



1. Administering the Holy Communion in Two Kinds to the Laity.

2. Marriage of Martin Luther.

3. Death of Luther's Daughter, Gretchen.

4. Nailing the Theses to the Church Door.

5. Portrait—Luther (from the Picture by Holbein).

6. Martin Luther's Home at Christmas.

7. Luther Preaching.

8. Luther's Funeral.

9. Luther Reading the Monastic Bible.

The Story of Martin Luther.

BY L. P. L.



ABOUT the close of the fifteenth century there lived near Eisenach, in Saxony, a frugal and honest couple, John and Margaret Luther by name. The family to which the name of Luther appertained was a large and respected one among the peasantry of Saxony, though this branch was extremely poor, and their distinction consisted in the superior sense, piety, and worth of the young couple. John was rigidly just and truthful, and an example of household severity; Margaret was a model to her sex in piety and thrifty economy. They had two sons already, when Margaret gave birth, unexpectedly, to a third son on St. Martin's Eve, November 10th, 1483, in an inn in Eisleben, where she had gone to attend a fair, and who was baptized the following day by the name of Martin, in honor of the saint.

Shortly after Martin's birth the family removed to Mansfeld, renowned for its mines. Here they became more prosperous, John becoming owner of two small furnaces, and in time a member of the Town Council.

John loved learning, and assembled in his cottage, as often as he could, such learned men as would honor him with a visit, and he resolved that his little Martin, who early evinced superior abilities, should be brought up a scholar. With this end in view he used to carry him on his shoulders, when too young to walk alone, to a school in Mansfeld, where Luther learned the Creed, the Ten Commandments, Our Father, and to sing hymns.

Martin's father was very severe, as was his mother also, who once whipped him for some act of dishonesty about a nut until the blood came. At school the discipline was still more severe, for Luther records having been well whipped fifteen times in one morning.

When fourteen, Martin was sent to the choral school of Magdeburg, conducted by Franciscan monks, and as his parents were still poor, he was forced to eke out his living by the plan, common with German boys, of singing at house-doors and begging for scraps of bread and meat as a recompense. When Luther had become great, if not rich, his door was never shut against poor boys who sang for charity, and he urged others to practice the same liberality. "Never despise poor boys who sing at your door and ask bread for the love of God. How often have I been one of such a group!"

After a year at Magdeburg, Luther was sent to Eisenach to school, but the straits of poverty were severely felt even there, where he had many relations. But one day, when very cold and hungry, Ursula Cotta, the wife of a burgher of consideration, struck with the sweetness of his voice, and observing he was the same boy who sang so beautifully in church, and behaved so decorously, opened

her door and calling him in gave him a hearty meal. Her husband, being much pleased with the boy's countenance and conversation, assented to her proposal that he should become an inmate of their dwelling. "There is nothing kinder than a good woman's heart," Luther said in after years, referring to this period of his life. "Happy he whose fortune it is to obtain it."

His studies in school embraced Latin, rhetoric, and verse-making; his amusements consisted in flute-playing, the good Ursula having made him a present of one. His taste for poetry developed as early as his taste for music, and, even in boyhood, he was remarkable for his fluency of language both in speaking and writing, and for his skill in verse-making.

In his eighteenth year he commenced his career at the University of Erfurth, his father working early and late, and living still more sparingly to afford him this advantage. There he read Cicero, Virgil, and Livy, and studied and acquired the science of dialectics. But his simple nature revolted from idle quibblings and useless subtleties, and he inclined rather to acquire acquaintance with things than to expend time and labor on the study of words.

Accident first directed his mind into that channel of reading and thought in which he was fated to reflect the light of God to men. He was one day opening one volume after another in the University library, when he lighted upon a book which riveted his whole attention. It was the Latin Vulgate of the whole Bible. He turned over page after page, and was arrested by the history of Hannah and Samuel, and he warmed over the description of the mother dedicating the child of many prayers to the Lord. Again and again he returned to the library and spent his spare moments poring over his new-found treasure.

