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# TWIN SISTERS.

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## THE TWIN SISTERS.

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ANNE and Susan Collins were twin sisters ; their mother was left a widow when they were two years old, and earned her living by being a nurse and helper in the families who had known her in past days. Her husband had been gardener at Mr. Thorne's, the Rector's ; she had been a servant in the same family : and when they married, their previous savings in service were laid out in stocking and furnishing a piece of ground and a cottage. It pleased God, however, about three years after their marriage, to afflict Collins with a severe illness, which prevented him from working in his garden. He soon after died.

A sister of Mrs. Collins was housekeeper in a gentleman's family, in a town some miles distant ; as soon as she heard of the trouble her sister was in, she came to see her. " I will," said she to the poor broken-hearted widow, " take charge of one of your children as soon as it is a little older, and in the mean time, I will pay you a sum weekly until you can get over your trouble, and can begin to work again. But, Mary, I must tell you



one thing, and that is, when I take charge of the child, you must give it up entirely, and must promise to let me bring it up in my own way, and not to see it very often. I wish to be as much its mother as if it were really my own child. I have a little money, you know ; and I will take care at my death to leave the child in comfort. I shall quit my present place in six months' time ; I can live well upon the pension my late master left me. My mistress then goes abroad ; and I shall not go with her. You know, Mary, I am twenty years older than you are, and have worked hard all my life : now, very soon, I shall have nothing to do but enjoy myself." Mrs. Collins was in so much grief, that she could only thank her sister for her kind intentions ; and though it was hard to part from her child, the knowledge that she had but little means of maintaining it made her feel thankful for her sister's offer. In a few weeks she was able to exert herself ; and from her former good conduct she found many friends glad to help her in forming her future course of life.

The Rector's family, with whom she had lived all her early life, were very kind to her. Mrs. Collins had been a pupil in the Rector's Sunday School ; and Miss Thorne, his sister, had trained her as a servant in her brother's family ; with all of whom she was a great favourite. Miss Thorne did not neglect her old servant now that she was in trouble, and often called to give her both help and advice. She could not, from all she had heard of Mrs. Collins's sister, be glad to know that she was to take one of the twins ; for the aunt was a



most worldly woman ; and Miss Thorne feared that she would not take a right view of the duty she had undertaken, that of "training up a child in the way it should go." "But," said Miss Thorne, "you must, Mrs. Collins, talk to your sister seriously : she is about to retire from her present active employment ; she may now have time to think how far it has fitted her to leave the world altogether : if she resolves, with the blessing of God, to lead her young charge in the right road, her new duties may indeed be of most important value to herself."

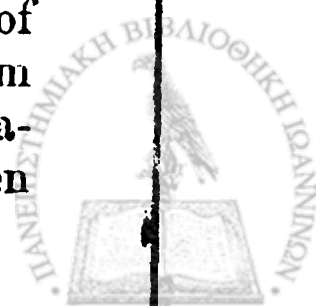
Mrs. Collins felt too well the truth of this good advice to neglect it when the time arrived that she was to part from her child. With many tears she repeated it to her sister, who seemed at first a little startled at the new view taken of her future duties. "Pray tell Miss Thorne, Mary," said she, "that I am no heathen : the child shall never disgrace its mother in any way." With this, poor Mrs. Collins was obliged to be content ; and now came the task of choosing which child she should part with. "O my dear sister, take which you will like the best ! I cannot look on—my heart is breaking !" Poor Mrs. Collins threw her apron over her head, and sank down upon a chair, waiting in silence the choice of her sister. "I think, Mary, I must take Susan, she looks healthier, and, perhaps, will not give me so much trouble as Anne, in the nursing way ; her eyes, too, are prettier,—I like dark eyes. Anne is quieter to be with you, and will not, perhaps, give you so much trouble. Will you go with me, dear Susy ?"





The child, just learning to speak, little knew the important question it was asked, when it answered, laughing, something that sounded very much like "Yes." Anne held by her mother's apron, looking very grave for such a little girl. "Mary," said the aunt, "I shall choose Susan; and to-night I will call for her, and take her with me as I come back from the place I am going to visit." Still Mrs. Collins remained silent; she was praying to God to strengthen her in this heavy trial, and she did not pray in vain: in a few minutes the apron was pulled away from her face, and she said, "God's will be done! take care, my dear sister, and O may the Lord direct you aright in the awful charge you have undertaken!" Her earnest manner struck her sister, and for a few moments affected her to tears—she was really a kind-hearted woman, though very worldly. Whatever was her after-conduct, at that moment she was sincere; and she assured Mrs. Collins that she would take care that Susan should go to school, and be taught to read and pray, and feel that her Bible was the only book in which true wisdom could be found. She then left Mrs. Collins to the sad task of preparing the unconscious child to leave its first home.

Mrs. Collins felt that her trial was one of necessity: her neighbours, willing as they were to help her in her difficulties, could hardly be expected to take charge, when she was absent, of two young children; and the little Anne, from being a very quiet child, was far more of a favourite than her noisy sister Susan. When seven



o'clock came, Mary looked down the long green lane, and saw her sister coming towards her in a small covered cart; her heart almost failed her, and she hugged little Susan closer to her side.

The child looked and laughed at the smiling face of its aunt, who held a large cake in her hand. "Will you come with me, and have this nice cake?" After one long kiss from her mother, Susan was soon sitting on her aunt's knee, busily employed in eating her cake. Mary watched the cart until it turned the end of the long lane, and then slowly went into her humble room, shut the door, and clasped the child that still was left to her close in her arms. Long after it was quite dark Mary remained seated in her low chair: Anne was fast asleep: but the poor mother knew no sleep for that night, nor for many following ones.

Mrs. Collins was promised that Susan should be brought to her once in twelve months; and at the end of the first year Susan and her aunt came to spend a few hours with her. How much the visit had been thought of by Mrs. Collins! She was delighted to see that Susan was looking very well; but it gave her a great pang to find that the child scarcely noticed either Anne or her mother. Susan looked plump and rosy by the side of Anne, who had just caught a bad cold. Her dress was very much smarter than her mother liked to see, but she feared to offend her sister by finding fault with it, and, therefore, could only sigh to see that even Susan, though so young, despised the clean but coarse



pinafore of her sister Anne, and showed her the pretty pink frock she had on. "I dress Susan like a little lady, sister Mary, because I think I have now a right to be a lady myself: I have nothing to do but to enjoy myself." Mary could have told her that Miss Thorne did not think having plenty to do at all unladylike. She employed herself all day long in active duties, and still was what Mrs. Collins thought a real lady.

"I have brought Anne a necklace, Mary; let me put it on her neck. Susan has one like it; when she behaves badly I take it away from her; it is the only way I can keep her in order—she is quite a spirit, I can tell you. Sometimes I think I had better have taken your quiet little Anne; and then I tell Susan that I will send her home."—"No, Aunt!" said Susan, hearing the end of the speech, "I won't go home." "Well, darling, you shall not, if you are good, and do not spoil your clothes. I have not thought yet about sending her to school, Mary; she is not quite four years old."—"Anne can say her letters," said Mrs. Collins, quietly; "and likes to hear me read little stories to her already."—"Well, Mary, I shall see about it when I get home; I have not forgotten my promise to you, I can assure you."

The time of parting came; again Mrs. Collins watched the cart turning the corner of the green lane, and again she entered her humble room, and closed the door. Anne again felt her mother's tears fall upon her face. It was the time for Anne to say her prayers, and ask God's bless-



ing upon her mother and sister, and thank Him for the mercies of the day past. Anne's little heart had been quite hurt at the rudeness Susan had shown to her humble playthings; and she did not at all like parting with her pretty necklace. But Mrs. Collins told Anne that it was not fit for a little girl living in a cottage, and that Miss Thorne would not like her to wear it. Anne was very fond of Miss Thorne, and she very quietly parted with her gay row of red beads, rather than displease Miss Thorne. Susan, too, had to part with her necklace for being naughty as she rode home; but it was given to her again, from her screaming so loud, that her aunt felt ashamed for the people passing by to hear her cries. They had many miles to ride, and it was dark before they reached home. Susan was cross and tired. Her aunt put her to bed, and told her she could not stop to hear her say her prayers that night, she might say them to herself when she got into bed. Susan began to say her prayers, but the pillow was very soft, and when she had got to the end of a few words she was fast asleep. Susan's aunt, too, forgot that night to thank her Maker for permitting her to enjoy the mercies of the past day. But He who causes his sun to shine, and his rain to fall, upon the unthankful as well as the thankful, allowed her to sleep in peace.

When Susan and Anne were twelve years old, a great difference was seen between them; they did not seem like sisters at all. Mrs. Collins loved them both tenderly: Susan could not be expected to return her love as Anne did, who



had never left her mother's side ; but she could yet have been taught to pay her more respect than she did at her yearly visits. Susan's aunt had become very stout, and did not like to move about or do much herself ; and she suffered Susan to play with rude girls older than herself, who went to the same school, " Because," she said, " Susan moped about, when she could not have her share of play ; and she did not like to see her pout, and spoil her pretty face." Susan, though so young, soon found that she had only to cry and make a noise, if she wished to get out to her companions. Susan's aunt lived in a large town ; her house was a small one, but it might have been made a happier home than it was. Susan could have been of great service to her aunt, by helping her to do without a servant ; and her aunt would have been a great deal better if she had worked herself. The servant, Sarah, had not been brought up with the fear of God before her eyes, and therefore deceived her mistress whenever she could, and coaxed and bribed Susan into doing so for her. Poor Susan was, indeed, to be pitied at this time ; her aunt certainly never forgot the promise she had made to her sister about sending Susan to school, but she chose a very unfit school for her. She made her, too, read her Bible ; but as she took no delight in hearing it read herself, and could not explain its comforts to Susan, the child soon looked upon the daily task of reading a chapter as one to be got rid of, if possible. The Sunday was no day of proper peace and comfort to her. Her aunt used to go to church in the morning ;



and in the afternoon she would have the large Bible placed on the table before the window, and amuse herself by looking, with Susan, at the passers-by. In the evening they would have friends to take tea, and talk about their neighbours ; and very bad ones they must have had, for Susan never heard any one thing good about them from her aunt's visitors. Susan was not allowed to attend the Sunday-school ; her aunt had been much displeased by one of the ladies there saying, that Susan's bonnet was a very smart one, and that she would look far better in one of plain straw, like her sister Anne's. The lady was a friend of Miss Thorne's, and had been asked by her to inquire about Susan. But Susan's aunt did not wish it to be known that she had a sister working for her living, and therefore she put a stop to Susan's going to the Sunday-school. Susan was sorry for this ; she had begun to feel a pleasure in joining her voice in a hymn of praise, in learning the lessons of the school, and in earning rewards, which were an encouragement to her.

Susan, when she last saw Anne, had been a little surprised to see how active her sister had become. Mrs. Collins could now be absent from home with great comfort ; Anne would clean the room, light the fire, and help her mother in many ways. Mrs. Collins took in plain work ; and Anne could work with her needle very well for so young a girl.

