

seemed a decent though not very tidy woman, to walk up and see her; for I was anxious she should have a visitor now and then when I was out, as she complained a good deal of the loneliness. The woman consented, and ever after was very kind to her. But my mainstay and comfort was an old woman who then occupied the room opposite to this. She was such a good creature! Nearly blind, she yet kept her room the very pink of neatness. I never saw a speck of dust on that chest of drawers, which was hers then, and which she valued far more than many a rich man values the house of his ancestors—not only because it had been her mother's, but because it bore testimony to the respectability of her family. Her floor and her little muslin window curtain, her bed and everything about her, were as clean as lady could desire. She objected to move into a better room below, which the landlord kindly offered her—for she was a favourite, from having been his tenant a long time and never having given him any trouble in collecting her rent—on the ground that there were two windows in it and therefore too much light for her bits of furniture. They would, she said, look nothing in that room. She was very pleased when I asked her to pay a visit to Mrs. Conan, and as she belonged to a far higher intellectual grade than my protectress, and as she had a strong practical sense of religion, chiefly manifested in a willing acceptance of the decrees of Providence, I think she did us both good. I wish I could draw you a picture of her coming in at that door, with her all but sightless eyes, the broad borders of her white cap waving, and her hands stretched out before her—for she was more apprehensive than if she had been quite blind, because she could see things without knowing what or even in what position they were. The most remarkable thing to me was the calmness with which she looked forward to her approaching death, although without the expectation which so many good people seem to have in connexion with their departure. I talked to her about it more than once—not with any presumption of teaching her, for I felt she was far before me, but just to find out how she felt and what she believed. Her answer amounted to this, that she had never known beforehand what lay round the next corner, or what was going to happen to her, for if Providence had meant her to know, it could not be by going to fortune-tellers, as some of the neighbours did; but that she always found things turn out right and good for her, and she did not doubt she would find it so when she came to the last turn.

“By degrees I knew everybody in the house, and of course I was ready to do what I could to

help any of them. I had more to lift me into a higher region of mental comfort than was open to them, for I had music, and Lady Bernard lent me books.

“Of course, also, I kept my rooms as clean and tidy as I could, and indeed if I had been more carelessly inclined in that way, the sight of the blind woman's room would have been a constant reminder to me. By degrees also I was able to get a few more articles of furniture for it, and a bit of carpet to put down before the fire. I whitewashed the walls myself, and after a while began to whitewash the walls of the landing as well, and all down the stair, which was not of much use to the eye, for there is no light. Before long some of the other tenants began to whitewash their rooms also, and contrive to keep things a little tidier. Others declared they had no opinion of such uppish notions; they weren't for the likes of them. These were generally such as would rejoice in wearing finery picked up at the rag-shop; but even some of them began by degrees to cultivate a small measure of order. Soon this one and that began to apply to me for help in various difficulties that arose. But they didn't begin to call me grannie for a long time after this. They used then to call the blind woman grannie, and the name got associated with the top of the house, and I came to be associated with it because I also lived there and we were friends. After her death, it was used from habit, at first with a feeling of mistake, seeing its immediate owner was gone; but by degrees it settled down upon me, and I came to be called grannie by everybody in the house. Even Mrs. Conan would not unfrequently address me, and speak of me too, as grannie, at first with a laugh, but soon as a matter of course.

“I got by-and-by a few pupils amongst the tradespeople of a class rather superior to that in which I had begun to teach, and from whom I could ask and obtain double my former fee; so that things grew, with fluctuations, gradually better. Lady Bernard continued a true friend to me—but she never was other than that to any. Some of her friends ventured on the experiment whether I could teach their children; and it is no wonder if they were satisfied, seeing I had myself such a teacher.

“Having come once or twice to see Mrs. Conan, she discovered that we were gaining a little influence over the people in the house; and it occurred to her, as she told me afterwards, that the virtue of music might be tried there with a

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