In 1505 he was made Doctor of Philosophy, and began to lecture on the physics and ethics of Aristotle, while preparing to study jurisprudence, as his father had long desired. But not long after this, while returning to Erfurth from Mansfeld, where he had been visiting, a violent thunder-storm overclouded the sky, and his most intimate friend was killed at his side by lightning. Luther in terror vowed if his life were spared to consecrate it to God by taking the monk's hood. Yet he resolved to have one more evening of mirth with his intimate associates before parting with the world forever. So he made a feast, but breathed no word of his resolve, while music and wit made the moments fly. As soon as his friends had left the room, he chose a Virgil and a Plautus from among his books, and with these in his hand sought the Convent of St. Augustine. The fraternity were equally surprised and delighted at his request to be enrolled among them, for he was considered one of the brightest ornaments of the University. The next day he sent his gown and ring back to the University, and informed his parents and friends by letter of the step he had taken. Members of the University thronged to the convent gate to dissuade him from so foolish a course, but were refused entrance. His father was overcome with rage and disappointment, for he had hoped to see Martin rise high in the legal profession and become a per-

son of note and opulence, and for this end what sacrifices had he not made during long years!

The drudgery to which Luther was subjected in his new home was such as would have disgusted any mind less earnest than his. While a novice he had to open and shut gates, sweep the chapel, and clean the rooms. He found most of the brothers lazy, stupid, ignorant, and fond of good cheer. It was their maxim that holy words would make the Devil fly, even if not understood by those who used them. So all their devotion consisted in mumbling over, at stated times, the *horæ canonicæ*. The most of them conceived a dislike to Luther because of his learning, so that if he asked for time to study, he was told the interests of the convent were served, not by study, but by bringing home fish, flour, eggs, and money, and soon as his indoor tasks were ended, the cry was, in their doggerel, "*Saccum per nactum!*" (Go through the streets with your sack and bring us something to eat.) The University at length interfered in behalf of one of its members, and it was arranged by the prior that Luther should be allowed time for study.

He flew to his studies with the avidity of one long deprived of his favorite pursuits. He read Saint Augustine, but that only made him more desirous to read the Bible. Yet much that he there read seemed inexplicable to him, for he could not comprehend how the terrible God could converse with man, "as one shoemaker with another," to quote his own words.

His conduct puzzled the monks, for before entering the convent he had been social and even jovial. Afterward he became silent and abstracted. He confessed frequently, not the usual sins of monks, but spiritual conflicts, especially what he called the "root of the question, How shall man be just before God?" His confessor knew nothing of such trials, he had never heard of them before, and Luther grew still more despondent. Whole days and nights he spent in the intensity of prayer, yet gaining no comfort.

It was at this time that John Staupitz, the Vicar-General of the order in Germany, went on a visit to the convent at Erfurth. His eye rested with curiosity on such a brow as Luther's amongst the commonplace faces of the brotherhood, and he asked the history of the young monk from the prior, and what he heard from him in the confessional added to the interest he had inspired. Luther's idea of repentance was, that it was made up of mortification of the flesh used to propitiate the divine favor. Staupitz explained that it was the heart which God wished contrite and broken, and not the body, giving him a Bible for his own to study.

Luther's health finally sank under the pressure of his mental conflicts, and he became seriously ill. An old monk who visited him, after listening to the doubts which perplexed his heart, replied by citing that article of the Creed, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins." not of Peter's, or David's, but of "my own sin;" adding that "by such faith are we justified." These words poured the balm of comfort on Luther's troubled spirit. As peace

returned his illness abated, and he regained strength.

In the spring of 1505 he was to be ordained priest, and glad of an opportunity for full reconciliation with his father, he wrote a dutiful letter, imploring his presence, and requesting him to fix the day. John Luther complied with the request, and named the second of May, *Dominica Cantate* (fourth Sunday after Easter). The father came, attended by several friends, and after the ceremony was invited to a repast in the refectory. Naturally enough, the conversation turned upon the events of the day, and all agreed in lauding the self-sacrifice of Luther in renouncing his worldly prospects to shut himself up in a monastery, that he might serve God and secure his own salvation. This was more than John could stand. "You men of learning," he exclaimed, "have you never read God's command, Honor thy father and thy mother"? These words made a deep impression on Martin's mind, and their truth afforded him one powerful argument for his subsequent work of exterminating monasticism in Germany.