Susan spent a day at her mother's when she was nearly fifteen years old ; her aunt had left her at her mother's house while she paid a



visit. Anne had taken great delight in preparing for the visit of her sister. James, the son of the gardener at Mr. Thorne's, had given her a fine bunch of flowers. They were put in water very carefully. Anne's little table and stool were placed in the green porch of the house; and here Anne sat with her work, looking anxiously down the green lane, before eight in the morning, that she might catch the first glimpse of the covered cart. But nine, and ten o'clock came—and no Susan; just before eleven however, the noise of wheels was heard—Susan came. Her aunt, when she set off to visit her friend, promised to call for her in the evening. The sisters kissed each other, and were really happy to meet; but Susan soon got tired of the humble cottage. The porch she would not sit in; it was cold. "Cannot you put away that work, Anne, now mother is out? I hate work myself; aunt makes me do some for her, but I never work so neatly as I could, because then I shall not have much to do. Now, Anne, that stitching you are doing I am sure I should never like to learn at all."—"O Susan," said Anne; "if you could help mother, I am sure you would not mind trying to stitch, would you?"—"O, I don't know; I am only fourteen years old; no one can expect me to work neatly. I heard aunt tell my governess so; she did not know that I heard her, for she is always trying to make me like to work; but I think it is worse than reading."—"O Susan! what would Miss Thorne say if she were to hear you talk so? I wish you were at our school; to-day I have a holiday because you are here.



Should you like to see my prizes?"—"Well, there does not seem anything else to do, so you may show them to me if you like, Anne."

Anne then pulled out from under her bed a small square box, and took from her pocket a little bright key; she unlocked the box, and then carefully took out a very nice Prayer-book and Bible, and several other books. How proud she felt to be able to show them to Susan!

Susan looked at them for a few minutes. "I have some gayer books than these dull-looking brown ones, Anne. I could show you a great many. I read them, too, much oftener than I do my Bible." Anne covered her books in great surprise, to think that they were not more admired. A half-crown was now shown to Susan. "The Rector gave me this, because Miss Thorne told him that I had helped mother to make his last set of shirts! I am keeping it to buy a frock for the winter. I have a shilling and fourpence besides."—"Why, Anne! you are a little miser, I declare," said Susan. "I never can keep a penny, I am sure; but aunt says it is of no use to be so saving; and I am sure she does not save much herself. When she is angry, she tells me that she is getting rid of all her money, and that when she is gone I must work for my living; but I do not believe her. But come, put away all these stupid things, I am getting quite hungry. When does mother come home?" Anne told her how sorry Mrs. Collins had been to be obliged to go to the Hall, but it was ironing day there; she had left home as early as four o'clock in the



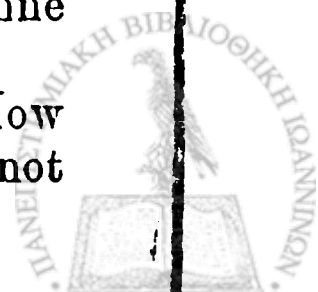


morning, that she might be able to return at twelve, in time for dinner.

“ I can get the dinner ready,” said Anne. So having trimmed the fire, she took down a small frying-pan, cut a few slices of bacon and put them into it. She then took from the cupboard some cold potatoes, and cut them small, to fry when the bacon was done. “ Is this what you always have for dinner, Anne ?” said Susan. “ O dear no ! this is quite a treat for you.”—“ I don’t think it will be much of a treat to me, Anne : why it is all fat !” Anne turned away her head and her tears began to flow. Anne did not often cry ; but then it was hard to have her tempting dinner so scorned. Susan was silent ; for some little time she felt sorry to see Anne’s distress. “ Well, Anne, after all, I do think I shall like it : how nice it does smell !” Anne smiled through her tears, and said, “ Mother will bring you an egg, I hope ; James has promised me one of his white hen’s eggs : how glad I shall be if he can give it to mother to-day !”

The dinner was taken up, and covered to keep hot ; the cloth laid on the round table ; but still no Mrs. Collins. “ Do run out, Anne, and see if she is coming : I am quite tired of waiting.” Anne was very hot with cooking the dinner, but she did not often think of herself, and ran directly to the bottom of the lane, where she could see across the common : Mrs. Collins was just coming out of the house : she made great haste, and Anne and she came into the cottage together.

Mr. Collins kissed Susan with great joy. “ How you are grown, my dear child ! But you are not



so rosy as Anne, though you are a little taller!" —"I should be sorry," said Susan, quite affronted, "to have such a red face as Anne has; and I do not think I have a great brown mark all round my neck; and I am sure Anne's fingers and arms are not white like mine. Aunt says she would not have me such a country puss as Anne is, for anything." Mrs. Collins could almost have scolded Susan for her pertness, glad as she was to see her; but she was truly happy to see that Anne did not mind her remarks at all; she certainly looked at her brown fingers once or twice, but seemed as if she was contented in knowing that they could handle the needle, and were generally much more usefully employed than the white ones of her sister Susan. Anne said grace; and the dinner was soon over without any egg. James could not give one away just now—it was a secret why; the truth is he was rearing a chicken, that Anne might have eggs of her own; it was to be a little present for her on the next May-day. Susan managed to eat quite as much dinner as was good for her, in spite of the fat bacon.

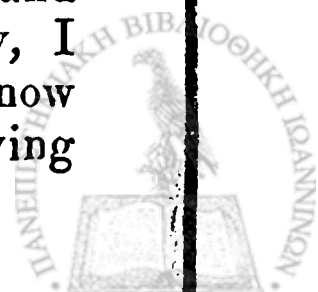
Anne washed the dinner things, and put them away; her mother was very much tired, and glad to sit down, for she had been ironing all day. She could talk with Susan about many things, while Anne was thus busy; she was grieved to find that Susan cared for little except her dress and play, took no delight in her school, and boasted how often she could stay at home. "When aunt is very dull I always know it, for she says, 'Susan, darling! it will rain I am sure; and you



will take cold if you go out ; you shall stay at home and amuse me.' Our servant Sarah often laughs, and mimics her ; but then sometimes, when it is raining very hard, she makes me go, if she thinks I shall be in the way, or if any one is coming to sit with her." Many things of this kind Mrs. Collins was grieved to hear ; and she could only try to make Susan feel the value of what she was now so glad to throw away, but with little success.

Miss Thorne happened to call on Mrs. Collins that afternoon ; and when she saw Susan she made up her mind to stop a little time and see what kind of a girl she was. Of Anne Miss Thorne was very fond, and had taken a great deal of trouble to make her what she was,—a child brought up in the fear and love of God, happy in herself, and a blessing to her mother.

"I suppose Susan," said Miss Thorne, "you quite enjoy this country visit, you see your mother and sister so very seldom?"—"O" replied Susan, "I like seeing them of course ; but I like our town much better, there is something to be seen, and there I have a great many play-fellows. Anne seems to do nothing but work, and learn, all day long."—"Well," said Miss Thorne, "do not you think that Anne seems very happy?" Susan was not at all bashful ; she had been made forward by her aunt, who liked, she said to hear her talk, and did not approve of the old maxim, that little girls should be seen and not heard ; so she replied.—"She is happy, I suppose in her way, because she does not know what fun is. I like running about, and playing



at hide-and-seek ; but aunt does not let me, if she knows it.”—“I think,” said Miss Thorne, “if you could see Anne running about in the meadow, on a fine holiday, with her play-mates, picking cowslips to make balls, and daisies to fasten on the thorn branches, you would say she could enjoy herself as much as you do playing at ‘hide-and-seek’ in the dusty streets with rude boys and girls ! I have seen Anne look very happy, sitting in the porch reading her evening chapter to her mother, and hearing her mother explain to her the parts that she did not quite understand ; or on a Sunday morning, walking down the green lane, while the church-bells are ringing, all her lessons perfect, and hoping to get more good tickets to add to her little box of treasures when she comes home ! What do you do on a Sunday morning Susan ?”—“Why, ma’am, when aunt gets up in time, she used to hear me say my Catechism, because she promised mother that she would ; but now, from not saying it often, she says I tire her patience, because I cannot answer quickly. And I must learn it just before I am confirmed ; I shall not be confirmed until I am fifteen ; I shall have plenty of time to get it by heart. I did learn it at the Sunday-school : but I do not go there now ; aunt says the ladies are partial and unjust, and give the prizes to the little common children that wear stuff frocks and straw cottage bonnets without any bows ; but I like even now to look at my good tickets, and keep them, though aunt thinks I burnt them, as she told me to do.”—“Well,” said Miss Thorne, “I am pleased that you like



to look at the good tickets ; but I do not like to hear you speak so lightly of deceiving your aunt. I am afraid she does not know that the ladies at the school have no reason to be so unjust as to give rewards to those only who dress plainly ; if you had deserved a prize, rely on it you would have had one. The ladies thought you would be quite as happy in a plain bonnet as in a smart one ; and so you would, I dare say ?” Susan made no reply : she had been taught to think that a pink bonnet was very desirable to have, because all the girls looked at it, and wished they had one like it. “If I ever see your aunt, I shall ask her to allow you to go to the Sunday-school again ; I know one of the ladies there, and will write to her about you.”—“Aunt does not get up early enough now, I am afraid,” said Susan, “to let me go ; and Sarah, with whom I sleep, will not let me get up before her. Last Sunday she said it was a good thing there were church-bells to wake her, or she should not have been up in time to get the breakfast ready by ten o’clock. Aunt did not know that we were so late, that was one good thing.”—“O my dear child,” said Miss Thorne, quite shocked to see Susan laughing, “do you know that it was God’s day you were wasting away so ?—that ‘He chooses Sunday for his own ?’”

“O yes, I know all that hymn by heart ; aunt gave me sixpence for saying it to a lady she used to live with ; I learnt it at the Sunday-school. I think it is a very pretty hymn.”—“It is a pretty hymn,” said Miss Thorne ; “I hope you may be yet taught to feel the truth that it tells you. I feel

anxious for you, both on your own account and your mother's. We must all try to make you as happy as Anne is. Do you see how surprised she looks to hear you talk so lightly of God's holy day?"—"I go to church always once," said Susan, rather pertly, not quite liking that Anne in a brown stuff frock should be thought happier than a girl who had a choice of three or four smart dresses; "my aunt says Anne is obliged to go oftener, because mother is poor, and the great people would not help her else. I always read a chapter aloud on Sunday afternoon; aunt tells me not to mind her eyes being shut, she is not always asleep."—"Well, my dear," said Miss Thorne, "I will send you some little books to read; perhaps your aunt may like you to read them to her; at all events, you can read them yourself. You speak of having forgotten the Church Catechism: pray begin to learn it again; you must not think of it only as some task to be learned by rote, before you can be confirmed. You will be expected by the clergyman who will examine you to be able to answer any question in it, and to show that you understand the answers. It is of no use learning to repeat things by heart unless you understand them. Do you know what being confirmed is Susan?"—"O yes, ma'am, all my class will be confirmed with me; we shall all have new frocks, and we are not to wear bonnets, and we are to walk two and two up the church, and kneel round the communion-table; and the Bishop will put his hands upon our heads, and bless us; and the church will be full of people. Aunt says



she shall sit in the gallery, because there she can see better.”—“All this is quite true Susan ; but there is a great deal more, that you seem to know nothing about. Anne, I trust, will be confirmed in another year ; she has a very different notion from yours of what being confirmed is. When you were baptized, or christened, Susan, you entered the Church of Christ ; but you were too young to know or promise anything for yourself. Your godfathers and godmothers, therefore, did promise for you, that you should renounce all wickedness, believe all the articles of the Christian faith, keep God’s holy commandments, and walk in them all the days of your life. It should have been their duty to see as far as they could, that you did avoid all wickedness and keep God’s commandments ; but they have not done so for you, Susan. I fear you do not even know the commandments ?”—“I know that there are ten, ma’am ; but I cannot say all the long ones.”—“Anne shall repeat them to you, Susan.”

