

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]
The Fonthill Tragedy

by Mrs. R. B. Edson

The hall door was open, as I was just coming down the broad stairway, with its carved banisters, and rich, heavy mouldings, and a faint scent of sweet-brier floated in. It was one of those delicious June days that always sets me wondering what heaven can be, when earth is so lovely.

I had been at Fonthill House nearly all of my vacations—partly as seamstress and partly as friend—for five years. The family consisted of Mrs. Fonthill, Alice Crofton, an orphan niece, and Harry Fonthill, the adopted son, and heir prospective to the great Fonthill property. My mother whom I scarcely remember, was an early and intimate friend of Mrs. Fonthill; and so, when five years ago my father died, also, leaving me homeless and portionless, Mrs. Fonthill insisted on my making my home there—which I did; teaching, however, a greater portion of the time in a neighboring town. She had been very tender with me for my dead mother's sake, and I had grown to love her very dearly.

But I am wandering. I was about half-way down the stairs when the sound of a raised voice—an unmistakably angry one—reached me from the dining-room. I paused, undecided whether to go on or return, but finally walked slowly on, until I stood in the dining-room door. How well I remember how everything looked that morning! I have thought of it all a hundred times since. The sunshine streaming down the long dining-room; the table with its massive service of silver; the quaintly-carved furniture of black walnut, and purple velvet, and the high panelled walls, of heavy oak.

In a lounging-chair, in the great bay window, sat Alice Crofton, the morning sunshine nestling in her soft, golden-brown curls. One daintily-slippered foot just peeped out from the folds of her delicate morning-dress, of pale rose cashmere. I remember, too, of noting that a tea-rose, in the window, had opened since the day before. Harry stood leaning against the sideboard, and near the head of the table, flushed and angry, stood Mrs. Fonthill. I never saw a person in such a passion before. She seemed to have lost all control of herself, and launched out in reproaches, insults and invectives, without stint. She taunted Harry with being a low adventurer, a nameless impostor, and in fact everything mean and despicable.

All I could gather from the torrent of words, was, that he had been expelled from college, for some misdemeanor. But, though naturally of a quick, impetuous temperament, he stood there as still as marble, and almost as white. The white teeth were set into the lips until the blood started, and one hand clenched the window-seat till it grew purple under the nails. What self-control the boy had! I had never given him credit for it. When she at last paused, exhausted by her violent passion, he straightened himself up—and ah! how handsome and noble he looked! saying, in an even tone:

“Is this all, Mrs. Fonthill?” He had always called her “mother,” and I could see she winced, slightly.

“Is it not enough, sirrah?”

“Perhaps. At least I think you will be sorry that it was so much, some day. Good morning.”

And lifting his hat, he walked slowly away, apparently as cool and calm as if his blood was of ice. But I knew him so well! I knew it had been a terrible struggle. But he had conquered; he had not answered back!

Mrs. Fonthill rang a little bell, and the breakfast was brought in, and we three sat down and went through the farce of eating. For my own part, I thought I should never swallow the rich viands, the sobs kept rising and choking me so; and in order to wash them down, I swallowed my coffee so hot, that I am sure my mouth and throat were blistered.

And Alice! It was pitiful to see her. The roses that I so loved to see—because I never had any myself, had faded entirely out of her cheeks; and a white, frightened look on her face, made it seem absolutely haggard. I think we were all glad when breakfast was over, and we were at liberty to go to our rooms. Alas, how unlike it was to the pleasant meals we had taken together in that bright, sunshiny east room, with Harry’s gay laughter and pleasant badinage. He always had an inexhaustible fund of wit and humor; and though his great flow of animal spirits, and his intense love of sport, were continually getting him into scrapes, yet so thoroughly good-natured and open-hearted was he, that even his victims could hold no malice against him.

I had long seen that Alice and Harry were very much attached, and I used to busy myself building the most delightful of air-castles, in which they always figured as king and queen. I never expected to marry, myself; I was shy, and plain, and then, besides, I was poor. I knew there was nothing in me to attract the attention of men; and so I put such thoughts out of my mind, and planned the happiest of futures for my friends.

I am sure, if I had been a fairy god-mother, I should have built palaces of crystal and silver for them all. But Harry was my especial favorite. I do not think I could have loved an own brother with a more tender, faithful love. What would he do? I said, as with a burst of tears I thought of what he was suffering, for he was as proud and high-spirited as Mrs. Fonthill herself; and I knew how her cruel taunts had wounded him.

Alice came in presently, and sitting down at my feet, hid her face in my lap, and gave way to a perfect passion of tears.

“O Annie!” looking up with a dreadful face, “isn’t aunt dreadful? You didn’t hear half. I never was so frightened in my life. If she ever gets angry with me, I shall die, I know I shall;” and she shivered with apprehension.

“Yes,” said I, trying to comfort her; “but how grandly Harry behaved. I never was so proud of him in my life. I did not know his strength before.”

Just then a light tripping step sounded in the hall, and came running up the stairs.

“Caddy Jennison,” I said, for nobody else ever came in like that. I used to tell her, laughingly, that I was positive she had wings, else how could she skim along without touching the ground, as I was sure she did.

“I know all about it,” she broke out, in her quick, impulsive way; “and it’s outrageous! I don’t care if it is Mrs. Fonthill. And Hal’s such a splendid fellow, too!”

“How came you to know about it, Caddy?” I said.

“O, Hal told me himself; he’s been over. I smuggled him into the pantry and obliged him to swallow I don’t know how many cups of coffee. You see I didn’t care to have papa know about it, he would read me a chapter an hour long, on ‘accessories,’ ‘implications,’ and ‘evidences.’ *I* wouldn’t be a lawyer for all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them. They are so suspicious of everything; they are so sure there is some terrible cat under every little innocent heap of meal! I am so sorry about Harry, though, for he is just the dearest friend I have in the world.”

“And Frank Henderson?” I said.

“O, he is—is different!”

“Ah! yes, I understand,” I replied, quietly, smiling.

“You dear little thing,” throwing her arms round my neck, and perching her bright little head on one [side], looking so like some gay, tropic bird, with her great flashing eyes, short jetty curls, and the vivid crimson burning on cheek and lip; “you don’t understand anything about it. What, with desperate lovers, outraged friends, passionate aunts, and obdurate papas, I do believe I shall go distracted.”