Luther had been three years in the convent at Erfurth when he was appointed professor of physics and dialectics in the University of Wittenberg, instituted by Frederic the Wise. The following year he was made bachelor of theology and lecturer on the Holy Scriptures. Passing from his cell to the professor's chair, with a Bible in his hand, he poured out his own deep convictions, the truth of which he had learned by long and trying process, to a crowd of eager students. Staupitz, through whose instrumentality he had received the appointment, now requested him to essay his powers in the pulpit. Luther resisted at first, but his vow of obedience prevailed. The old Augustine church was a tottering edifice of wood, propped up on every side with stays. The pulpit was a rude structure of unpolished planks, three feet high above the floor. Here Luther first preached the "good news" in language plain and simple as the rustic edifice, but with a power, zeal, and clearness which won the heart, it being evident his words had their birthplace, not on the lips, but in his soul.

In 1510 or 1511 several of the Augustine convents were at variance with their Vicar-General on some point of order, and they chose Martin Luther to go to Rome to represent their case to the head of the order. He was allowed a certain sum of money and a brother monk as a traveling companion. After crossing the Alps, Luther and his friend found themselves in the midst of luxury such as they had never dreamed of. Stopping at a convent of the Benedictines, they were amazed at the gay dresses and delicious food of the recluses, the tables being loaded with delicate viands even on Wednesdays and Fridays. Luther at length gently reminded the monks they were violating the pope's order by eating meat on fast-days. But this reproof nearly cost him his life, and it was only by favor of the gate-keeper he was allowed to effect a clandestine retreat from the dangerous spot and reach Rome in safety.

When he came within sight of the long-looked-for towers, falling prostrate on the earth

and raising his hands to heaven he exclaimed, "God save thee, O Rome! seat of the Holy One—yea, thrice holy by the blood of the sainted martyrs shed within thy walls." He entered by the *Porta del Popolo* and remained about a fortnight, during which time he ran from church to church, and from tomb to tomb, listening to many idle legends, and believing implicitly all that was told him. He climbed the *Scala Sancta* (Pilate's Staircase) on his knees, but in the midst of this effort a voice in the depths of his heart seemed to rebuke him, saying, "The just shall live by faith." He sat at table with many priests, and heard some boast how they deluded the silly people by changing the words of consecration in the mass to "Bread thou art, and bread thou shalt remain." When he said mass he was reproved for his slowness, for a Roman priest could say it seven times while he said it once.

On the eighteenth he was made Doctor of Theology with the customary formalities, swearing "never to teach strange doctrines condemned by the church and offensive to pious ears, but all his life long to study the Holy Scriptures, and to maintain the Christian faith by disputations and writings."

There is no doubt that, by the beginning of the year 1517, when the "Morning Star of the Reformation arose," he had formed the idea of becoming a Reformer, for his mind was engrossed with the duty of reviving the ancient doctrines of the church, of the Scriptures, and the Fathers, in place of the school of Aristotle theology which had paralyzed faith and heart piety. But as yet his reverence for the Roman church was deep and untouched, and he only wished to recall to that section of it whom Aristotle and the schoolmen had deluded, what was in truth the real doctrine of the Catholic church as taught by the fathers and founded on the Bible.

At this era purgatory, the mass, and plenary indulgence were the three doctrines by which, especially, the Roman pontiffs filled their coffers. The origin of the last was as follows: In early times penance was exacted for spiritual or moral delinquencies with great vigor, not by way of expiation, but in proof of sincere contrition. But, by degrees, the real object of penance was lost sight of, and it came to be looked upon in the light of an atonement. To battle in Palestine for the Holy Sepulchre, or to visit Rome during a jubilee year, was accepted in lieu of penance. Later the opportunity of buying pardon, instead of doing penance, at the Pope's discretion, was offered, and finally this indulgence was declared to avail for sins past, present or to come.

Leo X. was not insensible to such a means of revenue. Erecting the splendid church of St. Peter, with a taste for all the elegances of life, he found even the mines of wealth discovered in the credulity of the people inadequate to satisfy his needs. It was a custom to let out the indulgence traffic, in some countries, to contractors, and they, being usually of high degree, employed sub-agents. In Germany the Archbishop of Mentz selected for his subordinate one John Tetzel, a Dominican monk, who was possessed of great inventive genius in lying, and of extreme impu-

dence. In 1517, Tetzel established his indulgence market a few miles from Wittenberg. He was forbidden to enter Saxony by the Elector Frederic, yet many of the inhabitants flocked to Tetzel's pardon counter and returned home with plenary indulgence.

