

## Ida Vernon.

For the Cutch.

"Almost as I left it eight years ago, nothing but me has changed." Thus said a lady on the deck of the Nellie Stanhope, in 1860, as the noble steamer rounded a bend in the river and came in view of New Orleans.

Yes, there lay the proud city, her levee stretching far away from sight on either side, and lined for miles with shipping, where the ensign of every nation rose and fell on the evening breeze, while the water seemed alive with barges freighted with produce from every part of the great valley.

But to return to the speaker from whom this familiar scene had elicited the above remark. Here was a fine intellectual countenance, though thin and pallid from the torments of disease; and though physical suffering was strongly delineated there, yet a skillful physiognomist would have told you that the soul which looked out from those dark shadowy eyes was bound beneath suffering which no power on earth could remove.

She had come on board alone at Cairo, and had given her name as Ida Vernon. She had failed rapidly during the passage and had manifested great anxiety for its end. "I am almost home," she said to a travelling acquaintance. "Yes," was the brief rejoinder, for there was something in her tone that led her listener to wonder whether she referred to her home by the Mississippi, or the home toward which the gleaming spire of St. Patrick, on which her eyes rested as she spoke, was steadily pointing. In a few moments came the bustle and confusion of landing; with assistance the invalid succeeded in reaching the wharf, though much exhausted.

"To Lafayette square," she murmured as she sank back into a seat in an omnibus. A few moments, rapid drive out into the suburbs of the city, and the vehicle drew up before a stately mansion that reared its granite front proudly above its surroundings. Mrs. Vernon directed her feeble feet slowly up the steps, then paused and leaned against a marble pillar. The old magnolia near, beneath which she had played so oft in childhood, seemed to move its snowy blossoms in welcome, and the rich perfume of the orange trees came like the sweet reminder of happier days. But the arched door-way stood grim and silent in the gathering twilight. For years it has been closed against her, and she shrank from opening it now, from passing the threshold over which she had once been told that she had passed forever.

"But did not father tell me to come back," murmured the proud exile; "what if his letter was cold and distant, I know that his heart is yearning towards me? why am I waiting?" And she laid her hand upon the door-bell. Its sounds seemed to echo solemnly through the hall, and a chill crept round the anxiously beating heart of Mrs. Vernon, as she waited an answer to her summons. Soon the door opened and a stranger servant ushered her in. A brilliant light streamed from the parlor into the dim hall, yet all the room was empty. As her eyes took in at one rapid glance, its pictured walls, its costly ornaments and furniture, even to the rich carpets that lent its warm tints to complete the charm which combined wealth and beauty threw over the eye of the beholder, it seemed for a moment as though the ruthless storms that had swept across her life since last she stood there, laying low every flower that hope or affection clung to, were some beautiful dream, some wild dark fancy, but the voice of the servant dispelled the sweet illusion.

"Is there any one you wish to see?" A low earnest thrill rang through the words as she answered:—"My father, call my father." "If you mean Esquire Arnold, he has gone a journey, and will not return under a fortnight." A deadly pallor overspread the features of Mrs. Vernon. She sank down upon a sofa near, and buried her face in her hands, mourning in a voice choked with anguish. "Oh, I shall never see him again, I feel the chill approach of the hand of death! It was only the hope of this meeting that has given me strength to ward it off thus far, but it is all in vain, and I have dragged my faltering feet to the home of my girlhood to die among strangers." A few moments later they had borne Mrs. Vernon to a chamber and laid her upon a couch. She received mechanically the kind attentions of wondering, pitying servants, apparently unconscious of

what was passing around her. Gradually a reaction followed her intensely agitated state of mind, and she fell asleep. The long lashes lay in dark lines upon the colorless cheeks, and had it not been for the occasional grievance of the finely chiselled lips, one might have thought that the spirit had fled from the tenement so beautiful even in decay. By the bed-side sat Aunt Peggy, an old slave who had served for many years in the family of Esquire Arnold. To her the frail sleeper was evidently no stranger, for two bright tears chased each other over her sable cheeks as she muttered, "My poor, poor child; old Massa did a cruel thing when he shut you, its only sunshine, out from his home. But him has mourned for you ever since, away down in his proud heart, for his hair am grown white as the winter hills away up in the Norf, and his steps am grown unsteady. De oder day, when he was moving some books dat belonged to poor dead missis, a little curl jes like like a ring of gold slipped out of one of dem, and fell down on de carpet. Oh, Massa know'd what wee restless head dat come off. He didn't think dat anybody seed him, but I stood jest inside de door all de time, and dis ole heart will neber forget de look dat was on his face when he stooped to pick it up, and his voice dat sounded so solemn like when he said—"Ida, my daughter, where are you?" No wonder dat his heart smote him, perhaps he was thinking of your bridal night when he pulled dem same bright curls jes grown a little longer, and said he couldn't give up his little beauty."