Looking up, half-smiling, at this characteristic little speech, I was startled at the look of real pain in her face. She hid her face quickly on my shoulder, and I expected to hear a stifled sob, when lo! a low, soft peal of laughter rippled from the scarlet lips! It was so like Caddy—she always laughed and cried in the wrong places.

“O Caddy! how can you?” said Alice, disconsolately. “I don’t feel as if *I* should *ever* laugh again.”

“My poor little snowdrop,” stooping to caress the wet, tangled curls. “I know I’m a perfect little monster, but O, it was *so* funny, I never saw anything so ludicrous.”

“Caddy Jennison, what *do* you mean—what was ‘funny?’” said Alice, sitting up, and gazing at her in an astonished sort of a way.

“Why, don’t you know what it’s all about—this trouble!”

“No, only that it is one of those dreadful student scrapes, that annoy aunt so.”

“Why, it was yesterday at examination that it happened. You know that horrid Professor Brunn, with dignity enough to found a divinity-school. Well, while he was in the bath-room, Charley Mason and Harry thought they would try some practical experiments in his favorite science of chemistry. So they slipped in his room, and put some sort of chemical preparation on his new, glossy wig. The professor is not only absent-minded, but very near-sighted, and so of course never noticed. The hall was crowded when he came in, and a long row of dignitaries, in black coats, were ranged along the platform, looking as wise and solemn as owls. He was about half-way up the hall when I heard suppressed laughter. I glanced up, and O, of all the ludicrous sights—his hair was the most brilliant blue and orange I ever saw. It was perfectly magnificent! The professor was blissfully ignorant, and stalked on in his pompous way, with his spectacles perched on his queer little nose. The gentlemen on the platform were suddenly seized with a desire for silent contemplation, and one after another hid his face in his hands, while the audience tried in vain to keep their countenances. I am sure it was only the presence of my very proper papa, that kept me from screaming with delight.

“The usher pulled the professor’s sleeve desperately, but he only gave him a stern look; but after a while he succeeded in getting him out of the hall, when I suppose he discovered the trick. He came back after a while in his old wig, and the exercises proceeded; but there was an angry flush on his usually stolid face, that boded no good to the perpetrators. I don’t know how it was traced to them, but it was, however, and they were expelled at once.”

Alice was laughing through her tears, despite her recent assertion; and I, notwithstanding my disapproval of practical joking, could not repress a smile at the thought of his very original appearance. For Professor Brunn, with his arrogant and self-conceited ways, was not a general favorite.

“Why, there comes papa!” suddenly exclaimed Caddy; “what *do* you suppose he is coming now, for?”

I glanced down the carriage-way, and saw the Fonthill carriage at the foot of the drive. It had evidently been sent for him, and knowing him to be Mrs. Fonthill’s legal adviser, a painful foreboding of his business pressed itself upon me. Presently there was a light tap at the door, and Norah the housemaid looked in.

“Miss Luce, the mistress says, will ye please step down to the back parlor.”

“Dear me,” exclaimed Caddy, “I shouldn’t wonder one bit if papa was going to propose to you. What a nice little mamma you would make, to be sure!”

I was too much disturbed to reply, only smiling faintly as I closed the door. Norah was waiting for me on the landing, with a distressed air.

“Ah, Miss Annie,” she said, “it bodes no good to the young master.”

“What is it, Norah?”

“O it’s making a new will that she is, the old termagant!”

“Norah!” I interrupted, sternly.

“I don’t care,” she went on, desperately; “it’s not Norah McGinnis that will stay here to see Master Hal, with his bright face and pleasant ways, drove away; it will be just like an old tomb, that it will!” And Norah wiped her eyes vigorously with the corner of her apron.

“Then you don’t care for the rest of us?”

“Miss Annie, you’re just a sweet saint, that you are, and little Alice is as pretty as a sunbeam; but after all it is Master Hal that makes the old house glad.”

Alas! how well I knew it.

“The mistress has never been in such a passion since the Henly affair; not that I blamed her so much for that, though.”

“I have heard something of this,” I said; “but never knew the particulars.”

“Well, you see this man—Luke Henly, was groom here nigh seven years ago; he had the devil’s own temper sure, and we were all scart of him—only Master Harry, and he was always playing jokes on him. He just hated the boy—Harry was just turned of fifteen then, and used to spite him all he dared. Mrs. Fonthill had a beautiful little chestnut mare—Lady Mary, that she kept for her own riding. She was as sweet a creature as ever was—only a bit high-spirited, and wouldn’t stand quite still to be groomed. So one day when she was dancing and frisking about, Luke Henly seized a billet of wood, and struck her across the fore legs, breaking one of them shockingly. Harry, who saw it, went to the mistress with it at once; and O, wasn’t there a nice bit of a scrimmage? The mistress was in a dreadful passion, and had Henly tied up and horse-whipped, and then gave him fifteen minutes to leave the grounds. Henly was livid with rage and shame, and he clenched his fists, and just swore that he ‘would be revenged on her, if it wasn’t for twenty years.’ Well, for a long time we were expecting to wake up and find the house burnt down over our heads, or some dreadful thing or other, but he’s never been seen about here from that day to this. I shouldn’t wonder at all if he was in purgatory, this minute.”

I had stopped, listening to Norah’s story. I now hurried through the hall to the back parlor. Mr. Jennison was standing by the window as I entered, toying with the long purple sprays of fragrant heliotrope that filled the room with sweetness. He came forward and set a chair for me, bowing in his superb way. I think I never saw a more thoroughly well-bred man, or one more studiously polite, or with greater suavity of manner; yet, after all, I instinctively shrunk from the man—why, it would have been very hard to tell.

Mrs. Fonthill had still an angry flush on her face, and the mouth was firm and rigid. I saw no sign of relenting there. It was as I had supposed; a new will had been drawn up, making Alice

sole legatee of, not only the broad acres of Fonthill, but of all the personal property, stocks, bonds, mortgages, etc. I was wanted as a witness, and as soon as possible withdrew. I would not have placed my name on the paper, but I knew it would make no difference, it would be done just the same.

Alice was indignant, declaring she would never touch a penny of the property; and Caddy declared if "*she* was a lawyer, before she would make such unrighteous wills, to please crotchety old women, she would cut off her right hand."

Looking out of the window, I saw Mr. Jennison walking leisurely down the white, gravelled way, bordered with elms a century old. Just before he came to the carriage in waiting, he stooped and picked up something, it was dark brown, I thought. He rapped it lightly against his gloved hand, then put it in his pocket.

