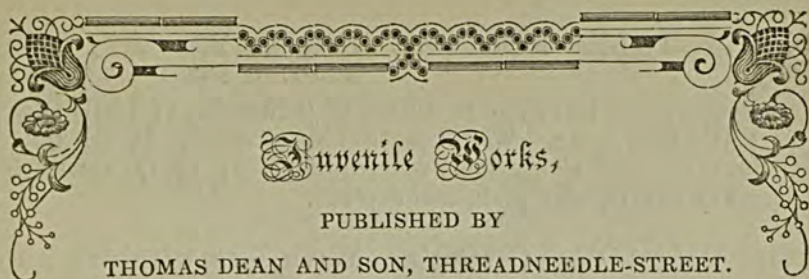
A little enquiry soon put him in possession of the eventful history of their sufferings and wanderings, from the time of Widow Harlington's death, up to the moment in which he providentially met with them in the shed.

His next care was to inform Sir Manwarring, by degrees, of the restoration of his long lost grandchildren. This he did prudently, for age and sorrow had reduced him to a state of almost childish weakness. Julianna and Harry were soon introduced to the apartment where he was seated. The old man recognized the likeness of his son Frederick in the countenance of Harry, instantly as they entered. The orphans approached the knight, who now shed tears of sorrow and of pleasure; he tenderly embraced them, and listened with delight, not unmingled with pain, to their artless tale of sorrow and sufferings. It was a sight such as some master genius would have delighted to witness, in order to have transferred the interesting scene, in living characters, to the canvas.

Preparations were then made to secure the whole of the knight's large possessions to the orphans, after his decease. The instrument was drawn up by Mr. St. Belmont, and signed by Sir Manwarring, in the presence of witnesses. He survived the act but a short time; but sufficient to afford pleasing evidence of sincere regret for his past conduct towards their parents and themselves, and his humble and exclusive dependence upon the merits of the Saviour for forgiveness and for everlasting life.

Julianna and Harry, fully alive to the highest emotions of gratitude, lived to become eminent blessings to the population around them; and practically consecrated themselves, and what they possessed, to Him and His service, whose watchful care and merciful providence had taken care of, and preserved them, even while friendless orphans.

THE END.



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