When Luther first heard of Tetzel's proceedings he said, "God willing, I will beat a hole in his drum." But it was in the confessional that Luther's sincere religious principles were brought into actual collision with the dogmas of Tetzel. Several persons demanded absolution with the frank avowal that they had no intention of leaving off sin, since it would be an unnecessary act of self-denial, showing their indulgence paper in explanation of this statement. Luther assured them of the absurdity of this notion, and refused absolution unless they were seriously bent upon amendment, following this up by a sermon in the parish church. To this Tetzel replied with furious denunciations.

On All Saints' Eve, October 31st, when the precious relics, inclosed in cases of gold and gems, which Frederic had collected at great pains and cost, were exposed to public gaze, and multitudes of pilgrims were thronging the cathedral, Luther appeared in the crowd and nailed on the door ninety-five theses on the doctrine of indulgences, which he offered to maintain in the University against any opponent.

These theses were copied and sent to one place and another, translations even appearing in Holland and Spain; so that in one day, as it were, an unknown monk had become a European celebrity, and palace and cottage rang with his name. The prophecy of John Huss was recalled, that though they might kill the goose (Huss), after one hundred years a swan would succeed to whose notes they would listen. The one hundred years had just ended!

In August, 1518, Luther received a citation to appear in Rome, within sixty days, to answer to the charge of heresy. This was an anxious time to Luther, for a letter had been sent to the Elector in which it was hinted that Frederic's fidelity to the Holy See had fallen under suspicion, and that to reinstate himself in the esteem of the church, it was trusted that he would cease to protect his rebellious friar. Luther's personal safety, to human eyes, turned on Frederic's decision; but there was every reason to believe that the support required would not fail in this hour of extremity. The danger did not repress Luther's zeal for truth. After much talk it was finally agreed that he should appear at Augsburg before the Pope's legate, which he did after having a safe conduct granted him, and, after several hot interviews, he refusing to recant, was ordered to leave. Being warned that the cardinal had power to throw him into prison, he escaped from the city secretly, and returned to Wittenberg.

But though he had escaped immediate peril, his condition could not be regarded under any other light than as most precarious. By 1520, Luther had so far advanced in doctrines as to reject four out of the seven sacraments—baptism, penance, and the Lord's Supper. Purgatory he called "A dream of the popes, who

knew less on those points than the least of the believers." The fifteenth of June in this year the famous Bull of Excommunication, consigning all Luther's writings to the flames was signed. Beside this, another letter was addressed to the Elector Frederic urging him to rigorous proceedings against his heretic monk. To this Frederic replied there were so many learned men in Germany, and so many students of the Bible, even among the laity, that the mere authoritative decree of the church, without scriptural proof, would only occasion bitter offense and give rise to horrible tumults. This was plain language to use to the Vatican; but as Luther's danger increased, warm demonstrations in his favor were evoked from all quarters. Indeed the bull, instead of extinguishing the Reformation forever, gave it new life and decided its success.

In 1521 the Diet was called at Worms, over which Charles V. was to preside, and Luther was summoned to appear, a safe conduct being secured him. Just before reaching Worms a message was sent to urge him not to proceed from fear for his safety. "Say to your master that I will enter Worms though as many devils set at me as there are tiles on the housetop." Upon seeing the walls of Worms in the distance he rose in the carriage and sung his paraphrase of the Forty-sixth psalm, "Ein feste Berg ist Unser Gott."

"A tower of strength is God,
A shield on every side,
A sure defense the Almighty rod,
Let whate'er will bestride."

When it was known that he had arrived several of his friends and courtiers of the princes in attendance on the Diet formed an escort around his wagon as he rode through the city. Nor was rest allowed him that night; princes, counts, knights, nobles, priests, and laymen crowded the Elector's rooms till a late hour to see one whose daring and reputation contrasted so forcibly with his humble origin and poverty. He was summoned to appear the next day before his Imperial Majesty to listen to the charges against him. When the herald appeared to conduct him to the Diet, it was almost impossible to force a way through the streets, so dense was the crowd. At the door of the room Luther was met by George Freundsberg, whose name with the Germans in that age was the symbol of gallantry. "My good monk," said the famous soldier, "you are going a path such as I and our captains in our hardest fights have never trod. But if you are sure of your cause, go on in God's name. He will not leave you."