"Ah," said Caddy, gazing after him, "you handsome, shrewd, clever papa, you don't begin to know Caddy Jennison, yet—you think you do, but some day you will find your mistake—poor papa!"

There were two or three short, stifled sobs, and she burst out in a perfect little tempest of tears. Was there ever such a girl?

"Caddy Jennison, was there ever such an enigma?" I exclaimed, perfectly at a loss to account for this sudden outbreak. She looked up, a radiant smile breaking through her tears.

"I know, dear, but I never *can* get the hang of these things. I suppose I ought to have *laughed* just now, and *cried* about poor, dear Brunn! There, I'm going home now. Alice, allow me to congratulate you, as a young woman of 'great expectations?'" she called out, putting her face back an instant, as she was closing the door.

"How can Caddy be so gay, when Frank Henderson leaves for Calcutta to-morrow?"

"Then it is decided?" I said.

"Yes, and Harry says it is a splendid opening for him, he has fine abilities, and this is a fine field for them."

"And Caddy is so volatile, she will soon forget him, and well for her if she does; I don't suppose Mr. Jennison will ever consent to her marrying him."

"No indeed! He told Frank he would sooner see Caddy in her shroud, than the wife of a poor, struggling merchant's clerk. The son of a poor widow, who takes in plain sewing, hardly suits the fancy of the ambitious attorney, I suppose. If Caddy was like anybody else—but there! one never can tell how she feels about anything."

"How long has her mother been dead?"

“O, ten years, or more; I can hardly remember her. She was a Cuban, and of Spanish descent, and very beautiful.”

“Mr. Jennison is still a young man; I think he is hardly forty. Don’t you think him handsome?”

“I think him the most elegant, superb-looking man, I ever saw; handsome does not apply to Mr. Jennison.”

“And yet, he is granite where he pleases; it is the old story of the ‘claw beneath the velvet paw.’”

The house was dull all day, but toward night Harry came home. Alice and I were in the shrubbery. He came out, holding a hand to each of us. He did not look either angry, or disheartened, but a new look of determination marked the proud, sensitive mouth.

“Congratulate me upon my good fortune,” he said, smiling down in our sad faces, “I think this will make a man of me. I shall learn to depend on myself; and if there is anything in me that is worthy, it will have chance for development. I have secured passage in the steamer for Calcutta, with Frank Henderson. Only it will be hard to be where there is no one to care for me.”

“O Harry, Harry, you must *not* go!” exclaimed Alice, bursting into tears. “I never will touch a cent of this hateful old property! I’ll go off somewhere, and do something—I don’t know what, for a living, but I never will stay here, if you go away in this manner.”

The tangled brown curls were pushed back from the tear-stained face with a resolute hand, and a soft, pink flush crept into the waxen cheek. I think Hal was rather gratified with this avowal, although he would as soon thought of a rose-tree’s bearing pippins, as of Alice earning a living.

“What do *you* think, Annie?” turning to me, but still holding tightly the little wet fingers he had taken from her face.

“I think it will be, as you say, a good thing for you. I think there *is* something in you that is worth developing; and fair winds and smooth seas do not make skillful mariners. But it is the way in which you are going that pains me. But then, it is God’s way, and you can never go so far away as to be beyond his love and care; or,”—I added, the great tears springing to my eyes—“beyond the loving thought of those who stay at home and wait.”

The bright face was very grave, and the dark, soft eyes had such a longing tenderness in them, I knew how hard it was for him to go. Presently he said, softly:

“Annie, I must see *her* before I go. She has done too much for me, to let one hour of anger blot out all the long, sweet years of tenderness and care. I do not wonder she was offended; it was a reckless piece of work. I don’t believe I should do it now; I seem to have lived so long since morning—I feel so much older. I will pack my trunks, and see mother to-morrow morning. I shall have time, and perhaps she will feel better towards me.”

Ah! these to-morrows, who can tell what they will bring! I went up to Mrs. Fonthill's room in the twilight. Harry was moving about in his chamber, she said:

"Who is that walking about?"

"It is Harry, packing his trunks," I replied, quietly.

"Where—where is he going?" half-rising as if to go to him, but controlling herself, and sitting down again.

"To Calcutta, with Frank Henderson," I said, watching her from under my lids. She was very nervous and uneasy, but at last said, half to herself, "To-morrow, yes, to-morrow will do." Thinking she would be better alone, I went to my room.

Mrs. Fonthill's room was a front chamber, facing west, with two south windows at the end. A low balcony ran along the front of the house, and the two front windows opened on it. My own room was in the same end of the house, only at the back, with one window looking south, and commanding a view of the carriage way and the road beyond. It had also one east window, and directly adjoining it was Harry's room. This was directly over the dining-room, and had two little dormer windows, with quaint, odd-looking, piazzas, overrun with grapevines.

The house was still early, but I could not sleep. I felt restless and troubled with an indefinable dread of something. It was near ten o'clock, I should judge, when my quick ear caught the sound of a pebble thrown against Harry's window. It was opened softly, and I heard Harry let himself out of the window, and slide to the ground by the vines. What could it mean? I arose and looked out of the window, but the sky was overcast, and the moon had not yet risen, and I could see nothing.

After a while I fell into a troubled sleep, but my senses were still very acute, and I started at the lightest sound. Presently I started up in bed, broad awake. I never knew *what* awoke me, but I sprang out of bed, and looked out of the south window. The moon was just coming up through a heavy bank of clouds, but I could see the white gravelled drive, like a pale ribbon folded over the dusky sward. The elms gloomed in the shadow, as I held my breath to listen. The clock in the hall below struck one, reverberating strangely through the great, silent house. I looked down the long line of elms, half-expecting to see some ghostly form emerge from the shadow, when—was it fancy? a faintly outlined form slouched down in the line of the trees, carefully keeping their trunks as much between him and the house as possible. By this time I was decidedly nervous, and half resolved to speak to some one. But after a moment's reflection, I resolved to keep quiet, as the house was profoundly still.

It was near three o'clock, when I saw Harry come carefully up, and climb in at the window as silently as he had gone, but not so silently, however, but that one of the servants in the northeast wing opened the blind, and looked out. I was so wearied with my vigil that I slept lightly toward morning, and the sun was up when I fully awoke.

I heard the servants busy at their work below, and heard Alice from across the front landing, come out of her room, and go down. Mrs. Fonthill was habitually an early riser, but as yet she had not come out. Presently some one came up, whom I heard speak at her door. I could not hear her answer, but in a moment Norah's alarmed face looked in at my door.