When Anne had finished, Miss Thorne went on to tell Susan, that she was now coming to an age when she was thought to be old enough to know and understand what had been promised for her when she was an infant, and to be then able to promise with God’s help to do the same for herself—that the Bishop would lay his hands upon her, to confirm and strengthen her in the good resolutions she then made ; and would pray for the blessing of God upon her, to keep and defend her, that she might increase more and more in his Holy Spirit, and finally come unto God’s everlasting kingdom. “You never heard



of this before, I dare say, Susan?"—"No, ma'am," said Susan; "my aunt told me that she hoped I should not be so wild and rude after I was confirmed; and I am sure I shall be good after the Bishop has blessed me."—"But you must not expect, Susan, that the Bishop's laying his hands upon you is to make you good; unless you pray yourself for the blessing of God to make you good, you had better stay at home; for it is only mocking God to kneel down, and expect that his blessing is to fall upon you, when you will not ask for it by praying to Him. Anne will tell you that she prepares herself for confirmation by praying to God every day to give her his grace, that she may be able to take upon herself to keep all God's holy commandments, and to receive his blessing. I think, dear Susan, you are quite old enough to know how wicked it is to mock God, by kneeling down and saying what you are not thinking about! You do say your prayers, Susan, morning and evening, do you not?"—"O yes, when I do not forget it, I do; but sometimes I am too tired. Aunt used to hear me say my prayers when I was not quite perfect in them; now she says that, as I can say them without missing a word, she need not hear them."

"Then, Susan, I suppose you never thank God for any mercy that happens to you in the past day? Your aunt was very ill a short time since; I heard she was very near death; did you thank God when the doctor said she was out of danger? If you had lost her, you would indeed have been in trouble. You cannot, like Anne, almost get

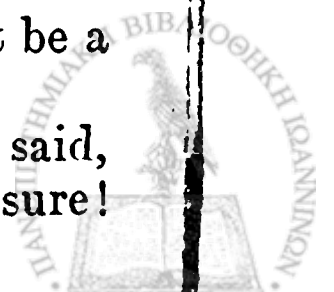




your own living. You would have been obliged to come back to your mother's cottage, that you now seem to despise, and be a burden to her and Anne till you could learn to do something useful!" Susan was a little surprised. "Suppose," said Miss Thorne, "that you had died, when you had the scarlet fever last year, do you think you would have gone to heaven? Did you thank God for sparing you a little time longer, that you might try to live as if you hoped to go there?"—"No!" said Susan, "but I was very glad to be out of the bed-room. Aunt says I shall never have the scarlet fever again; and when she dies I shall have all her money. I don't wish her to die, because I love her very much, and she is not often cross to me."

Susan seemed to have made up her mind that all would go well with her; and Miss Thorne and her mother could only agree in hoping it would please God to hear their prayers for her, and give her a new heart. "I fear," said Miss Thorne to Mrs. Collins, when the girls did not hear them, "that Susan's aunt is spending her money a little too fast to leave her niece much when she dies. Her health is failing; and what with company, and doctors' bills, I should think her expenses must be much beyond her income. I must now leave you; I have taken up a good deal of the little time Susan has to be with you: but I do indeed feel the difference between the sisters to be an awful one, and I am sure to you it must be a heart-rending trial."

As soon as Miss Thorne was gone, Susan said, "Well, I have had a pretty long lecture, I am sure!



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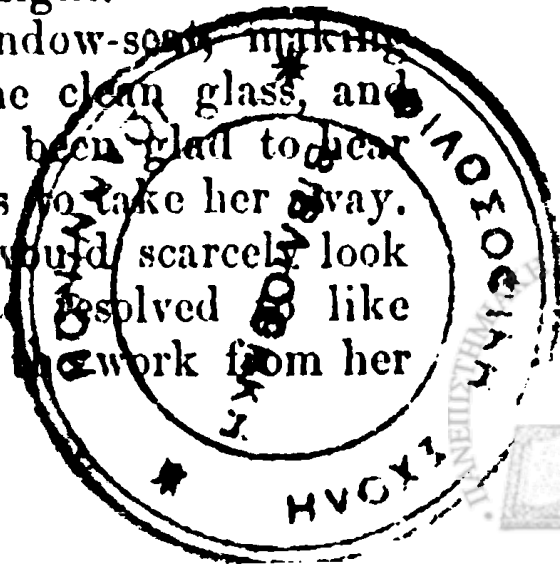
THE TWIN SISTERS.

ΣΟΦΙΑΣ ΑΝΤΩΝΙΑΔΟΥ<sup>25</sup>

I ought to be made good. You are used to them, I suppose, Anne? How grave you looked all the time! you seemed afraid to speak or move. My aunt likes any one to be able to give an answer without being shy; though she says I do talk too much for her head to bear sometimes. I shall tell her all that Miss Thorne said to me about being confirmed. I am sure I wish to be good as much as any one, and I think I am as good as any one in my school. Come, Anne, do not make any more long faces. I should not wonder if I were quite as good as you are, after all. Miss Thorne will not examine me for confirmation: I am sure I shall be able to get a ticket. I wonder aunt is not come; it is getting late!"

"The church clock has only just struck five," said Mrs. Collins, who had been listening to her little girls; "your aunt cannot be here until seven: and you shall have some tea before she comes. Susan, I fear you will find it dull to be with us. Doing nothing makes the day very long; you do not seem to like either working or reading; you will not go out because you will be tired, or you might go in the meadow with Anne, and see the lambs. Anne is very fond of watching them playing about. One of them knows her, and runs to her as soon as she comes in sight."

Susan knelt upon the window-seat, making marks with her fingers on the clean glass, and said nothing; she would have been glad to hear the wheels of the cart that was to take her away. Anne's bunch of flowers she would scarcely look at: she, indeed, seemed quite resolved like nothing. Anne at last took her work from her



mother's basket, and began to stitch a collar. "I never shall like work," said Susan, "even if I were to be paid for it. How you stitch away, Anne! While I have been talking, you have nearly done that long row!" "This is the last collar, Susan, for the shirts we are making; and when we are paid, mother is to have a new shawl!"

Anne laid down her work to think how happy she should be to go to the shop with her dear mother and choose one. "I suppose," said Susan, "you will buy some brown thing or other." "Indeed," said Anne, "mother's shawl is to be a very nice one! but I must not lose any more time." The kettle was now boiling, and Anne set the tea-things, and put a little tea in the pot, as a treat for the visitor; but she did not tell her that they very seldom had tea. Anne recollected the remark about her dinner. "You don't take sugar," said Susan, helping herself to another spoonful; "but I suppose you don't like brown sugar; I think any kind is better than none."

Mrs. Collins could have told her that they both liked sugar very much, but that they could not afford to use it. "O! here is aunt, I declare!" cried Susan, jumping up, and nearly upsetting the little round table. "How glad I am to see you, my dearest aunt!"—"And, darling Susan, I am quite pleased to see that you are not tired of your poor old aunt yet." Mrs. Collins thought the hearty welcome was from her being tired of a day of perfect idleness; but she felt sorry to part, and did not say so. Anne kissed her sister, and gave her the bunch of roses which she had

carefully tied up, but Susan left them behind her on the window-seat.

“Mother,” said Anne, when they were gone, “how sorry Susan will be to think she has left these beautiful flowers behind!”—“No, my dear, I fear Susan does not care about anything that we have to give her.” Mrs. Collins sighed as she said this, and Anne saw more than one tear fall upon the work her mother was doing. Anne felt, too, that her sister had taken no pleasure in anything she had done for her. “I wonder, mother, what kind of girls Susan likes? They must not have brown fingers, like mine, mother; must they? But I have finished the collar,—here it is; to-morrow the shirts will be done: and how glad I shall be to see the new shawl! But, mother, we must not buy a dark one, because Susan does not like dingy colours.”

The time came at last when Anne was to be confirmed. Mr. Thorne had given notice in the church that he would examine the young people on certain evenings, which he mentioned, before the Bishop was to arrive. Anne felt that she could answer almost any question that Miss Thorne used to ask her, but she was a little afraid of the Rector. “Mother, you must come with me as far as the green gate; and if I am not long, you will wait for me I know.” As they went along Mrs. Collins asked her daughter many questions that she thought the Rector might ask, and Anne replied to them all, and, indeed, seemed to be quite aware that she was about to enter on the solemn duty of taking upon herself to walk in God’s commandments all the days of her life.



After Anne went into the house Mrs. Collins waited patiently at the green gate of the Rector's garden, and at last Anne came running down the path looking very happy, holding up a ticket in her hand. "O mother, the Rector was so kind! He asked me a great many questions, told me not to hurry myself, and then he said, 'Anne Collins, I have very great pleasure in giving you a ticket, for I perceive you know and feel the nature of the duties you are about to undertake. You have answered the questions on the Church Catechism in a manner creditable to yourself, to your mother, and to your school. God's blessing has been upon you thus far—may it remain with you for ever! After the Confirmation is over, I shall speak with you about your receiving the Holy Communion.' I feel so happy, dear mother! I wish Susan had been examined with me. I wonder if she could have answered all the questions? One of the girls, Jane Roberts, was standing by the Rector's side when I went in, He told her that he could not give her a ticket, for all that she knew about the Catechism was, that she had a Christian name and a surname. She looked so ashamed!"

"I have been thinking, my dear, a great deal about Susan," said Mrs. Collins. "Miss Thorne, I know, sent her the little books she promised her: if she has read them carefully, they may, perhaps, make her more serious in thinking about confirmation."—"Take my ticket, mother," said Anne, "for fear I should lose it. When I get home I will try and write down on my slate all the questions Mr. Thorne asked me; some

of them I could not answer, but he said, 'Don't be afraid, Anne Collins; take a little time to think.' "

When they reached home the postman met them, and told them he had a letter for them. It was from Mrs. Collins's sister; she was very ill, and wished to see Mrs. Collins and Anne, if they could come to her by the next waggon. Anne was to be confirmed on Thursday, and they could leave home very well the day after. It would cost them a shilling each: but this Mrs. Collins knew her sister would gladly repay her. Anne, on the Thursday morning, was up very early. When she knelt down to say her prayers, she did not forget to pray that God would let his blessing rest upon her that day, and confirm her good desires and resolutions to live according to his holy will and word.

The confirmation was to take place at eleven o'clock, but at nine o'clock Anne was quite ready. Her hair was neatly combed back from her happy little face; a clean white tippet and blue cotton frock had been carefully ironed in Mrs. Collins's best style. The box that held Anne's treasures was opened, that the ticket might be had, and the words, "Examined for confirmation, and approved," were read over a great many times. "I wish, mother, I might keep this ticket all my life." The girls were to assemble at their Sunday-school room, where Miss Thorne, and the other ladies, kindly met them, and walked thence to the church. It was a very fine day; the birds were singing, and the butterflies flying about with their gay wings of blue and gold. The church bells were



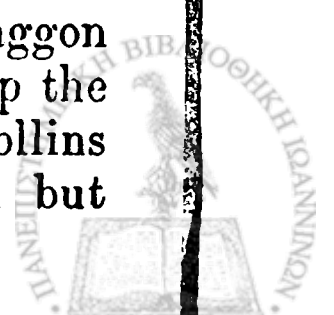
ringing, and a great number of people were waiting in the churchyard to see the procession of young Christians going to be confirmed. There was a large number of boys, as well as girls; but all behaved with quietness and order, and when the solemn service began, you might have heard a pin drop in the church.

The Bishop said, when the service was over, that he had never seen a more attentive congregation, from the youngest to the eldest; and Mr. Thorne felt very much pleased with his little flock. The children parted at the Sunday-school, and Anne's mother was waiting there for her. "O dear mother, how happy I feel, but yet I have been crying. When I felt the Bishop's hand upon my head, and heard him pray to God that I might continue his for ever, I responded to the prayer from my heart, and humbly trust that God will hear it."