The hall contained beside the Emperor more than two hundred personages of the highest rank in Germany and Spain; and in the midst stood this man in a monk's garb, worn with study and ill health, there arraigned because he had dared to remind his fellow-men of the supreme authority of God's word. The charge being formally made, Luther was ordered to return the following day and answer by word of mouth. For an hour the next afternoon he spoke in German, but the Emperor not understanding perfectly, he was requested to repeat in Latin, which he did. At the conclusion the Chancellor said, "All we wish is a simple and direct answer, Will

you retract or will you not?" To which Luther replied, "I cannot retract anything. Here I stand. I can do no otherwise. God help me. Amen."

Finding it impossible to shake Luther's determination he was ordered to return whence he came, and neither to preach nor write anything on the way. That day the Elector and his councilors concerted a plan for the safety of Luther to which he gave a reluctant acquiescence. He had traveled a part of the way home, when as his wagon passed a narrow defile near the castle of Altenstein, two masked and armed horsemen with attendants rushed out, seized Luther, threw a knight's mantle over him, put him on a horse, and then rode away, leaving the frightened wagoner to help himself as best he could. Back and forth the little band rode to baffle pursuit, until at nearly eleven o'clock at night they reached the foot of a precipitous hill. On its summit, frowning over the forests at its base, stood the venerable castle of the Wartburg, sacred to St. Elizabeth, and once the seat of the Landgraves of Thuringia. Here Luther was made to represent a prisoner captured in the day's enterprise, and was conducted to a chamber, already prepared for him, with all the respect shown to a distinguished guest. He was provided with the dress of a knight, requested to allow his hair and beard to grow, and was introduced to the household as Yonker George.

There was much in this change of circumstances to vex and irritate him, yet something also to refresh him. His duties, his friends, his preaching, the open honesty and hardihood of his life resigned! The sacrifice was not a light one. His almost superhuman energy in controversial and theological writings in his ten months' exile did not prevent him keeping a steady eye on the course of events. In him the man of study and man of action were united. During the latter part of his stay in the old fortress his time was engrossed with the work of translating the whole of the Greek New Testament, which has shed such glory around his own name, and the tower and the room in which it was achieved. His lute, which had beguiled many a wearisome hour, was laid aside; his rides were discontinued; the New Testament was in his hand or before his eyes constantly; and in three months the Greek original had been converted into noble German.

In 1552 he returned to his beloved Wittenberg, where he was received with enthusiasm. There he laid down certain principles of reform, the abolition of the mass, and of every usage plainly forbidden by Scripture, but wherever the verdict of Holy Writ was less evident, to permit the retention of its disuse as each individual conscience might dictate.

While the German version of the New Testament was passing through the press, he began the more arduous task of translating the whole of the Old Testament from the Hebrew. As this labor advanced he said, "If any man thinks himself learned, let him attempt to translate the Bible, and he will find out his mistake." No source of information, however humble, was neglected in the endeavor to give as perfect a version as possible, one Hebrew word often occupying a laborious

consideration of three or four weeks. His rule was always to choose the shortest and most familiar words and phrases, since it was to be the poor man's Bible. And it is a high praise that by the purity of his German Bible he fixed the standard of his own language, and became the father of German literature as well as father of Protestant churches.

On Trinity Sunday, 1525, Luther was married to Catherine von Bora, once a nun, and the Augustine convent became the residence of the pair, the cloisters which a few years before had sheltered in ease a flourishing society of monks, echoing ere long to the voices of a large family of happy children. His private life flowed in an even tenor, and his garden became a great source of amusement. From his ample mansion the refugee was never excluded, nor the claims of charity ever forgotten. Amid those domestic cares and joys Luther's nature expanded with all its genuine German kindness. A year after his marriage he wrote: "I have received from my excellent and dearest wife a dear little John Luther by God's wonderful goodness." Five years after, being absent from home, he wrote the following letter to encourage the child in learning: "I hear with delight that you learn well and love to pray. Go on so, my little son, and when I return home I will bring you a pretty fairing. I know a beautiful garden where many children go in, and wear golden jackets, and gather beautiful apples and pears and cherries, and have beautiful ponies with golden bits and silver saddles. I asked the man to whom the garden belongs, Whose children are these? He said, They are children who love to pray and learn well and are good. So I said, Dear man, I have a son called Johnny Luther; may he not come into this garden and eat such beautiful apples and pears, and ride such pretty ponies, and play with these children? Then he said, If he loves to pray and learn and is good, he shall have pipes, drums, and every kind of stringed instruments, and dance and shoot with the cross-bow. Therefore, dear little Johnny, learn good and pray cheerfully, and you shall come into the garden.—Your dear father, MARTIN LUTHER."