"O Miss Annie, what can be the matter with the mistress? I've called, but never a word can I get, and she such an early riser, too."

A little startled, yet concluding that she also had a sleepless night, and had, like myself, slept a little after it was morning, I followed Norah, and rapped lightly on the door. It was all still. I rapped again, still louder, calling her name; but still no answer. I tried the door but could not open it. Norah stood behind me, white with fear, and I was thoroughly alarmed myself.

My first thought was to find Harry, as with rapid step I descended the long stairs. I saw his trunks strapped and labelled in the hall. He was walking up and down under the front balcony.

"Harry," I said, excitedly, "we have been trying, Norah and I, to wake Mrs. Fonthill, but cannot. I fear she is ill, or—I don't know what," I added, a sudden fear coming over me. "Hadn't you better force the door?"

Harry sprang up the stairway before I had done speaking, and was rapping, and calling "Mother, mother," but no sound came from the silent room. It was decided at once to force the lock. By this time, Alice, with a white face and frightened eyes, and nearly all the servants, were on the upper landing. The door yielded at last. A faint odor of ether floated out. The room was quite dark, the blinds being all closed, but the light from the open door streamed in, and fell across a white, ghastly face, and a wide crimson stain on the sheet folded over her bosom. We stood transfixed with horror at the terrible sight, and Alice fell to the floor in a deadly swoon. The body was quite stiff and cold; the dreadful deed had evidently been done some time before. We found, upon turning down the clothes, two ugly gashes near the region of the heart. A physician and coroner were at once sent for, and with awe-struck faces we waited their coming, in that terrible chamber.

Harry was wild with grief; he knelt by the murdered woman, shedding hot, burning tears, and stroking tenderly the cold, nerveless fingers. I went to the windows opening on the balcony, and raised one a trifle to admit a little fresh air. Something lay on the balcony directly under the window. I picked it up, and with a quick glance about me, to see that no one was looking, put it in my pocket.

The physician and coroner came at length, and as the story spread, white, terror-stricken faces crowded the stairs, all eager to learn something of the shocking tragedy. The verdict reached was, that the room had been entered from one of the windows opening on the balcony, and after first stupefying the victim with ether, she had been twice stabbed with a stiletto, near the heart, probably causing instant death. It had been done, they judged, from six to eight hours before the body was discovered.

As soon as possible I stole to my room, and after turning the key, drew from my pocket a brown kid glove; there was a slight stain of blood across the palm. My heart, for a moment, stood quite still, *for I knew the glove*, but to be doubly sure, I turned down the wrist, and read, "*Harry Fonthill*." It was one of Harry's whims to write his name on his gloves. How came it there? and what was my duty in the case? I asked myself twenty times over. Not that I could ever believe Harry guilty of this dreadful crime; but would it not be a strong presumptive evidence against him, if discovered? Feeling half like a criminal myself, I folded it in a paper, put it in a box, locking it securely, and placed it in the bottom of my trunk.

"I will let the future decide," I said, but it troubled me greatly.

The house was in the utmost confusion. Harry and Alice were utterly incapable of attending to the necessary duties and preparations, and of course I must take the place of director and overseer of everything. Harry's trunks were carried back to his room, and Frank Henderson sailed for Calcutta without him.

There was a strange little scene enacted at Mr. Jennison's the morning after the murder, which I might as well relate here. Caddy come down late to breakfast, with a pale, disturbed face. She was nervous and *distract*, and hardly tasted her coffee. Mr. Jennison, too, was a trifle less calm and collected in manner than usual, but each was too pre-occupied to notice the other, until a serving-man, coming in from the street, said, abruptly:

"A terrible thing this is, sir, to be happening among us."

"What has happened?" said Mr. Jennison, without looking up.

"And don't you know, and you her lawyer and friend? Why, the old lady—Mrs. Fonthill, sir, was found murdered this morning—stabbed to the heart, in her bed."

Mr. Jennison sat white and still as a statue, and Caddy's great black eyes were dilated with horror.

"And they do say, sir, that it looks rather hard for young Master Hal; they had hard words yesterday," continued the man.

"It is false!" cried Caddy, fiercely. "*I know better.*"

"My child," said Mr. Jennison, "compose yourself. You can know nothing of the affair, any way."

"But papa, *you* don't believe this cruel story, you know you don't."

"I do not believe anything about it. I shall wait for the proof."

"But I tell you it was *not* Hal. Why, it's dreadful! you must save him, papa, if he is accused. I tell you, you *must!*"

The girl was wild with excitement; her great eyes flamed and glowed, and a wild burning crimson flushed her cheeks. Mr. Jennison gazed at her in surprise, himself greatly agitated; but his long habit of self-control at length enabled him to regain his composure.

Before noon, he came over to the house, and by his presence of mind, his experienced thoughtfulness and calmness, helped me greatly by his quiet suggestions and ready executions. I hardly know what I could have done without him. It seemed so properly his place, too, as he had always had charge of Mrs. Fonthill's business affairs.

Detectives were at once at work, but they had but very little to work on. The room was entered from the window nearest the southwest corner. It was done, too, evidently by some one who knew that *that* window was never fastened. It was the only one in the house that was not closed by springs. The late Dr. Fonthill had it arranged so that he might come in or out if he pleased, without disturbing the house. Mrs. Fonthill had taken the fancy to have it remain as he left it. The only thing found was a strip two or three inches long, of coarse linsey-woolsey, caught on a splinter, on the edge of the balcony.

I gave my account of the slouching figure in the shadow of the elms, and so the matter rested until after the funeral. Harry was still firm in his determination to go abroad, but consented to wait until we recovered somewhat from this sudden and violent shock. It was somewhere nigh a week, I think, when one day word was brought up that Mr. Jennison wished to see me in the library. Latterly I was getting very much afraid of this man; I could not tell what it was, only a feeling as of some vague, impalpable danger. He talked to me a great deal lately—and he had rare conversational powers, but I had an intuitive impression that I was being cross-questioned. I even grew to think he carried about him a concealed book, in which he was continually engaged in summing up and setting down “evidence.” I used to sometimes fancy I heard the rustle of the invisible leaves. And yet, this man had been very kind to me, and had helped me through those first terrible days, by his calmness and strength. Evidently, I was getting nervous. Could that little hidden packet have anything to do with it?