"You must pray to Him continually, my dear child, to allow you to 'increase more and more in his Holy Spirit.' We will read the service over again when we get home; I have the rest of the day to myself, I am thankful to say."

Anne and her mother ate their humble dinner that day in more than usual peace; they spent the rest of it in reading over the "Confirmation Service," and talking about the holy sacrament of the Lord's Supper. In another month Anne was to receive it.

At six the next day they set off in the waggon to see Susan and her aunt. They walked up the hills, as the waggon went but slowly. Mrs. Collins was dull and low-spirited, and could talk but



little to Anne, who amused herself at first in picking wild flowers, and tying them up in bunches, when she got back into the waggon. A woman was in it, who had come a long way; she had a baby—a very lively one, too, for he would not sleep himself, nor allow his mother to do so, though she, poor thing! was very weary. Anne offered to take the infant from her; the offer was most thankfully accepted. Anne was very fond of babies, and the little one was quite pleased with his kind little nurse.

It was late before they reached the town. When they got down at the inn, the mother of the baby took it from Anne. "I have come a long way," she said, "from Falmouth; I landed there last week from Lisbon; open that basket, you will see some very large oranges; I will give you a couple for your kindness in taking my baby; I have been able to get a little sleep, and I sadly wanted it."

Anne was much pleased with her present; the oranges were, indeed, large ones. Mrs. Collins and Anne were directed by the waggoner to the house of Susan's aunt; it was a small one, at the bottom of the street. They knocked at the door several times, but no person opened the door; at last Mrs. Collins opened it herself, and they went in. The kitchen was on one side of the passage, and a pretty little parlour on the other, but no one was to be seen. Mrs. Collins then went up stairs, leaving Anne to sit in the parlour: it was very gaily furnished; but everything was as dusty as if it had been placed in the highroad all the past hot day. Anne soon heard her mother





call her, and she went up stairs. Mrs. Collins was much shocked to find her sister ill in bed.

Susan and the maid had gone to see a show that had just come into the town, and had left the poor sick woman alone for more than an hour. "O my dear sister, Susan is no comfort to me now," said the aunt; "she never comes near me, if she can help it. Not a drop of tea or gruel have I tasted since three o'clock; and my medicine, too,—I ought to have taken that at six o'clock." Mrs. Collins was hurt, and grieved, to hear so sad an account of Susan. "Sit by your aunt, Anne, and I will go below, and get her something to drink." The poor sick woman looked at Anne, who felt great concern, and could not help showing it. "Your eyes are kinder ones than Susan's, though they are not so handsome. I cannot take my medicine now, Anne; I must have something to drink, I am dying of thirst; feel my hand, how hot it is: but my head feels much hotter!"

"Let me bathe your forehead, dear aunt," said Anne; "this night-cap is very hot, shall I take off the bandage?"—"Ah! yes, do; Susan would not wait when I asked her. I have rung my bell a dozen times; I did not think they would have both left me! I got into a passion with Susan, because she would wear her best bonnet; she put it on before my face; she knew I was too weak to hinder her."—"Do you think," said Anne, "that you could eat an orange?"—"What a question!" said the sick woman, fretfully; "what is the use of asking me to have what I cannot get in the town if I were to give

a guinea for one?"—"You shall have one, dear aunt, for much less than that. Look! did you ever see such large ones as I have taken out of my basket?"—"O make haste, cut one directly; it will cure me, I know, to have one!" said the aunt.

Mrs. Collins now came in with a little gruel; she had found the kitchen fire not quite out, and had made a cupful. She was surprised to see the wanton waste around her there: pieces of bread thrown about on the table, even on the floor; arrow-root, sago, tea, and sugar, all seemed mixed together in the drawer of the dresser; dirty knives and forks were left upon unwashed dishes and plates; the kettle on the fire without a drop of water in it; and the remains of an immense fire in the large grate. Mrs. Collins remembered the words of Miss Thorne about her sister's living beyond her means; such waste, and want of management, would have ruined a far richer person than Susan's aunt. Mrs. Collins's cup of gruel was disdainfully rejected. Anne's oranges were most cooling and pleasant to her aunt, and she cheerfully gave them up, though she thought she should have just liked to taste what they were like.

Anne soon made her aunt's room look quite tidy: she folded up all the things lying about, smoothed the bed-clothes, shook up the pillows, and wiped the pretty little table by the side of her aunt's bed, which was marked by many a ring of wet that ought not to have been there. "You are looking at my table, Anne! Once you could have seen your face in it. How often have



I begged Susan to rub it for me!—you do it without even being asked! I saw, when I have been at your cottage, you did everything your mother wished, without being told twice. I think, Anne, you and I would have agreed better than Susan and I do. But then Mary is your mother; I ought to have known better than to expect that another person's child would become like my own!" Mrs. Collins saw that her sister was ill and fretful, or she would have reminded her of the very different way in which Anne had been brought up.

And now a great giggling and laughing was heard below, and in a few minutes Susan came into the bed-room. The candle there was a small one, and burnt but dimly, so that she did not see Anne and her mother at first. "Well, aunt, an't I home early! I had such trouble to get Sarah away, she said she could have stayed there all night!"—"Susan," said her aunt, angrily, "how dare you talk about its being early?—it is nearly ten o'clock?"—"Indeed it is no such thing, it is but half-past nine! But if this is to be my thanks for coming away, I wish I had stayed there until twelve."—"Susan!" said Mrs. Collins. Susan started, turned round, and saw Anne looking at her in great amazement. "Why, where did you come from?—Aunt said you could not be here until to-morrow!"—"I am afraid we are not very welcome now, Susan," said Mrs. Collins; "at least to you."—"I am sure," said Susan, "if I had known that you could be here to-night, I would not have gone out: but you don't know, Anne, till you try, how dismal it

is to be sitting moping in a sick room with a cross old woman." Susan added this in a lower voice. "Aunt has not wanted anything, I am sure, since I have been out," said she, looking at the cup of gruel, "for the doctor said that the less she took the better."—"O you unfeeling girl!" said the aunt, raising herself up in the bed; "you know that Mr. Bates said I must take tea and sago, and gruel, very often. But I see you want me to die!—you may be disappointed though, when I do, Susan!" Here the poor woman fell back, quite worn out. "Let us go below, Susan," said Anne, "this noise is too much for her; my mother will stay here." The girls left the room, Susan grumbling something about not meaning any harm, only folks were so easily offended. "Let us go into the kitchen with Sarah, and hear some fun about the show: I used to say, though, that you did not know what fun was."

Sarah was not inclined to have any fun; she did not like feeling that Mrs. Collins had been putting a great many things in her kitchen in their right places, and had swept up the hearth, filled the kettle, shut all the open doors and drawers, and bolted the back door, which she had left unfastened. Sarah had crept up stairs, to listen to what her mistress would say of her to Susan, and then found that Mrs. Collins and Anne had arrived. "I shall not have you in the kitchen, Miss Susan; your aunt says you are to keep in the parlour, and have nothing to do with me."—"How very polite we are all at once!" said Susan: "but into the kitchen I will come." Sarah was taller and stronger than Susan; she



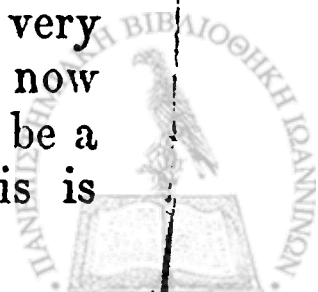
took her by the shoulders, and, pushing her out, bolted the door. Susan kicked at the door some time, in spite of Anne's begging her to think of the poor sick woman up stairs. "You need not tell me about aunt; I never forget that she is sick and ill, neither would you if you had to put up with her temper. But let us go into the parlour; it is quite dark; I will ring the bell as loud as I can, and Sarah must bring us a light." Susan pulled the bell violently, and Sarah came in looking very sulky. "There is not a candle in the house, if that is what you want: I must step out and get some." As soon as she was gone, "Anne!" said Susan, "do you know that Sarah gives away the candles and soap, sugar and tea, to a woman who comes here to sell bonnets and gowns? Sarah is to have a black silk gown in three weeks. I dare not tell aunt, for Sarah says if I do, she will tell her that I went to a dance at the tea-gardens in the last fair-time while aunt was at Bristol. Aunt would be in such a rage for my going with such low people as Sarah and her brother!" Anne was, indeed, not only astonished, but frightened. "Susan! my dear Susan! you ought to tell aunt, whatever she might do to you: why, if what you tell me of Sarah be true, she is dishonest! Let me tell mother—at least, you ought not to have such a person in the house with you." — "O Anne, I don't care about your telling mother, so long as aunt does not know of it. Sarah has been very cross to me many times this week." Sarah now brought in a light, and seemed disposed to be a little more civil: "And so," said she, "this is

your twin-sister, Susan? She is not so tall as you are; but she would look quite as well in your blue silk frock as you do; let her try it on." "I do not wish to have on a silk frock, Susan," said Anne. "How would my brown neck look with blue silk all round it!" "Well," said Sarah, "I must get you some supper; though I don't know what you will have, I am sure." "Never mind supper," said Mrs. Collins, who just came into the room: "a piece of bread and butter is all we wish to have. Susan, you sleep with Sarah; your aunt tells me that there is a bed in the garret that will do for us very well."

When they were alone, Mrs. Collins told Anne, that she hoped she had made her aunt more comfortable; she had taken a composing draught, and was then asleep. Anne, in turn, told her mother, as she always did, every thing that had passed between her and Susan. Mrs. Collins did not tell Anne, but she had made up her mind to get rid of Sarah directly, and remain a little time with her sister, who now did not care, in her present state of illness, that people should know she had a sister who worked hard for her living, and was much pleased to find that Mary would stay with her. In the morning Mrs. Collins was up very early; she had seen her sister several times in the night, and was shocked to find how weak and ill she was. Susan had written the letter that brought Mrs. Collins to her aunt's; but spoke very lightly of the illness. She spoke to her sister about Sarah, and got her consent to send her away. Mrs. Collins had the key of the money-drawer, and



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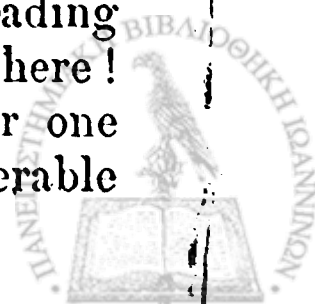
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took from it enough to pay Sarah's wages. When Mrs. Collins told her that she wished her to leave the house directly, Sarah was very impudent, and said she would see her own mistress. This Mrs. Collins would not allow, and Sarah's tone soon altered when Mrs. Collins said that if she did not go quietly, a policeman should be fetched and told the reasons for her being turned out. "And so, Miss Susan," said Sarah, "you have told upon me. I will be even with you yet ; see if I am not."