In 1542, his dearly-loved daughter Magdalene died, an affliction which grieved him sorely. He tells in a letter how a little while before her death he said, "My little daughter, are you quite willing to remain here with your father, or go yonder to your Father in heaven?" To which she answered, "As God wills, dear father."

Years passed away of mingled sorrow and joy, of work and fightings for the truth, and Luther had grown to be an old man. For years he had suffered from some chronic affection, and in February, 1546, when on a visit to Eisleben he was severely attacked with his old trouble. The Count and Countess of Mansfeld remained by his side, and all that skill and medicine could suggest were done for him to no purpose. He died on the 17th of February, 1546.

An express was immediately sent to the Elector of Saxony with the mournful intelligence, and a request that he might be permitted to rest at Eisleben, the place of his birth and death. The evening of the same

day the Elector returned word requiring the body to be deposited in the Church of All Saints in Wittenberg. The body was placed in a leaden coffin, and followed by the Counts of Mansfeld with their wives, the Prince of Anhalt, citizens and matrons. It was conveyed with great pomp and lamentation to the city gates. So the procession moved forward to the sound of funeral hymns and tolling of bells, from one town to another, till it reached Wittenberg, where it was met by thousands. The spot chosen for burial was on the right side of the pulpit, and when the coffin was carried into the church and placed before the chancel, the services were begun with funeral chants, followed by a sermon by Bugenhagen and an oration by Melancthon, at the close of which the coffin was lowered into the grave by the Chancellor of the University.

Provision was made by the Elector of Saxony for the Reformer's widow, so that she remained in comfortable independence until her death in 1552. The four children who were left married well, but only one acquired much reputation—Paul, the youngest son, who became an eminent physician. From him and his sister Margaret, who married a personage of high authority in Prussia—George von Cunheim—there are numerous descendants at the present day of the Greatest of the Reformers.

My Sister Bell.

CHAPTER IV.

CONCLUSION.

WHEN my arrival at home I found, as Bell had said, that everything was very miserable. Poor Dr. Rossitur lay smitten with paralysis, quite powerless to move, and entirely delirious, in our old school-room, which had been hastily converted into a bedroom for his use. Father would not listen to our step-mother's entreaties to have him removed. He had fallen suddenly one evening, while talking to Bell, so I was told, and there he had been ever since.

Bell told me all, in a low, frightened voice, that night of my arrival, when we were alone together.

"Dr. Rossitur had been plaguing me, Bess," she said, "for ever so long, to marry him and be done with it. He was almost wild with jealousy, because he thought I was going to like somebody else, and I would not say I would marry him. I told him there was no hurry. He said I was killing him, Bessie"—here Bell's voice grew lower, and her face grew white—"but you know all men say so, and I thought nothing of it, and I only laughed at him and kept on flirting and dancing. O Bess! do you hear him?"

Bell's eyes grew wild with terror, for, through the darkness, a cry came ringing loudly as of a man in mortal agony.

"He says I did it!" moaned Bell, with her

face hidden in her hands. After a moment she went on: "That dreadful night that he was taken ill, he had come early to see me before I went out, for I was going to a ball. I had a beautiful bouquet, and that made him jealous, for I did not carry his in my hand, but left it upstairs. He began by talking wildly, and then he said he knew I did not love him, and I was very cool about it all, and hardly noticed what he said. Then he grew quite wild, and said he had lost every cent he owned in the world. This made me pay attention to him I can tell you, and he said he had gone security for a friend who was ruined, and that he was ruined too. Then he asked me if I loved him well enough to bear poverty with him, and I told him no, for you know, Bessie, I never could bear the idea of being poor! I did not say anything violent or unkind I am sure, but I said, of course, that ended the matter—and then! O Bessie! I never shall forget his face! He threw his arms up over his head, and fell as if he had been shot! He has never had his mind for one single moment since, and when I go near him he calls out that I have come to kill him, that I have killed him!"