When I entered the library he was standing by the bookcase. He came quickly forward, and took both my hands in his, and looking down in my face, said:

“My dear Miss Luce, this is wearing on you sadly; you look really ill.” And drawing a lounging-chair up before the bookcase, he placed me gently in it; and releasing my hands with a faint pressure, went and brought a cushion for my feet.

He then leaned carelessly against the shelves where he could look directly in my face. He then went on, leading my thoughts away from myself—what infinite tact the man had!—telling me of new publications, of literary changes, things which he knew interested me, but of which I had not had time to think of late. He went on from speaking of new books, to old ones, until he came to those treating of mental hallucination, optical illusions, etc., running his hand lightly over the volumes, selecting, and quoting from one and another.

“My dear Annie—may I call you so?” with a tender intonation, a rare smile lighting up his face, “it is not altogether impossible that the man you saw—or *fancied* you saw, in the shadow of the elms, was one of these mental illusions, the result of nervous excitement.”

I heard the flutter of those leaves as plain as ever I heard anything in my life!

“I am very positive,” I said.

“Ah, yes. No doubt they all were,”—then carelessly. “By the way, have you heard anything of a glove being found on the balcony?”

I knew he was watching me intently, and for a moment my heart stood still; then my martyr-blood arose. Who was this man, that he should wrest my secret from me? He should *not*, I said, defiantly. I would defend it with my life. There was not even the tremor of a lid, in the eyes that met his, as I said, with surprised interest:

“Ah! I had not heard; when was it found?”

For a moment his eye fell, but he regained his self-control immediately.

“You misapprehend me. I did not mean it as an affirmation, but more as an interrogation, or suggestion; as if I had said, ‘these things were found in such and such cases, have you heard of any in this?’” Then shutting up the book he was carelessly turning, he came and stood by my chair.

“I came here to-day on a very unpleasant errand,” he said, in a tone of tender regret. “I have tried to lead your thoughts to it naturally, that it might be less shocking, but somehow I do not seem to succeed. But before I proceed, I wish to ask you one question. Is there not one to whom suspicion naturally points, although you do not doubt his innocence; have you *not* thought of the possibility of that person being suspected?”

“Harry!” I gasped. He bowed gravely.

“O, they will not dare arrest him!” I cried, excitedly, feeling myself growing faint.

“I fear it is already done; but calm yourself, Miss Luce; if he is innocent, it is best that it be proved. For this suspicion was getting very hard for his friends to hear at every corner.”

I arose. “You will, of course, excuse me now,” I said. “I thank you for the trouble you have taken in the matter.” He came and opened the door for me, saying, as he did so:

“You will break this as gently as possible to Miss Crofton; was there not formerly some sort of an engagement between them, before this difficulty made such a thing improper?”

“There was; and *I* am unable to see any impropriety in its continuance,” I replied.

“You reason like a woman, Miss Luce. Do you not see that it would defeat the whole spirit and purpose of the late Mrs. Fonthill’s will? I cannot conceive of an honorable man’s taking advantage—under these circumstances—of what was probably but a mere childish fancy. But we will not stop to discuss the point now. Please say to Miss Crofton, that my services are at her command,” he said, taking his hat from the rack, and bowing with infinite grace as he walked slowly out.

With a weary heart I climbed the long stairs and sought my room. What was my duty? If I had been less positive as to Harry’s innocence, I should not have hesitated. My duty, though hard, would have been plain. And what did Mr. Jennison know about it? for, despite his plausible explanation, I felt that he *did* know something; but how much? and *how came he to know it?* I had no one to whom I could go for advice or assistance, only to Him, the Supreme and Invisible, who is touched with a feeling of infinite pity at all our griefs and agonies. But I found that strength sufficient for me. A sweet feeling of divine approval, like a tender benediction, settled over my perturbed spirit. I knew *then* that I was right. From that moment all doubt and distrust died.

I was spared the necessity of breaking the sad news to Alice; she had heard it from the grieved and indignant Norah. This, together with the grief and excitement of the past fortnight, was too much for her delicate system, and a low, nervous fever was the result. The commencement of my school term arrived, but Alice would not hear of my leaving her, and so I gave up the situation, and was installed queen of the castle, with Norah for prime minister. I had been supremely ignorant all my life of practical house-wifery, but I suddenly developed a wonderful talent for “accounts.” It was surprising how naturally I took to dairy-maids and market-men! And I carried the keys at my belt with an importance that would have done credit to a veteran. I laid aside my French and German poems, and became enthusiastically devoted to “receipt books.” Indeed, with Norah’s assistance, I concocted some of the most remarkable, not to say delectable, pastries and preserves imaginable. Talk of the poet’s license and the romancer’s extravagance; they are not worthy to be mentioned the same day with the license and extravagance of our modern cook books.

We saw but few people, and the days dragged slowly. Mr. Jennison called sometimes, and Mr. Allston, the rector of St. Jude’s, where the Fonthills had worshipped for half a century. Mr. Allston was yet quite a young man—scarce thirty-five; but he had already obtained an enviable reputation. He had rare qualifications for the sick room, which all ministers have not. His calm, restful faith made not only Alice, but myself, stronger and better; Alice declaring that he did her more good than all her medicine. He called one day when Alice was sleeping, and I went down to the parlor to meet him. We fell naturally to talking of Harry.

“Mr. Jennison believes him innocent,” I said.

“Does he?”

I looked up. Something in his face invited my confidence, and before I had stopped to consider, I had unbosomed myself to him, all my doubts and distrusts, my intuitions and aversions, adding, “I am sorry if I have wronged him.”

Mr. Allston looked grave, as he said, "I should be more sorry if you *not*; far better, a thousand times, that you be mistaken, than he what we fear."

He had said "we;" then he, too, shared my distrust.

"It is rather singular," he went on, musingly, "that all these hints, and suspicions, and intimations afloat, can be traced either directly or indirectly to him. He has a way of affirming his belief in his innocence which says very plainly that he has no such belief."

After this, I grew more uneasy; but I knew that Harry had hosts of friends, who were very active in his behalf, but none, perhaps, quite so zealous as Caddy Jennison. She devoted her whole time and thought to his interest; she was instant in season and out; she besieged the jail, and waylaid the jailor, until he was glad to admit her. She came in to see us daily, and she had the strangest moods—one moment walking the floor excitedly, her eyes flaming, and cheeks glowing—the next, kneeling by Alice's bedside, kissing the little colorless hand, and stroking tenderly the wan, white face, looking so strangely altered now all the bright curls were clipped away.