Sarah left the house ; and when she went to her friend to whom she had been so liberal in giving soap and candles, tea and sugar, the friend did not know her now that she was out of place, and laughed in her face when she spoke of the black silk gown. Sarah was soon glad to wear a very coarse black stuff one, for she could not for a very long time get a situation. Anne and her mother soon made the house quite a different-looking one. Susan, at first, worked as hard as they did ; but when the bustle was over, and every thing was put in its right place, she did not like the daily task of keeping them there. Her aunt had been very particular in having her house kept clean and tidy ; and it was only when she was ill that it got out of order. Poor woman ! she fretted greatly at being confined to a sick room, and thought her case a very hard one. She forgot all the mercies of her past life, and dwelt only on her present pains and troubles. She could find no pleasure in her sister's reading to her from the Book of true comfort. "There ! Mary," she would say, "that is enough for one day ; I have heard it all, but I am just as miserable



as ever."—"Pray to God, my dear sister," would Mrs. Collins say; "join with my prayers in heart, if you are not, as you say, strong enough to repeat any of your own." Mrs. Collins thought her sister's voice quite as strong as ever, when she fell into a fit of passion at Susan's refusing to put away the best bonnet. Mrs. Collins felt all the grief an affectionate Christian heart can feel in seeing her sister so wilfully shut her eyes to the things that belonged to her everlasting peace. "She will open them," thought she, "in another world, in shame and confusion; then, and only then, knowing and feeling the mercies she has despised here."

The weather had been very wet after Mrs. Collins's arrival, and the first fine evening she begged Susan and Anne to take a little walk together. They very gladly went; and when out of the house, Anne said, "I know it is not right to be discontented, Susan; but I am sure you must be tired of seeing nothing but these long streets and stone houses. I do not see a bit of grass, or a tree anywhere. Are there any fields near us, that we could get at?"—"I do," said Susan, "feel very much discontented, but not at being without trees and fields. Aunt used to say they put her in mind of the great church-yard near where she used to live; there were plenty of trees, and grass too, there! We can go, Anne, to the tea-gardens, if you like."—"O no!" said Anne, "not without mother!"—"I wonder you ever leave her at all, Anne; do you think I shall take you where there is a great dragon to eat you up, because you are so good?" Anne smiled. "Let



us go somewhere, Susan, where we can talk ; I want to tell you about the confirmation.”—  
“ That will be no treat to me, Anne ; for you know I am put off for another year. Let us walk on to the highroad, and I will tell you all about it.” They reached the dusty turnpike road, and sat down on some timber by the side of it.  
“ Well,” said Susan, “ now for a beginning. Mr. Long, our clergyman, read a notice in the church, that he would examine the boys and girls, and give them tickets. I went to him, and he kept me talking to him for more than half an hour, and then he said, ‘ What lamentable ignorance ! ’ I remember the words, because I told aunt of them as soon as I came home, and she said it was as much as to say, I had not been properly brought up. He told me he could not think of giving me a ticket—that he would call upon my aunt. You may be sure, I looked foolish enough when I came home and told her. She had got me that blue silk frock, and all, for me to wear. Mr. Long called upon my aunt, and talked a long time with her, and left some books for me to read ; but I have not had much time since aunt has been ill ; she said it was making free to call upon her ; she dared say Mr. Long meant very well, but he had no business to talk to her just as if she was a common person ; and, as for the Sunday-school he recommended, I should not go there, if the ladies would come and fall down upon their knees.”—“ Why, Susan ! she did not say that to the clergyman, to be sure,” said Anne. “ O I can tell you, when aunt is in a real passion, she will say any thing to any body. She

had taken a great deal of trouble in teaching me my Catechism ; and I know she was very much disappointed that I could not get a ticket. Mr. Long is going away very soon, and the Bishop will be here again next year, that is one comfort !” —“ Let me help you, Susan, to prepare yourself ; I can remember nearly all the questions I answered !” Anne looked eagerly in Susan’s face, but Susan only laughed. “ I can say my Catechism quite perfectly now, Anne ; aunt said she was sure I never should be able to say it, and so I did learn it to spite her.” —“ O Susan, what a reason for learning ! How could you expect God’s blessing upon your work ? Have you read any of Miss Thorne’s books ?” —“ Why, no, I have not ! for aunt says she is sure Miss Thorne is a Methodist. I told her that Miss Thorne was very good-natured and smiling, and did not wear a poke bonnet ; but aunt is very obstinate about it. But I can’t talk any more about such things. I am sure I nearly cried my eyes out about not being confirmed ; and what could I do more ? So do not look so sorry, Anne. When we are twenty, I shall be quite as well off, I suppose ; by that time I shall be confirmed, and married, too, I hope. Eliza Fletcher is only eighteen, and she has been married these six months ; she was not a bit taller than I am when she had a lover.”

Anne stared with surprise. She began to think that Susan could not be her twin-sister ; but Anne had been brought up in the country, with but few playmates, and those of her own age ; Susan’s companions had been beyond her in years, and in art and cunning. Sarah, too, had



done her great mischief, and had put many things into her head that she would have been far happier in knowing nothing about. "Where have you been, my dears?" said Mrs. Collins, when they came back. "Anne looks quite tired!"—"No, mother, I am not tired!" said Anne. "I think, mother," said Susan, "that Anne fancies I am very wicked, and bad, and all that, because Mr. Long was so fidgety that he would not give me a confirmation ticket; she quite cried just now, because I said I was as good as other people. Indeed," said Susan, getting quite angry, "I am so sick of being talked to about such things, that I have no patience left. I wish aunt was well again; she would take my part a little, and not let every body say that I am wicked, even if they think so."—"My dear Susan, I do not think any body has said you are wicked. Anne, I know, would not make such a cruel speech. I have never taken upon me to correct you in any way. I feel now that I have almost been to blame in giving up, as I did, the care of an immortal soul, which had been entrusted to me; may God forgive me for allowing my poverty to drive me to do it!"—"Well, mother," said Susan, a little ashamed at the distress of her parent, "when aunt does die, I shall not be in poverty, and I hope you will not either. I may be wicked; but I shall always love you and Anne, and will take care of you."—"Susan! you may be tried very soon; your aunt has been very ill all day; if she is as ill all night, I do not know if she will see another day."—"O let me go to her directly," cried Susan, bursting into tears: "she always used to say so

much about dying, that I never seemed to think she would really die."—"You must not disturb her now," said Mrs. Collins. "I have persuaded her to see Mr. Long. I trust there may yet be comfort for her in this world."—"Mr. Long!" cried Susan; "then I shall run away; he will be sure to ask me about those books, and I don't even know where they are." Susan's guilty conscience made her run away from her best friend. Mr. Long was with her aunt for some time, and had been the means of awakening her a little to a sense of her awful state, for she had all Susan's notions of not being worse than other people. "Read to her, and pray for her, Mrs. Collins," said the good clergyman. "God may yet have mercy upon her. Let her seek Him with heart and soul. He will be found!" But, alas! Mrs. Collins's sister was unable to take comfort in anything. She tried to pray, but her head ached. She felt that bitter pang,—that she ought to pray, and could not. She was leaving her heart in the world she was about to quit for ever. "Forgive me! Mary," said the dying woman, "the injury I have done to Susan, in making her so much like myself. Pray to God to forgive me; 'May Christ have mercy on my soul.'" These were her last words! Mr. Long tried to comfort the weeping sister, by expressing his hope that the words were those of sincere penitence; she could only reply, "Great is his mercy."

The death of Susan's aunt had been rather sudden at the last, and fell with a great shock upon poor Susan. Her grief was bitter, and her



self-reproach hard to bear. "O Anne! if I had only done for her what you did; if I had only made the last gruel that she took, or held the last cup of water to her lips, I should be less miserable! Anne, I am sure I shall die of grief; I have cried the whole night without stopping; you take things so quietly, Anne. I wish I was so unfeeling!" Anne was very far from wanting feeling. Indeed, she would have done more for any one in trouble, than Susan would have ever thought necessary. She did not, however, think it right to cry and sob so loud as Susan; for Mrs. Collins had not been in bed for many nights, and actually wanted the rest which Susan prevented her from taking. Susan's grief did not hinder her from talking a great deal about the mourning; she did not like Mrs. Collins's wish, that everything should be as plain and cheap as possible: but she could not prevent it.

The day of the funeral was a very dismal one for them all, and poor Anne, who had never before been in the house where death was, felt the gloom of everything about her a great deal. Her mother was far from well, and grieved about her sister more than she showed. "Anne, my dearest child, death must come to us all; may it find us prepared to meet it! Your poor aunt had a great deal more suffering in her mind than she had in her body, though you know what pain she has been in for the last week. But I must rouse myself, Anne, for the sake of poor Susan; she is in great trouble."

The day after the funeral Mrs. Collins told Susan that she was sorry to find that a half year's

rent was due ; that her aunt's annuity from her late master ended with her life ; and it appeared that when the furniture was sold, and all expenses of the funeral and mourning paid, there would not be much left. "I find that my sister has spent nearly all the money she had saved for so many years ; Susan, there is but 20*l.* left in the bank. This I shall not touch ; it will be there for you, Susan, when you are grown up and settled in the world." Poor Susan was indeed astonished.—"What, mother ! must I go and live in the country with Anne and you ? O how cruel of my aunt to tell me that I should be a lady, and have her gold watch when she was dead."—"My dear Susan," said her mother, "you must indeed come to us : but we will try and make you happy. Miss Thorne has always promised that when Anne was fifteen, she should come to her and learn to be a housemaid ; but the Rectory is not far from us, and Anne will often be able to come and see us. You, Susan, must try and learn to be useful : Anne can plait straw, knit stockings, and work, you know how neatly. She will be able to teach you one of these, or all of them. Do not cry so, dear Susan ; I cannot bear to see you fret and grieve. We shall have many happy days yet, I trust." But Susan was mortified and vexed, and would not listen to either her mother or Anne, when they said all they could to console her. "You, Anne," said she, "have been brought up to be a servant ; you like it ; but I always thought that I should live like aunt did, and have a servant of my own. O how glad Sarah will be to know that I am nearly as





poor as she is!"—"Don't think of that girl," said Mrs. Collins, "but come and help me to look over your poor aunt's drawers, that I may see what may be useful to you." Susan's face cleared up; she had forgotten the silk gowns and shawls! In the first drawer was a small packet directed to Anne; in it were five sovereigns; and written on the paper was, "For my dear niece, Anne, because I was so pleased with her when I last went to my dear sister Mary's."—"Now, Anne, dear," said her mother, "this is quite a treasure for you; I have been thinking a great deal about how I should get you some new clothes to go to the Rectory. How kind and good of your dear aunt to remember you!" Anne quite agreed in this; like most young people, she liked to have new clothes, and now indeed stood much in need of them. "Mother," said Susan, "you may choose any shawl and gown that you like." Mrs. Collins looked grave; "My dear, I could not think of wearing these fine clothes. I intend to sell them: you will be glad of the money one day." "O Mother, may I not keep what is my own?" Susan was getting out of temper fast; so her mother said, "Do not, Susan, let us quarrel over your poor dead aunt's clothes; we will look at them another time."

Mrs. Collins kept all the really useful things for Susan, and the next day parted with all the rest, greatly to Susan's dismay. A few articles of furniture were kept, and packed by Anne and her mother to take home with them in the waggon. In a few days all was settled, and Mrs.

Collins, with her two daughters, returned to her humble cottage; she was quite longing for the peace and quiet of the country; and she, with Anne, thanked God for allowing them to return in safety. Susan was very tired, and was glad to go to bed. Mrs. Collins let her sleep until late in the morning, for she thought that she really wanted rest. She pitied her too, and feared that there was many a mortifying trial in store for her. There was a nice breakfast ready for her as soon as she came down. Just as Susan had finished it, Miss Thorne called to see her old friend, Mrs. Collins; she spoke very kindly to Susan, and hoped the country air would do her good. "Indeed, Susan," said she, "you have had a great trial in the loss of your aunt; we must try and make you as happy as we can. Anne, I hope, will come to me next week; but she shall often run home and see you; and you, if you like, shall come and see her." Susan thanked Miss Thorne: "I am sure, Ma'am, I am very unfortunate; but I must bear it if I can."—"You are not so unfortunate as you think, Susan; you have an affectionate mother, and I must not say before your sister what I think of her; must I, Mrs. Collins? but I can say that Anne will do everything to comfort you for your loss."