The half audible rerec of the old woman was interrupted by a movement of the sleeper; slowly the dark eyes unclosed and turned upon the patient watcher. A smile of recognition played around the lips of the sufferer, as she exclaimed, "Are you here Peggy? I thought that you were resting from your labors long ago." Her voice was clear and steady as though life was rallying its forces, but the poor old slave knew as she wiped the gathering dampness from the marble forehead, that the spirit was fast gathering strength to depart. Again the voice of Mrs. Vernon broke the stillness. "Peggy, time is short, yet I cannot go without pouring into some faithful heart the sad story of my life, that life that dawned unclouded, but now is going out in darkness ere its noon. Ah! yes, my life was cloudless until my marriage, and you know what followed that, although my father was as pleased, yes, proud, of Eldridge Vernon on my bridal eve, as I, he was not so blind to the stern truth, that soon became too evident, that I had married the exterior of an accomplished gentleman, and scholar, a fortune hunter and a spendthrift. I closed my eyes against the sad reality, until having squandered nearly the whole of the large legacy left me by mother, he was detected in a fraudulent attempt to gain possession of another, which might have fallen to me at some future day. My father was thoroughly exasperated, and renounced him openly as a villain, sternly laying two paths before me, to cast him off and remain in the home of my childhood, welcome to its ease and luxury, or to brave it with him, disowned and penniless, never to return. Oh! how could I have done differently? my heart still clung to my husband. Still ruder shocks must come to sever its love from him, and perhaps the bitter words of my father stirred something of my angry pride, and I left his sheltering roof, to walk by the side of him in whom my faith was already shaken, a path that stretched dark and uncertain before me. We went to the State of Illinois, and there opened a school. It was eminently successful, for Eldridge possessed a fine talent for teaching, but day by day, I learned that I held no place in his heart. My gold had won him, also that it had left me. Yet I had one bright blessing left, my little Isabel. My poor heart wound its bruised tendrels around her and was comforted. But I must hasten to the end," and the voice of the speaker grew husky, and her breath grew labored. "One bright morning my husband asked me to dress my darling for a ride; unthinking, I tied on the little hat and kissed her sweet lips, then watched the riders till they disappeared in the distance over the broad prairie, and oh, Peggy, I never saw the light of those laughing blue eyes again, nor caught the merry trill of the childish voice, for she never returned. I watched and waited patiently for months, but there came no tidings, and

slowly the distressing truth dawned. Eldridge Vernon had deserted me—had stolen from me my idol; through all these long years I've searched and prayed for her, struggling with grief and poverty, till nature has given way, all in vain. Oh father, why are you not here that I may beseech you with my dying breath to search for my darling child? but it cannot be, and Heaven's will be done."

The tolling of the mid-night bell stole solemnly into that silent chamber, and as its last stroke died away, the soul of Ida Vernon winged its way upward to join that white-robed company that have come off of great tribulation, to where God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. E.

THE OUT-TRAVELED TRAVELER.—A traveller came very late for his breakfast, and the meal was hurriedly prepared. Thompson feeling the food was not quite up to the mark, made all sorts of apologies around the eater, who worked away in silence, never raising his head beyond the affirmative influence of his fork, or by any act acknowledging even the presence of mine host. This sulky demeanor rather vexed the landlord, who, changing the range of his battery, stuck his thumbs in his arm holes and said: "Now, mister, confound me if I hain't made all the apologies necessary, and more, too, considering the breakfast and who got it, and I tell you I have seen dirtier, worse cooked, and a deal of a sight smaller breakfast than this several times." The weary, hungry one laid down his tobs, swallowed the bite *in transitu*, and modestly looking up to the fuming landlord, exclaimed—"Is what you say true?" "Yes, sir." "Well, then, I'll be blamed if you hain't out-traveled me."

A Down-Easter speaks of a heavy fog in his locality. He says he hired a man to shingle a barn. At noon the man complained that it was a terribly long barn, for he had been at work all the morning and hadn't got one course laid. So after dinner he went to see what the man had been about, and found that he had shingled more than a hundred feet right out on the fog!

Dr. Mead was one time assailed in a pamphlet by Dr. Woodward. The doctors met; a fight ensued with swords. Mead disarmed his adversary, and ordered him to beg for his life. "Never!" said Woodward—"never till I am your patient."

A polite man was once making a voyage on the Danube, when the boat in which he was, sunk. When he was just on the point of drowning, he got his head above the water for a moment, and taking off his hat, said: "Ladies and gentleman will you please excuse me?" and down he went.

Dr. Kitchener happened to be one of a company thirteen in number, and on its being remarked and pronounced unlucky, he said:—"I admit it is unlucky in one case." "What case is that, Doctor?"—"When there is only dinner for twelve."

An exchange, commenting on the fact that a number of Cincinnati young ladies have been married and carried away to other places, says our city has a better claim to supply spare ribs for the immense West.

An infamous old bachelor, being asked if he ever witnessed a public execution, replied "No, but I once saw a marriage."

The sovereigns that exert the greatest sway in the world, are neither white nor black—but yellow.

What unlucky men military officers are, to be sure they are always in some mess or other.

## DEATHS.

Name	Rank	Company	Regiment	State	Vol.
Reuben Hunter	Ass't Surg.		54th	Pa.	
John E. Davis	Corp'l.	Co. F	8th	Vt.	
Charles Black	Pri'vt.	"	A, 31st	Me.	
Derwin A. Smith	"	"	C, 1st	N. H.	Cav.
Michael Cratting	"	"	E, 170th	N. Y.	Vol.
A. R. Price	"	"	H, 144th	Ohio	"
William Smith	"	"	I, 28th	Mass.	"
William Willey	"	"	J, 155th	N. Y.	"
E. Blanchard	"	"	F, 34th	Mass.	"