"Caddy," I said once, when she was unusually excited, "be patient. I have faith that it will be all right at last."

"Faith! patience! Annie Luce, *you* don't know! I should go mad to sit down and wait. It is *my* duty to work."

I was looking at Alice. A faintly perceptible shade of pallor settled about the white lips, and a slight tremor stirred the drooping lids. After Caddy went out she lay very quiet, with her face to the wall. By-and-by she said, very softly:

"Do you think Caddy would mind if you didn't let her come up so often? she tires me so."

"No, dear, not if it hurts you."

"I think it does," a little weary sigh just stirring the folds of her snowy night-dress.

Mr. Jennison was rather annoyed that Caddy had become so much mixed up in this affair, and one day attempted a remonstrance. She was seated on a rich crimson *fauteuil*, absently turning the leaves of a book. Her father stood looking down on her, noting how white and thin she had grown. I think he felt something like pity for her, for his voice was very tender as he said:

"Caddy, people are remarking about the interest you feel in young Fonthill."

"That does not concern me," listlessly.

"But it concerns *me* to have my daughter's name in the mouth of every low person in town."

"I wouldn't mind such low people, papa."

A faint flush rose to his face; the girl's composure annoyed him.

"One would suppose he were your lover," hotly.

She sprang to her feet, the book falling on the floor with a dull clang. A fiery red shot into her cheeks, and the thin nostrils dilated.

"And *you* can say that to *me!*" she exclaimed. "Pray how many men would you have your daughter love, sir?"

"Caddy, I wish you to consider *that* affair settled."

"I do, irrevocably; a swift, exultant smile flashing across her face. "But papa, Harry Fonthill is innocent, and he *shall* be saved. There is some atrocious villainy somewhere—would I could unmask it."

"You! a woman!" he sneered.

"Yes, I, a woman. Women have done braver deeds than that. I would not hesitate if it were my own father."

He grew white to the lips, but she did not appear to notice.

"Papa, I heard a man say in the street, to-day, that 'Squire Jennison had more influence than any man in the county, and it would go very much as *he* willed it. You will *remember*, papa."

The day of trial came at length. Mr. Allston very thoughtfully came over and accompanied me to the court-room. The evidence was very meager. The fact of the difficulty with the deceased was brought forward, and the remark that he had made that "she would be sorry she had said so much" was dwelt upon. Next, a servant testified to seeing him return toward morning, letting himself in through the window. I, also, was obliged to testify to the same thing. Caddy sat near the witness stand. There was not a vestige of color in her face, and her great dark eyes never left Harry's face. Two or three times she half rose from her seat, but at a look from Harry settled back again.

Harry freely admitted his absence from the house from ten till three, but steadfastly refused to tell where he was. Mr. Jennison was prosecuting attorney, and it was intimated that he would make a strong plea; but contrary to expectation, he reviewed the case very briefly, and with none of his usual force and eloquence. It was very evident that there was not evidence enough to hold him, and no one was surprised when the jury acquitted him without leaving their seats.

The verdict was received with shouts of applause, and a crowd quickly gathered round him; but Caddy, walking swiftly up to her father's chair, stooped and touched her lips to his forehead, whispering, "Thank you, papa!" and then rapidly walked away.

Harry went home with Mr. Allston and myself, and word having been sent to Alice, we all went up together. Alice was cool and constrained, and Harry, who had been in a fever of excitement, froze instantly. The interview was very embarrassing to all parties, and Mr. Allston soon withdrew, and was followed almost immediately by Harry. I had thought to be perfectly happy when he was acquitted, but instead, I felt more like crying than I had done since his arrest. After a little while I went down into the library. I knew I should find him there. He stood leaning against the mantel, one hand resting lovingly on a portrait of Mrs. Fonthill. There was a sad, grieved look on the bright, handsome face, and tears in the dark eyes. He looked so utterly hopeless and friendless that it made my heart ache, and stepping softly up behind him, I pressed my lips to the bowed head, brushing back caressingly the moist, tangled hair.

He drew me to him with a quick motion. "Annie! little sister! Why are not all women as tender and true as you?"

"O Harry," I sobbed, "you know she has suffered so much, and is still weak and ill. O remember those old, sweet days."

"Remember! Would to God I could forget them! What claim have I, a poor homeless, penniless beggar, with the smell of the prison on my garments, to the favor of the rich heiress?"

"O Harry, don't!" I moaned.

"I am going away to-night, little sister."

"No, no, Harry."

"What! do you think I will live here on *her* bounty?"

"But where will you go?" clinging to him convulsively.

"God only knows!—anywhere away from here."

"O Harry," I cried, "this is terrible!" as the beautiful air-castle I had been so long rearing toppled and fell.

I gave up my place by Alice to Norah that night, and sat till after midnight in the library with Harry.

The next morning, Alice thought she felt well enough to have on her wrapper and sit up a little. I think she had a faint hope that Harry would come in. Norah came in to help me, and as I was arranging Alice's dress, she said:

"Master Harry was standing by the squire's gate, just now, when I came by, and Caddy's bright eyes were red with weeping, at the bidding of him goodbye. But she gave him a picture of her sweet face—God bless her! *She* don't turn against folks as is in trouble."

And Norah, having vented her little spite, was her own kind-hearted self again. Alice, who was leaning on my arm, suddenly grew heavy.

“I believe I’ll rest awhile,” she said, faintly, burying her face in the pillow; and though Norah and I waited long, she said no more about getting up that day.

The summer wore away at last. Alice convalesced slowly, and it was late in September before she was able to go down stairs. How very lovely she looked, in her pretty *neglige* of soft blue merino, matching so exactly the color of her eyes! With the faint rose creeping back to her cheek, and the little rings of golden-bronze hair clustering round her low, broad forehead! I did not wonder that Paul Allston called oftener at Fonthill House than elsewhere in the parish; or that Mr. Jennison found the business of the estate demanding so much of his time. I doubt if ever another client had so attentive a legal adviser. He treated her with such gentle deference, too, doing everything so thoughtfully, with reference to her comfort, and performing so simply and naturally all those little, unobtrusive attentions so pleasing to a woman.