Miss Thorne was much pleased to hear of Anne's little fortune, as she called it. "I hope," said she, "that your mother will put the greatest part in the Savings' Bank for you. I do not like to see my servants at all smart, you well know; and, perhaps, with a very few more clothes you may always be able to look clean and neat; you



have got now a very good mourning frock and bonnet. But I will not stay any longer, for you and Susan must have a great deal to talk about and to do.”—“Anne,” said Susan, when Miss Thorne had gone, “I would have another frock if I was you; you cannot be in mourning on Sundays only; everybody will stare at you.”—“Why,” said Anne, laughing, “do you think the people at church will notice me? I should be very sorry not to be neat and clean: but I don’t care if everybody knows that I have only one black frock; I hope it will last me all the winter.”—“I suppose,” said Susan, “mother thought it would, when she bought this coarse stuff: yours may last Anne; but I am not going to leave off my mourning every day but Sunday. What shall we do with ourselves this morning, Anne?”—“Why,” said Anne, “suppose you put away your clothes in the chest of drawers mother brought home. I have plenty to do; I must begin to prepare my things to go to the Rectory; I have not yet marked my stockings. Look, Susan, I knitted these three pair last winter, and two pair for mother besides; hers are finer than mine, because I liked to make them better for her; you must learn to knit, Susan.”—“I began to learn, Anne, at school; but my governess was so cross, that I did not get on at all; and then aunt said I should never want to wear such coarse worsted stockings; and I don’t think I ever could wear any like those, Anne. What great shoes you must have to get them into!”—“Why,” said Anne, looking down at her strong leather shoes, “they are rather clumsy; but then they do

nicely for walking through the mud in our lanes. I am to have a neater pair to wear at Miss Thorne's; because these make such a noise."—"How you do bring in Miss Thorne always, Anne! I suppose you think she is the best person in the world."—"Well, I really think she is," said Anne, gravely; "at least I do not know any one better," not noticing that Susan was smiling most disdainfully.

Susan put away her clothes, and then idled about all the rest of the day, sadly hindering poor Anne. Mrs. Collins was at the Hall; she had been greatly missed there, while she was away at her sister's. When she came back in the evening she found Susan very cross and tired; the cottage was dull, nothing to be seen if you did look out of the window. "Do you think, Susan, that you should like to-morrow to go with me to the Hall? A lady is there with her little girl, on a visit, and you could amuse the child, I dare say; for the nurse is ill." Any change seemed to promise pleasure to Susan; so she agreed to go with her mother.

In the morning, as they went along, Mrs. Collins said she hoped that Susan would try to please the little girl. "She is about four years old, and has been rather spoiled, but still is good-natured, if you know how to manage her. She got quite fond of Anne last summer; but now Anne cannot be spared to go to her."—"I dare say I can please her quite as well as Anne," said Susan; "though I cannot say I am very fond of children."—"Well, Susan, dear, do try if you can keep her quiet, and amuse her; for her mother



was very kind to me once, and I love the child for her sake."

They passed through a very pretty garden, and met the lady walking there. "This is my daughter Susan, ma'am," said Mrs. Collins. "She is tall for her age," said the lady, "but does not look very strong; my little Lucy will soon tire her, I fear."—"No! I hope not," said Mrs. Collins; "we will if you please go to the nursery."

Miss Lucy was with her sick nurse, and Susan had but a poor beginning of her day's work; the child screamed loudly as soon as she saw her. "Take off that black bonnet, do," said the nurse, who was in a large easy chair by the fire: "Lucy does not like anything black at all." Susan took off the bonnet, and was not much pleased with the tone of the nurse. "Now, get some playthings out of that cupboard, and try to keep her quiet; my head is just splitting, and I am going to lie down."

Susan did as she was desired; but Miss Lucy's chief pleasure seemed to be in making the very noise that was so much disliked. Books, dolls, playthings of all kinds, were all pulled to pieces, and thrown aside. Susan got out of patience; and upon Lucy's telling her that she was cross and ugly, she gave her a violent shake, and a slap, that made Lucy scream so much more in earnest than usual, that her mother rushed up stairs just in time to hear Susan exclaim, with a face red with passion, "Little brat, it quite serves you right!" Poor Susan's stay in the nursery was not long after this; she was sent home in great disgrace.

Mrs. Collins came in for a share of blame, for having a daughter with such a bad temper. The lady did not give herself time to think that her own child would grow up, perhaps, to be far more violent. How ready we are to see the faults of others without thinking of our own!

“Anne,” said Susan, as she met her in the lane going back, “mother says that I must go and beg pardon for just giving that ill tempered child a shake and a slap: I did not hurt her, I am sure. I almost wished that I had, that she might know another time not to call people names. I have made up my mind not to go near any of them again, and no one shall make me. How did you manage, Anne, with that dreadful child?”—

“Why,” said Anne, “I asked her to let me read to her a story, and showed her the pictures about it in the book: and I made a little bonnet for her doll, and I showed her how to tie up flowers after we had picked them.”—“Why,” said Susan, “she threw her doll at me, and tore the leaves out of the book, because I would not let her open it herself.”—“You have not been used to children, Susan, that is one thing; our neighbours made me fond of them: I have always had some baby or other to take care of.”—“I don’t want to like them, Anne. If mother thinks that I am to be a nursery-maid, she is very much mistaken; if I must be anything, I will go into a draper’s shop.”—“Into a shop!” said Anne, “I don’t think you would like, Susan, to be standing all day long, waiting upon people, and never seeing the green fields, or, indeed, taking a walk at all.”—“Well, Anne, perhaps I shall be a lady’s



maid.”—“But Miss Thorne’s maid, Susan, does a great deal of needle-work, and makes her bonnets and caps, and irons all her laces.” Susan was silent ; she could not hem the border of a cap neatly, much less make bonnets. “Anne, I will learn ; I should like to go to London with my mistress ; the lady’s maid, where my aunt lived, always went there with her mistress, and they used all to enjoy themselves.”

Mrs. Collins came home in the evening, very tired indeed ; and when Susan talked to her about being a lady’s maid, she told her, “That she must learn to govern her temper, before she would be fit for anything. Little Lucy had been a sad trouble all the day, and her nurse was still very ill. You might, Susan, have tried to please her ; if the child had liked you as much as she did Anne, you would very likely have been taken to London with them : they now want Anne ; but I have promised Miss Thorne that she shall go to the Rectory to-morrow, and I must keep my word.” Susan was very sorry when she heard about the going to London. “If I had only known that,” said Susan, “I would not have slapped the cross little brat, whatever names she had called me.” “Let us go to bed,” said Mrs. Collins ; “I am quite worn out ; I am too ill to hear with patience Susan talk about anything she has done, or may do ; I can only pray that God will turn her heart to see that she is going on in a course that can lead to no good. Pray, my dear Anne, and you too, Susan, for your poor mother ; her trials are great.” Mrs. Collins was right in saying that her trials were great ; she could get

Susan to do nothing that might even lead to her being useful.

Susan began to learn to plait, and after wasting nearly all Anne's stock of straw for a bonnet, said, "she never would be able to plait: she would learn to knit." Anne was as patient as any teacher could be, and Susan did try, but after all the trouble, never got through more than half a stocking.

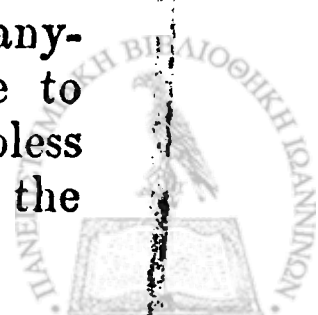
When the time was come for Anne to leave home, Mrs. Collins had an offer to go as nurse, for two months, in a family some miles distant; but she did not know what to do with Susan: Anne she had always left without any fear. The neighbours were so fond of her, that she was always a welcome guest; and they would gladly come and stay with her, that she might not feel lonely. Susan knew this, and was really sorry to think that she was so much in the way. "I tell you what, mother," she said to Mrs. Collins, the morning before Anne left home, "the woman who keeps the shop where my poor aunt used to buy her thread and tape and things, lost her daughter at the time you were with us; I know she then wanted some girl to take her place in the shop; perhaps she may take me. I suppose I am clever enough to sell pennyworths of tape and cotton, though both you and Anne think me so very useless; and if I don't like it at the end of two months, I can but come back here again."—"Indeed Susan," said Mrs. Collins, "I shall be glad for you to try the change; and I will write to Mrs. Price, and ask her if she still wants any help in her business; I





do not like giving up my offer to go out as a nurse: and for you, too, Susan, employment will be far better than idleness."

Mrs. Price answered Mrs. Collins's letter directly; she was much in want of a helper in her little shop; she had a large family, and had plenty to do for them; her husband was an idle man, and lucky was it for his poor children that their mother had been brought up to work for her living. Susan might come as soon as she could: she should, at first, have her meat; and they would settle about what she should be paid after a month or two. Any change was a welcome one to Susan; she packed her box at the same time that Anne did; James, the gardener's son, came from the Rectory to carry his favourite Anne's box to her new home. "I was very sorry, James," said Anne, "when my pretty white hen died; but now I do not know what I should have done with it if it had not, for mother is going away, and so is Susan." Poor Anne's heart was very full, and she could not help crying, to think how dreary the cottage would look the next day. "I must kiss you again, my dear mother! I wish I had not been crying, for Miss Thorne will see my red eyes, and think I am sorry to come to her."—"Kiss me, too, Anne," said Susan; "I am afraid mother will not grieve about me, as she will about you, when I am gone."—"My dear girls," said Mrs. Collins, "I shall grieve for both of you, more than ever you will know anything about: let me hope I shall not have to grieve for your doing anything wrong. God bless you, my dear Anne: James will come to the



family where I am going once in a fortnight, and he can then tell me how you are going on ; he can see you, too, often, and it will be a comfort to us both."

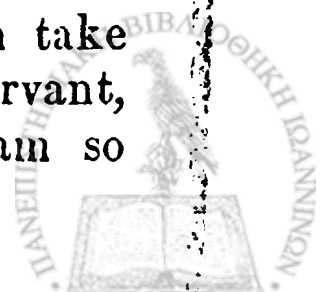
The two months soon passed away. Anne had got happily settled at the Hall ; the servants were very kind to her, and Miss Thorne's maid had always been fond of her, and, when she had time, taught her to make many things that were useful for her to know. The cook had not been long in her place ; she could not read very well ; Anne took a delight in helping her to read the Bible, and many other books that were in Mr. Thorne's kitchen. Kitty, the housemaid, was very particular, certainly ; and Anne found, sometimes, that rubbing the oak floors made her arms ache ; she wished the carpets were spread all over the floors : it was a long time before she could walk on the boards without slipping down ; and Anne did not know why people liked to have their floors so shining and slippery. Anne got on better with Kitty than most young girls would have done ; she did not answer pertly when Kitty was cross and tired ; and Kitty, when she got into a good temper again, did not forget this.

Susan found the shop quite amusing at first, for a great many of her old playmates came to buy cotton and tape, that they might see her again ; but when Mrs. Price found that they took up a great deal of Susan's time in gossiping, she did not wish for their custom. Many people came from the country to deal at the shop ; and market day was a fatiguing one. Susan very often lost her



temper, because people like to have blue cotton instead of red, after she had taken down the red. One old woman was sure that needles had larger eyes when she was young, or else that Susan would not take the trouble to look for them.