Bell cried and shuddered and clung to me. But in all her fright and horror I did not see in her a moment's perception of her own share in this tragedy. She evidently did not think that she had anything to answer for, I thought of my love for Clinton, and how the bare thought of inflicting pain on him wrung my heart! How gladly would I have borne poverty or any ill with him. Bell was right when she said she did not know how to love. She had never loved Dr. Rossitur! But her nerves were shaken by the shock they had received, and she cried constantly, and shuddered with horror whenever she heard his voice.

It was necessary that either she or I should stay by our dear old friend, for only the presence of one or other of us quieted his wild delirium. He thought I was Bell, evidently, and my touch had power to soothe him even at his worst moments.

But Bell resigned the post of nurse to me, she could no longer endure the misery of the sick-room, and so the duty of caring for Dr. Rossitur devolved on me.

The physicians had said he would recover his reason in a few days, and would probably live, but never again be able to walk. A merciful God spared him this fate. Still he lingered, week after week, losing his strength slowly, but sometimes in wild delirium, and then in weak, low tones he would call for Bell, plead his love for her, beg her to be kind to him, and call her by all the old familiar, caressing names of childhood. Then again he would cry out that she had killed him, and rave about his money. At these times I could quiet him, and I rarely left him. How could I do so? Was he not my oldest, dearest friend? How often in childhood had he watched by my bedside and soothed and cheered the weary hours of sickness and languor. What a constant true friend he had always been to us. And now he was dying! Harry was away at sea, and Bell would not come to him.

"Will he die?" she asked me every day, and when I said he would, she drew in her breath hard and clasped her hands, but never shed a tear.

"Come to him, Bell," I begged one day. "Come, for the end is near."

She looked up eagerly, "How near?" "I cannot tell, but come to him, he loves you so dearly." Bell shuddered—"Hate me if you must, Bessie," she said drearily, "but I want him to die!"

Bell had her wish; he died with his dear hand holding mine, breathing out his life in loving words, and mistaking me for Bell to the end, happy and peaceful at last, thinking that she loved him.

Then I fell sick. My work was done and my strength was gone, and the day that saw my first and dearest friend carried to his grave, saw me laid low with nervous exhaustion. Body and mind had been overstrained, and I needed rest for both. I lay in a kind of stupor for days, caring nothing for what went on around me—no, one thing I cared for, and that was the lovely ferns and flowers that betokened Clinton's daily visit, and his loving care for me. This gave me a sense of peace even when I was weakest, and helped me to gain strength. But it came very, very slowly, and the physicians ordered me away for change of air.

This was bad news, and I tried to persuade them that I should recover more quickly at home; but they would not be convinced, and it was arranged that I was to go to the South for the winter with my step-mother.

The day before I was to sail, Bell sat by me chatting and laughing gayly. "I'll send you all the news," she said, "and I'll keep Clinton bright and happy for you, and by and by when I begin to go out again—" then she stopped suddenly. "How soon will it be proper to go out again to parties, Bess, or to receive friends here?"

I turned languidly to look at her, and only repeated the word "*proper*" in a tone of wonder.

"Oh, I know what you mean," cried Bell hastily, reddening from brow to chin; "but you know, Bessie, Dr. Rossitur was no relation, and nobody knew of my engagement."

The tears sprang to my eyes. "Don't cry, Bessie!" said Bell. "I am a heartless block of marble I believe. I hate myself! But I cannot help it! Oh, Bessie, I am so glad to feel free! and if I have no heart, is it my fault that I cannot feel?"

I looked at my beautiful sister. How beautiful she was! Nobody ever was as lovely, of that I am quite sure. The mourning dress she wore only served to heighten her beauty. Her golden hair curling all around her white brow looked like a halo in the sunlight, her clear brown eyes full of life and joy, her sweet dimpled mouth and chin, her beautiful rounded graceful figure, her little dainty hands, the exquisite pose of her head; oh! all these and many more beauties made it a joy forever to look at and remember Bell.

"How beautiful you are!" I exclaimed involuntarily.

"Yes," she answered slowly, "I know I am. But Bess," she cried with a sudden impulse,