I could see that Alice felt pleased and flattered by his attentions, but I fancied Mr. Allston did not altogether like the turn affairs were taking. And indeed, why should he, if he loved her, as I was sure he did; else why should he come so often that the parish of St. Jude—which was, by the way, eminently aristocratic—began to speculate upon the disposal of the pretty little parsonage, standing vacant, with no womanly hand to train the long, swinging tendrils of fragrant honeysuckle that ran riot over the latticed porches? Of course, if their rector married an heiress in her own right, there would be no further use for the humble parsonage.

I ought to have felt very glad for my darling—for it never entered into my mind that she would not love him; I could not see how any woman could help it. But I could not forget Harry’s sad face, and I grew very unhappy thinking how it would pain him when he knew. I tried very hard to persuade myself that it was only on Harry’s account that I cared.

And so, through all that long, golden autumn, I grew restless and uneasy. I resolved over and over again upon going away. I thought by change of scene I might regain my former tone of spirits. “I have grown weak and nervous,” I said. But still I tarried, drinking in, day after day, words of earnestness and wisdom from his lips. He not only conversed, but often brought books and read to us, in his clear, mellow voice, rare passages and selections. I used to sit and think how happy the woman would be who was one day his wife. I had never thought much about my lack of beauty, but I grew sensitive to the contrast that my dark, plain face presented beside Alice’s fresh, blooming one. I punished myself for this weakness, however, by sitting beside Alice when he was present, fancying that her rare beauty would give him greater pleasure by the contrast. I think I was even willing to bear this if it made *him* happier.

At length, an opportunity offered that enabled me to break away from this painful enchantment. I was solicited to take the part of assistant in the grammar school, and it was with a feeling of relief that I accepted.

Alice strongly opposed my going, but I promised to spend all my leisure time with her, and also to procure Mrs. Henderson for housekeeper, her practical experience rendering her peculiarly fitted for the situation.

Affairs continued very much the same through the winter. I could not understand Alice. Mr. Jennison grew gradually more attentive, if that were possible, till Norah declared “the young mistress’s head would be turned, with two such fine jintlemen.”

In the meantime, the excitement of the murder had subsided, and it was doubted if the murderer were ever discovered. I had heard nothing from Harry, and was entirely ignorant of his whereabouts. Neither had I seen much of Caddy. After Harry’s departure, a coolness grew up between her and Alice. Caddy changed rapidly from the gay, willful girl, to the superb, regal woman. She visited but little, and I did not see her often, but she was always tender and loving towards me. I had a vague suspicion that she knew where Harry was; but she was very reticent on the subject.

When the warm spring days came again, Mr. Allston got in the habit of calling at the schoolroom and walking home with me. “He wishes to talk about Alice,” I said, but somehow he never did!

One day, it was the last week of the term, he came in some time before the school closed, and after the scholars were all gone and I was busying myself arranging my books and papers, he came up to me, and taking a letter from his pocket, handed it to me.

I glanced at it; it bore a foreign postmark. My fingers trembled as I tried to break the seal. He caught my hands in both of his.

“Poor little hands, how they flutter!” he said, bending over and kissing the tips of my fingers.

I grew suddenly faint with happiness. “I have no right to be glad of his kisses,” I said, reprovingly, to myself, as I slowly unfolded the letter. I could not repress a cry of delight as Harry’s familiar writing met my eye. It was brief and characteristic, and was nearly as follows:

“Calcutta, Apr. 14, —.

“ANNIE, MY DEAR LITTLE GIRL:—Hope you’re not married; if you are, I beg the gentleman’s pardon, but shall not retract! Annie, I’m coming home! I have thought all winter that I did foolishly to leave; but *now* I know why I came here. Annie, do you think God watches over and cares for such an unworthy fellow as I? I know just what you will say, you dear little saint—‘that his love is so deep and strong that no one of his children can ever stray beyond his care.’ I have never thought much about it, but lately I have met something that has set me to thinking more seriously. I shall be home in June—of course I do not mean the old home; but I shall doubtless find one somewhere. Mayhap the ‘authorities’ will furnish me with one!

“Good-bye for a little while.

HAL.”

I read the letter through, and handed it to Mr. Allston. He was as pleased as I, for Harry was a favorite of his.

“Poor Harry!” I said; “he will not go to the ‘old home.’ Where will he go, I wonder?”

Mr. Allston suddenly bent over me and whispered something in my ear.

“O Mr. Allston—”

“Paul,” he pleaded.

“Paul, I thought you loved Alice; she is so beautiful!”

“And rich,” he added, laughing, “while you are—”

“Poor, and plain, and—”

“Brave, and strong, and true,” he said, finishing the sentence. “Why, Annie, I would give more for this little dark, earnest face, with its clear, truthful eyes, than for all the roses and lilies that ever bloomed.” “Yes,” he said, as we walked slowly homeward, “we will have the parsonage all ready to receive Harry in June.”

Caddy was delighted. She laughed and cried, in her old happy way. She kissed me until she was out of breath, and then hugged me until I was nearly suffocated. Alice, also, congratulated me so warmly that I dismissed the fear I had, that she had ever loved Paul. But then it seemed so strange how any one could help it!

We had been settled a week at the little parsonage (the society concluded not to sell it!) when Harry came. How handsome and noble he had grown! But the same dear, merry fellow as of old. He caught me up in his arms, kissing me, as he whirled me rapidly round, perfectly regardless of the presence of the Rev. Paul Allston.

“You are a fortunate man, Mr. Allston.”

“I am very sensible of it.”

“For you have got a wife who can preach better than you.

“Preaching the *deed*, and not the creed,
Will help us in our utmost need.”

“Annie,” he exclaimed, “it’s lovely here! How kind in you to provide such a home to welcome me to! Of course, it was all on my account!”

After a while, he told us he had come home to demand a new trial, as he was now prepared to prove his innocence. I was anxious about how Alice would feel at his coming. Lately, a suspicion had been awakened in my mind that she had thought he cared for Caddy, and that was the reason of her great interest in his trial. I determined to test her. I communicated my

suspicious to Harry, and persuaded him to accompany me to Fonthill House. Paul said I was a “dear little match-maker.”

Harry waited outside while I went into the long dining-room—that dear old sunshiny east room, with its carnations and tea-roses in the windows—where Alice was sitting, coiled up in the sunshine, as she had sat that other June morning, such a very long year before. She sprang up to meet me, reaching out both little rose-leaf palms.

“Alice, I have news for you—Harry has come home!” I said, not giving her a chance to think.