Poor Mrs. Price was a kind-hearted woman; but her husband tried her temper greatly by very often coming home at night drunk, and beating the children. Susan was much afraid of him, and often, with the eldest girl, went to bed without supper to get out of his way. "O Susan," said Mrs. Price one day, "I heard you tell the girl in the shop, who came to buy new stockings against she was married, that you wished you were going to be married too! How would you like such a husband as my Thomas? He has just been into the shop, and as you forgot to lock the till, and give me the key as you promised, he has taken out every farthing, and gone to spend it at the 'Ring of Bells.'"—"If ever I get a husband like him," said Susan, "I will have him taken before a magistrate; every body says that you are too quiet."—"No, Susan, I could not put the father of my children to such a disgrace! My mother warned me what he was before I married him; but I said, like a foolish young girl such as you are, Susan, that I would please my eye if I plagued my heart; and plague and trouble enough I have had, I am sure, since I said that."—"You were not much older than I am," said Susan, "then, when you were married; I dare say not a bit taller? The customers often take me for eighteen: Sarah, my aunt's old servant, said, she should not have known me, I am so

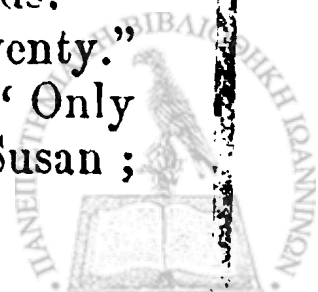


grown."—"Now, Susan," said Mrs. Price, "I hope you will have nothing to do with Sarah; she bears but a bad character, I can tell you: of course you must be civil to her, and to every customer in the shop, for my sake. I have often fancied this last week, Susan, that you might be a little more obliging than you are. The money that the charity children bring here is good money; and they seem to me to be almost afraid to ask you for a ball of worsted!" Mrs. Price was right. Susan did not like the children that were sent there on an errand: to be sure, they would make a mistake, if it was possible, and give her a great deal of trouble in making her change things more than once or twice; however, they soon took such a dislike to Susan, that they went to a shop in the next street, where the woman was very thankful to take a penny, even if she had more than a penny's worth of trouble. Susan said nothing about Sarah to Mrs. Price; she would not have liked her to know that she was to take tea with her the next Sunday afternoon.

How Sarah got into a respectable house again Susan did not know, and Sarah did not say. Mrs. Price always sent the children to church on the Sunday morning, and went herself in the afternoon or evening; sometimes she took tea with a friend; and the next Sunday, Thomas had faithfully promised to keep himself sober, and go with her to a relation's in the country. The eldest girl, Susan thought, could take charge of the children for once; and she then could have a cup of tea and a long gossip with her old friend, Sarah, unknown to Mrs. Price. On Sundays



Sarah was quite free, as she called it ; her master always spent the day out. Susan found her friend quite glad to see her. " I can give you a nice tea, Susan, to remind you of old times. I expect my brother, too, very soon : you remember him, I dare say ; you danced with him at the tea gardens ; he often talks about you."—" Well," said Susan, " when he saw me there, he saw me much happier than I am now. My aunt was very unkind to bring me up to be a lady, and then leave me the little money she did."—" I suppose," said Sarah, " it was not much ; but then, Susan, you have friends."—" Yes ! my mother and Anne have been very kind to me. Dear Anne ! I should like to see her happy face ; I hope I shall go and see both her and mother very soon : Mrs. Price will give me a holiday in a very short time." Sarah was not pleased to hear this. " Come, Susan, you do not eat the cake ; take some more cream ; how fond you used to be of sugar ! many a lump has your aunt lost without knowing it."—" I don't care much about sugar now, Sarah ; and I wish I had never taken any of aunt's ; I don't like to think about it at all." Sarah poured out another cup of tea, and said, " Well, I am sure I was very sorry for your aunt's death ; but I was not well treated altogether in being sent off as I was ; but I shall say nothing more about it. You, Susan, have reason to be glad of her death, leaving you, as she did, such a pretty little fortune of fifty pounds."—" No ! Sarah, not fifty pounds, only twenty." Sarah wanted to know the exact sum. " Only twenty pounds ! well, that is not much, Susan ;



but when you marry, it will give you many comforts."—"Why, yes," said Susan, "I am nearly seventeen, and I shall be married, I suppose, very soon; and then mother must give me the twenty pounds, of course." Sarah had intended that Susan should meet her brother, who was a young man that would have been very glad to find twenty pounds so easily, as having to persuade a forward girl that she ought to be married; but that night he did not come, and Susan got home in time for Mrs. Price to think that she had never left her children. Susan was twelve months with Mrs. Price after this; but in that time Sarah did her a great deal of harm; they had become very intimate, and Sarah's brother was a great friend as well. He was a carpenter, and got very good wages when he did work, which was only when he was obliged. He had not much trouble in persuading Susan that eighteen shillings a-week would be quite enough to make a wife comfortable; and so it would have been, if he had not been idle, and inclined to waste away his time. It was some time before Mrs. Price found out that Susan had a lover, and she spoke very sharply to her on the subject. "I shall directly write to your mother, Susan," said Mrs. Price. "O my mother will not care, I am sure, about it; she has Anne to watch and care about. The last time I went home, I heard nothing but what a comfort Anne was, and how fond Miss Thorne was of Anne, and how Anne was grown; and when I saw her, she was not so tall as I am by a good piece; and then mother showed me a bonnet Anne had made

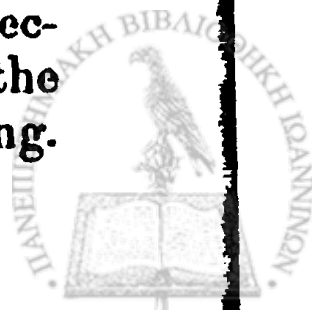


for her, and a new gown she had bought for her. She forgot that Anne's wages are much more than mine ; I can scarcely keep myself decent, though I am always buying ribbons and one thing and another. I dare say mother would be in a pretty fuss if Anne was going to be married : but she won't care about me."—" I speak for your good only, Susan," said Mrs. Price ; " you need not have talked yourself into such a passion. If William Giles was a steady young man, and you were of a fit age to be married, I should be glad to think that you were going to be settled comfortably in life ; but he is idle and ill-tempered : he has been a bad son ; and *bad sons never make good husbands*. Remember that ! You are, I know, tired of standing all day long in a shop ; I heard you say so the other day to your friend, Sarah : but, believe me, Susan, it is better to have your legs ache than your heart. My own girl, Jane, will soon be old enough to take your place, if you do go away ; so do not think I am speaking for myself in what I say to you."—" Well," said Susan, " I think I shall tell Anne, or my mother, myself, that I am going to be married in three months' time : how Anne will stare ! Mother will say, You are too young, Susan ; and then I shall say, You were only one year older when you married yourself."

Mrs. Collins came directly to see Susan, as soon as she heard the news. She tried in every way to hinder Susan from leaving her present comfortable place to connect herself with an idle young man ; but Susan's mind was quite fixed. " You think, mother, that he is going to marry

me for the sake of the money ; but this is not the case. He says, we shall take out some of it to furnish a room, and the rest shall be left in the bank ; he will not touch it. He is quite steady, and has not had a holiday for two months." Poor Mrs. Collins was in great trouble to find that Susan was so bent upon being married. She knew it was of no use to say that she would not give her consent ; for Susan would not have cared, and would as soon marry without her mother's blessing as with it. "Tell Anne," said Susan, "I hope she will come to my wedding ; Sarah is to be my bridesmaid ; she made me promise that."—"Do you recollect Sarah's words when she left your aunt's house, Susan ? O how bitterly true have they been ! she is indeed having her revenge."—"Sarah is very sorry that she ever said that, mother ; she is much altered now ; she is in a very good place ; her master trusts everything to her." That may not be the better for him, thought Mrs. Collins ; but she did not say so, for Susan was getting angry, and she did not wish to irritate her. Mrs. Collins was a meek, quiet woman ; and Susan had lately become so very violent, that her mother was quite afraid of her.

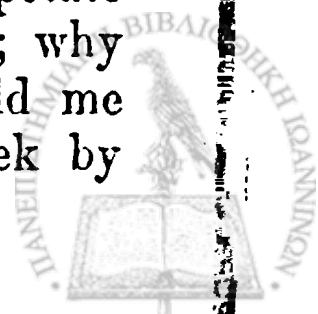
Anne, during this time, had been getting on in happiness and comfort ; she had quite learnt the duties of her place ; Kitty was married, and Anne could well take her situation. Her neat dress, and smiling, happy face made her a most pleasing inmate of the house ; everybody was fond of Anne ; and James, the gardener's son, thought the Rector's housemaid the most charming person in the world. Anne could not go to her sister's wedding.





Mr. Thorne was taken ill, and she could not be spared. Susan said she was sorry, but in her heart she was glad; Anne would not have liked the smart dress of her sister, and the contrast between them would not have been pleasant to Susan. She would have felt ashamed in spite of herself.

William Giles said it was the happiest day of his life, and he hoped Susan felt the same. We must have a week's holiday, said the newly-married couple! At the end of the week's holiday, William did not feel much disposed to go to work again; and why should he when his wife had money in the bank? Part of this had been taken to furnish a room, and the rest Mrs. Collins begged them to keep "for a rainy day." Susan promised to do this; but Susan had now a husband, who would not let her have so much of her own way as she expected. "Sarah!" said she, a fortnight after the marriage, "I wish you could persuade William to go to work again; we have spent nearly three pounds of my money this last fortnight." Sarah and Susan, together, did contrive to make William go to work again; and for a little time his earnings enabled them to live in comfort. This could always have been the case; but idle habits "begin in cobwebs, and end in iron chains."—"Why should I work hard all day," said William, "and you sit at home and do nothing, not even mend my stockings? You grudge the trouble of getting me a hot potato for my supper; other people's wives work; why don't you? Samuel, at the work-shop, told me that his wife earned six shillings last week by

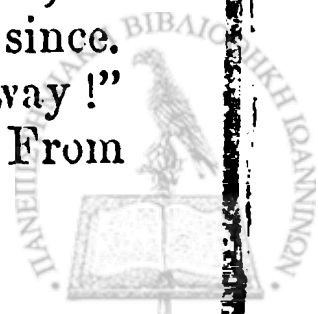


knitting, or something or another. Look at that nice new table, all grease and dirt; get up and clean it, you lazy thing, instead of sitting there in pink ribbons staring out of the window!" Susan flew into a great passion, told him to rub it himself, or send Sarah to do it. William could not bear to hear his sister's name; he already wondered how he could have ever thought such an untidy, lazy young woman as Susan to be pretty, and thought the twenty pounds had been hardly earned. Susan's love of dress soon made her take a little more money out of the bank; to quiet her husband, she gave him a part of it, and both could indulge in their favourite pleasure, the one in having a smart new gown, the other in treating himself and two idle companions with a day's holiday, to be spent in drinking away care.

Two years after this time Anne Collins became the wife of James, the gardener's son; his father had died about a year before, and he had taken his place. He and Anne had been fond of each other from their childhood. Mr. Thorne was very sorry to part with Anne, and his sister greatly regretted her loss. James's father had left him money enough to purchase the very cottage and garden that once belonged to Anne's father. Mrs. Collins was to take up her abode with them in her former home. Anne had saved a little money while in service; her husband would not touch it, but was proud to bring his dear Anne to her pretty cottage, which was neatly furnished and fitted up with many little comforts, that were not known to cottages generally. Miss Thorne



made Anne a present of all her wedding clothes ; and Mr. Thorne gave them a very handsome clock. Just previous to the wedding, he sent for them both into his study, and said to them, " Anne, I make you and your husband a present of this clock, from the respect I have for both of you ; and I have chosen it as a suitable present for you, Anne, in particular, because while you were in my family you were a diligent and faithful servant, and always showed yourself sensible of the value of time. You are now going to start together in the world ; and you must expect in the course of your journey through it to meet with your share of the common portion of care, and trouble, and trial, that awaits us all here. Take with you one plain and simple rule, which will never fail you in whatever circumstances you may be placed. In whatever you do, seek the glory of God, not your own. Ask yourselves night and morning—Am I serving God ? Is what I am doing right in God's sight ? That is the question for you to put to yourselves—not Will this thing make me rich, or that thing give me pleasure—but, Is it my duty in the sight of God ? Remember this, and may God bestow his blessing on you both ! " Mr. Thorne was well enough to marry them himself ; at which Anne was very much pleased. " I thought, dear mother, as I knelt at the altar, that it was there I had knelt to be confirmed, there I had knelt many times to receive the holy sacrament ; a blessing seems to have rested upon me ever since. I trust that it may not now be taken away ! " Few homes were ever happier than Anne's. From



her mother she had been parted some years, and the loss of each other's society had been felt greatly by both. Even in the comforts of her kind master's house the thoughts of her mother's



homely meal, and the pleasure she once had in sharing it, would come into Anne's mind, and cause a tear to fall. Now they were once more together. Mrs. Collins was very fond of James ; she had known him from an infant, and he was worthy of her love.

Soon after this happy marriage Mrs. Collins was reminded of a promise she had made to Susan to stay some time with her. Susan had become a mother. How sad was the contrast between the homes of her children ! Mrs. Collins felt



deeply to find Susan very far from happy; she was weak and ill when her mother arrived. "O mother, mother! let me look at you. I have not seen a kind face for a long, long time. William, since the baby was born, has left me quite alone; he would not take the trouble to make me a cup of tea! If it had not been for Mrs. Martin in the next room, I might have died for what he cared. O mother! how bitter it is to think that if I had died, he would not have shed a tear for me. I lay last night and thought of poor dear aunt, and how I left her, as the people now leave me."—"Dear Susan, I should have been here some days ago, had I known that you wanted me."—"William told me that he had written to you, mother: but he had been drinking, I know; and he could not have put the letter into the post-office, as he said. Now, mother, the rainy day is come; but all my money is gone. I have not sixpence to pay for the loaf on the table. William never came home yesterday at all; sometimes I wish I had died; but O, I am not fit to die!"—"Do not, my dear Susan, talk in that way, you will break my heart," said poor Mrs. Collins. "Let me look at the dear baby."—"Ah! well, I did say, thank God! when I heard it was a girl, because I can call it Anne. Dear Anne! I am sure she would pity me if she knew how unhappy I am. Mother, William says he hates squalling girls; he wished to have had a boy; I am glad he was disappointed in that." Susan's pale face became flushed when she said this; her mother took the baby in her arms. "Kiss it, dear Susan, and pray to God to give

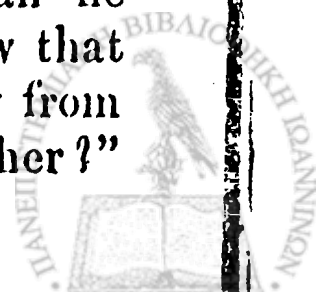
you better thoughts.”—“ I will try, mother ! I know I am very wicked.”

Mrs. Collins remained three weeks with her daughter, who did not gain strength very fast. Of her husband they saw but little ; he gave Mrs. Collins some money, and said she would manage it better than Susan, and not spend it in pink ribbons. He did not sleep at home ; but came to his dinner, which Mrs. Collins always carefully got ready for him. “ Upon my word,” said he one day, “ if Susan would only take the trouble to cook my little bit of meat exactly to the time as you do, Mrs. Collins, she would see a great deal more of me than she does. You always take care to have it ready at the very time I come in. I wish your daughter was more like you ! ”—“ You had better, I think,” said Susan, “ wish me a better husband ! ”—“ I wish,” said William, “ that you had no husband at all, or at least, that I was not the man ! ” Mrs. Collins quickly took the baby out of the cradle, and brought it to the father. She wished to stop such ill-natured remarks. “ Look, William, at this dear child, how fast it grows. I must get you to let Susan go back with me for a week to show it to her sister : the country air will do her good.”—“ You are welcome to Susan’s company for as long as you will keep her,” said her husband ; “ when she comes back, I hope she will know how to manage her provoking tongue a little better. Her sister, I am told, is a very different person from herself. I am glad, Susan, you have made up your mind to call your child after anybody but yourself ; I shall like it all the better.” Susan was about to



make an angry reply ; but she saw the tears in her mother's eyes, and was silent.

“ William,” said Mrs. Collins, “ I shall go back to-morrow morning, and Susan will go with me ; you must come and take your breakfast with us, and wish us a safe journey.”—“ I will come to-night, if you will give me some supper,” said William. “ I will take care of that,” said Mrs. Collins. William came to supper ; Susan was thinking so much about her journey, that she said but little. Her husband took the child in his arms : “ Well, I do think it is a pretty little thing, though it is a girl ; it almost smiled at me, I declare ; I shall not be here in the morning, Mrs. Collins, to wish you good-bye, so I must thank you now for all your kindness to me and Susan ; I felt almost afraid for you to come and see us. I thought if the daughter is so slovenly and passionate, what may the mother be ! I forgot that you did not bring her up. But I must run off, for I see Susan is ready to kill me ; I shall have that jug at my head.” He kissed the child, and shook hands with Mrs. Collins. “ Good-bye, Susan. I hope you will take a few lessons from your sister in the country how to behave before you come back.”—“ Mother,” said Susan, when her husband was gone, “ I wish I was never coming back ! what a time of misery I have had for the last two years ! Sarah used to take her brother's part in everything ; she has driven him to use me worse than he would have done, I am sure. Do you know that she has been tried for stealing some money from her master's desk, and been transported, mother ?”



“No, indeed,” replied Mrs. Collins; “but I am not at all surprised.”—“She owes me more than a pound now,” said Susan; “she used to be always borrowing money of me, and at last wanted to pay me with her master’s tea and sugar. I was not come to be so bad as that; and I told William of it. He flew into such a passion, first with me for lending the money, and then with Sarah, who just happened to come in, that I thought they would have had a fight. I cannot say I was sorry to see them quarrel. Sarah never came near us again, and William got a great deal kinder for a little time; but he soon got back to his old ways. I recollect telling Mrs. Price I would not put up with the treatment from a husband that she did: now I am obliged to do so. If it had not been for dear Anne’s present of baby-clothes, my child would not have had a garment to put on when it came into the world. William said, ‘Why don’t you work yourself, and make some things that you will want?’ I did work, dear mother; but I could not tell how to cut out, and make all the many things I wanted. I could have got baby-linen from the charity; but William would not let me: he did give me some money, to be sure, to buy calico and flannel; but I did not know how to cut anything out, nor how to make it when any one else fitted it for me. The very first quarrel I ever had with William was about a hole in his stocking; and we have, I think, done nothing but quarrel ever since. He stays out very late at night, and I get out of temper, I know, mother. He threw the door-key at me one night, because I said something about





Sarah's being a convict; look at this mark on my forehead: he was frightened then, for he thought he had killed me. I almost wish that he had."—"O Susan! think if you had died in that state of mind, what would have become of your soul!"—"Why, mother, I do think about my soul; though I suppose you and Anne still think I am a heathen, as poor aunt used to say. I do feel very sorry that my temper and behaviour are so bad." "It is not of much use, my dear child, to feel always sorry, and yet go on offending. You have now that dear baby given to you by God; try to make it better than yourself; you will be rewarded as I am, when I look at Anne. I do not mean to hurt your feelings, Susan, but you must know, and feel, that there is a great difference between you and your sister."—"Indeed I do, mother! After all, aunt's money has been no comfort to me; I wish she had never had anything to do with me, and yet it was very kind of her to take me."—"Yes, Susan. She, poor woman, had never known the blessing of a religious education herself; and when she brought you up without the fear of God before your eyes, she did not know how you would suffer from her bad management."

When Susan reached Anne's happy little cottage, she received a very warm welcome; she was tired with the jolting of the waggon, but the nice tea refreshed her very much. The baby was said to be quite a darling, both by James and his wife. "You know, Susan, how I do love babies," said Anne; "I promise to be such a nurse!" Mrs. Collins found her old arm chair

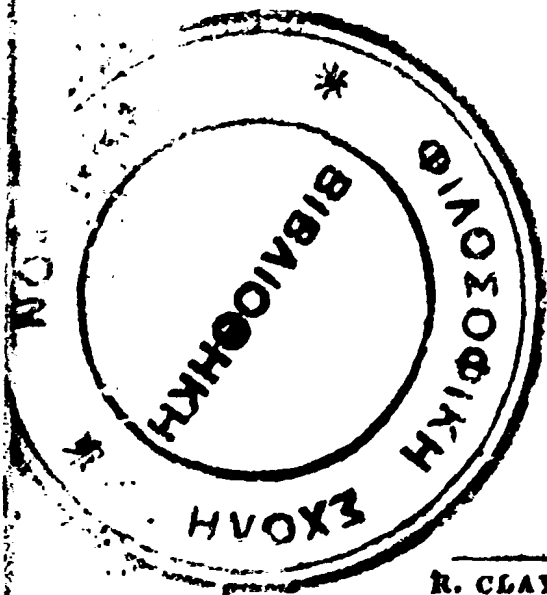
a real comfort to her ; hers was, indeed, a coming home. Anne's happy cheerfulness quite gladdened Susan ; she scarcely could tell why. " Anne," said Susan, " do you recollect my laughing at you about James, when he came on purpose to carry your books to the Sunday-school for you, and heard you say all your lessons ?"—" Why, yes," said Anne, " I think I do, Susan ; for you called him lanky James, and he heard you."—" Did he ?" said Susan ; " I am sure I shall not call him lanky James now ; for I think, if he is very tall, he is handsome too."—" He did not care much about it, Susan, when I told him not to mind it. He likes, even now, to read sometimes out of the Testament he used to carry for me."—" I wish," said Susan, " my husband cared about the Testament. I really do not think he ever opens a book of any kind."—" Perhaps," said Anne, " you never asked him to read to you."—" Why, no !" said Susan, " I do not see much of him ; and on Sunday he likes to take a walk in the country."—" And you go with him, I suppose ?" " O no, I do not ; he does not want me, I can tell you ; sometimes I go to church ; but, for a long time, you know, before baby was born, I was ill, and did not go at all. O what a miserable time I did spend ! William seldom came home until late at night ; and then he was often so drunk, that he did not speak to me at all. Mrs. Martin, in the next room, was very kind, and used to come and scold William for me ; but I do not think it did him the least good in the world, for very often I have been a whole day without a morsel to eat. You



are not yet come to the scolding part with Ja Anne?"—"Why, Susan, we think it better *bear and forbear*, as we both used to write in copy-books at school. If there is no first one, you know, Susan, there can be no second." "How wise you are!" said Susan. "Yes," James, who just then came in, with his water-pot in his hand, "I have got a very wise wife, Susan; she knows that, 'a soft answer turneth away wrath.'"

If all wives and husbands would remember there would be many more happy homes there are. "Blessed are the Peacemakers."

THE END.



R. CLAY, PRINTER, BREAD STREET HILL.