Alas, poor little darling! she did not try to think, but fell at my feet in a dead faint. Harry sprang into the room at a bound, and caught her to his breast. The action revived her. She opened her eyes and looked up in the passionate face bent over her. Then she wound both little white arms around his neck and nestled her curly head in his bosom.

I unlatched the door and stepped softly out, making my way to the kitchen, to inform Norah; and I really had to hold the faithful creature, to keep her from rushing directly to the dining-room, “to see the darlint.”

All the old excitement was renewed when it became known that Harry Fonthill had returned, and demanded a new trial, and the great court-house was crowded to suffocation. Mr. Jennison came in, pale and silent. By-and-by there was a little stir, and Caddy Jennison came in, followed by a bronzed and bearded man, who, as he turned his face slightly, I saw to be Frank Henderson. He took a seat by Caddy, and threw an arm about her, very much as if he had a right to! Mr. Jennison flushed hotly, and people stared in amazement.

Presently Harry’s former counsel arose, and said he was now prepared to prove an alibi.

“Mr. Henderson, you will please take the stand.”

Frank Henderson’s erect figure moved up the crowded aisle.

“Mr. Henderson, you remember the night of the nineteenth of June?”

“I do, sir.”

“Please state to the court what occurred, as far as relates to the prisoner.”

“I have the best of reasons for perfectly recollecting the night in question, for on that night I was united in marriage to Miss Caddy Jennison, in the town of B—, by the Rev. Charles Morgan. Harry Fonthill accompanied us, leaving town shortly after ten o’clock, and returning about three.”

“That will do, sir. The Rev. Mr. Morgan will please take the stand.”

A tall, venerable man, with white, flowing beard, came forward, and was readily recognized as a Presbyterian clergyman of B—.

“You know the prisoner?”

“I do, sir.”

“When did you last see him?”

“On the night of the nineteenth of June last. He came to my house near midnight, with Mr. Henderson and Miss Jennison. I united the last-named two in marriage, and they left my house shortly after one o’clock.”

“Why did you not testify to this on a former trial?”

“Mr. Fonthill begged me not to, as for *certain reasons* it was desirable that the matter be kept secret. Only to save his life, would he consent to have the truth made known.”

The audience drew a long sigh of relief when he closed. There was another little stir, near the door, and a man with a slow, shambling gait slouched up the aisle. My heart gave a great bound. *I knew the man’s gait instantly!* Norah, sitting just behind me, caught my arm like the grip of a vice. I looked round. Her eyes were dilated with terror, and her lips were like ashes.

“It is *him!*” she whispered, hoarsely.

“Who?”

“Luke Henly—the saints preserve us!”

As this (to us) unexpected witness took his stand, he turned a pale, sickly face toward us.

Mr. Jennison turned fairly livid as this man came up. He began his testimony by saying:

“My name is Luke Henly, *and I murdered Mrs. Fonthill!* I worked for her eight years ago, and she had me tied up and horse-whipped, and I swore to be revenged. I went away and was gone seven years, *but I never forgot my vengeance;* and one night—it was the nineteenth of last June—I crept in at the balcony window, and accomplished my purpose. The house was still, but when I was sliding down the balcony, a splinter caught in my pants and tore out a piece, and I slipped, making a slight noise. I thought I heard some one moving in the house, and I crept on my hands and knees until I reached the shadow of the big elms, and then dodged between them until I gained the road.”

Here he was interrupted by a violent fit of coughing. It was evident that he was far gone in consumption.

“When I gained the highway, a man suddenly started up from the side of the road. I knew him in a moment—it was Squire Jennison. He had seen me get out of the window, and boldly charged me with the crime. I could not deny it. He then said, ‘Young Fonthill is disinherited, and the old lady and he had a quarrel to-day, or rather, yesterday. If you could manage to throw suspicion on him, you might escape.’

“‘But what can I do?’ I said.

“‘I have a glove here which belongs to him,’ drawing a dark glove from his pocket. ‘If you could manage to toss it up on the balcony.’

“He gave me the glove, and I stole noiselessly back and threw it up, and saw it fall directly under the window. I found him waiting for me when I came back. ‘Will you keep my secret,’ I said, ‘if I will keep yours?’

“He said ‘yes,’ and took me home with him and kept me secreted till the next night, and then let me out privately. I don’t know as he saw, but I did, his daughter open a door and look out, as we stole softly through the meadow, to the road.

“I went to Calcutta in a few days, and have been living a wretched life ever since; haunted day and night by the pale face of a sleeping woman. I got so poor at last—for I was unable to work—that I was forced to beg in the streets. One day I asked charity of a young man; but no sooner had I done so than a great fear took possession of me. It was Harry Fonthill! After the first shock, I felt relieved to know he did not suffer for my crime. He knew me almost immediately, and insisted on my going to his lodgings with him, and there I took sick, and he nursed me through my illness, as if I had been his equal. I bore it as long as I could, and then I told him all—and even then he did not spurn me, he only said, ‘God pity you, poor fellow! It is terrible, but I will not cast you off in poverty and sickness.’

“I then made a solemn vow to God that if he would let me live to come to America, I would see justice done. And now I am ready; do with me as you will.”

I have lived at the parsonage three years, and the parish are pleased to say their pastor chose wisely. I had another letter from Calcutta to-day, from Caddy Henderson. She writes:

“At last we are coming home. I am *so* glad! But then, poor papa is buried here, and I half feel as if I ought not to be. You know he left America very suddenly after that dreadful revelation. We did not see him for more than a year, and then he came out here to us. Poor papa! he was tempted above what he was able. That terrible Fonthill property has been the cause of much suffering. But Alice and Harry write me that they are happy there at last. A wee little maiden ‘only two years old,’ who rejoices in the name of Annie, sits at my feet, as I write. I do not ever expect her to be as good as you, but still she is very gentle and lovable—at least, in two pairs of partial eyes.”

“Annie,” said Harry to me, one day, soon after that trial, “what do you suppose ever became of that glove? I remember losing it in the morning before the murder.”

I went upstairs and brought down a paper parcel and gave it to him. “I found it, Harry,” I said.

“Annie, was there ever another such a woman?”

“Pshaw, Harry.”

Luke Henly died in prison, of consumption, in less than a month after his confession; and at last, peace, sweet and abiding, has folded its wings in our hearts, and we are content.

“And care and trial seem at last,
Through memory’s sunset air,
Like mountain ranges, overpast,
In purple distance fair.

Flag of our Union, April 7, 1866